

Ellen G. White Estate

TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH



Vol. 2

ELLEN G. WHITE

Testimonies for the Church Volume Two

Ellen G. White

1871

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About the Author

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

Further Links

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Contents

Information about this Book	i
The Times of Volume Two	vi
Number Fifteen—Testimony for the Church	11
Introduction	12
Chapter 1—Sketch of Experience	13
Chapter 2—Doing for Christ	25
Chapter 3—Selling the Birthright	37
Chapter 4—Evilspeaking	47
Chapter 5—Selfishness and World Loving	52
Chapter 6—Flesh Meats and Stimulants	57
Chapter 7—Neglect of Health Reform	63
Chapter 8—Love for the Erring	69
Chapter 9—Everyday Religion	73
Chapter 10—Reform at Home	79
Chapter 11—A Violated Conscience	83
Chapter 12—Warnings and Reproofs	87
Number Sixteen—Testimony for the Church	103
Chapter 13—Object of Personal Testimonies	104
Chapter 14—Moving to Battle Creek	106
Chapter 15—Caution to Ministers	109
Chapter 16—Look to Jesus	111
Chapter 17—Separation From the World	116
Chapter 18—True Love	124
Chapter 19—Amusements at the Institute	127
Chapter 20—Neglect of Hannah More	130
Chapter 21—Prayer for the Sick	135
Chapter 22—Courage in the Minister	139
Chapter 23—Closeness in Deal	141
Chapter 24—Oppressing the Hireling	144
Chapter 25—Combativeness Reproved	149
Response	151
Chapter 26—Burden Bearers in the Church	152
Chapter 27—Pride in the Young	159
Chapter 28—Worldliness in the Church	167

Number Seventeen—Testimony for the Church	181
Chapter 29—The Sufferings of Christ	182
Chapter 30—Warnings to the Church	195
Chapter 31—Contemplating Marriage	204
Chapter 32—Danger of Riches	208
Chapter 33—Christian Zeal	211
Chapter 34—Responsibilities of the Young	214
Chapter 35—Servants of Mammon	216
Chapter 36—Sentimentalism and Matchmaking	224
Chapter 37—Severity in Family Government	229
Chapter 38—A Birthday Letter	236
Chapter 39—Deceitfulness of Riches	242
Chapter 40—Self-Deceived Youth	258
Chapter 41—True Conversion	261
Chapter 42—Duties of the Husband and the Wife	266
Danger of Confiding Family Troubles	268
Chapter 43—Letter to an Orphan Boy	275
Chapter 44—The Unruly Member	281
Chapter 45—Comfort in Affliction	284
Chapter 46—A Self-Caring, Dictatorial Spirit	286
Chapter 47—A Forgetful Hearer	288
Chapter 48—Remedy for Sentimentalism	290
Chapter 49—Duty to Orphans	294
Chapter 50—Appeal to Ministers	300
Chapter 51—Moral Pollution	310
Number Eighteen—Testimony for the Church	317
Chapter 52—Christian Temperance	318
Chapter 53—Extremes in Health Reform	336
Chapter 54—Sensuality in the Young	347
Chapter 55—True Love at Home	364
Conducting Social Meetings	370
Chapter 56—Importance of Self-Government	372
Chapter 57—Industry and Economy	381
Chapter 58—Stirring Up Opposition	386
Chapter 59—An Appeal to the Church	389
Chapter 60—A Cross in Accepting the Truth	429
Number Nineteen—Testimony for the Church	437
Chapter 61—Address to Ministers	438

Chapter 62—Exercise and Air	458
Chapter 63—Selfishness Rebuked	472
Chapter 64—Fanaticism and Ignorance	484
Chapter 65—An Indulged Daughter	488
Chapter 66—To a Minister’s Wife	495
Chapter 67—Unfaithfulness in Stewardship	499
Chapter 68—Mistaken Sensitiveness	501
Chapter 69—Convocations	503
Number Twenty—Testimony for the Church	507
Chapter 70—Social Meetings	508
Chapter 71—How Shall We keep the Sabbath?	513
Chapter 72—Christian Recreation	516
Chapter 73—An Impressive Dream	524
Chapter 74—Our Camp Meetings	527
Chapter 75—A Solemn Dream	533
Chapter 76—Manners and Dress of Ministers	538
Chapter 77—Love of Gain	547
Chapter 78—The Cause in Vermont	557
Chapter 79—Transferring Earthly Treasure	595
Chapter 80—No Probation After Christ Comes	603
Chapter 81—Accountability for Light Received	610
Appendix	624

The Times of Volume Two

While volume 1 of the *Testimonies* presents counsel having to do largely with the inception and development of the teachings, experiences, and enterprises of the newly established remnant church, volume 2 is devoted almost entirely to the personal piety of its members. During the thirteen years paralleled by the fourteen testimony pamphlets now forming volume 1, the publishing work was solidified, the church was organized, its system of finance was established, and it had launched into a great health program. When the closing article was written, literature was pouring in a steady stream from its presses at the Review and Herald publishing plant at Battle Creek, Michigan, and, near by, the newly established sanitarium was in full operation. The dark hours of the Civil War years were in the past, and for the church it was a day of opportunity. The task before it was to hold the ground gained and to enlarge its borders. Vital to the continued success of the church was the integrity of its individual members.

Early in 1868, as explained in an article now found near the close of volume 1, Ellen G. White began to publish, for the benefit of the church as a whole, certain personal testimonies which up to that time had not been distributed generally. Of these personal testimonies she stated: “They all contain more or less reproof and instruction which apply to hundreds or thousands of others in similar condition. These should have the light which God has seen fit to give which meets their cases.”—Vol. 1, p. 631.

Such instruction addressed personally to individual church members through the three-year period of February, 1868, to May, 1871, comprises almost the entire content of *Testimonies* Nos. 15-20, now embodied in this volume 2. The instruction is pointed and practical, dealing with almost every phase of personal experience and religious interests, from gossip, the indulgence of appetite, and the marriage relationship to misdirected zeal, avariciousness, and fanaticism.

At the beginning of the period of time covered by volume 2 Elder and Mrs. White were in partial retirement in Greenville, Michigan, due to the condition of Elder White's health. They soon resumed their activity in traveling and holding meetings with the believers in states adjacent to Michigan. In November, 1868, they returned to Battle Creek to make their home there.

Two months earlier, in September of 1868, a camp meeting was held in Wright, Michigan. This gathering, the first of its kind, proved such a great blessing to those who attended that the following years witnessed the establishment of camp meetings as a regular part of the program for the state conferences. Elder and Mrs. White's presence was called for, and so it came that the summer months in succeeding years were largely spent by them in these annual gatherings. In the latter part of volume 2 may be found counsel regarding such "convocations."

During the three-year period covered by volume 2 there was encouraging advance in the cause of present truth. The Health Institute at Battle Creek, having passed through a discouraging depression, now emerged into a period of prosperity. In the latter part of 1868 Elders J. N. Loughborough and D. T. Bourdeau lighted the torch of Seventh-day Adventism on the Pacific Coast. The same year a company of fifty Sabbathkeeping Adventists in Europe entered into correspondence with the General Conference brethren in Battle Creek, and the next year sent a representative across the ocean to plead for missionaries to be sent to them.

But, with all these gains and advance moves, the adversary continued to work earnestly to lower the spirituality of church members, to cause them to love the world and its attractions, to leaven the church with the spirit of criticism, to dry up the springs of benevolence, and especially to bring the youth into his ranks. Against these dangerous trends Mrs. White, as God's messenger, was faithfully and earnestly delivering her messages by voice and pen, calling the members of the church to God's standard of integrity and righteousness. [7]

On some occasions Mrs. White was given revelations pertaining to the experience of a number of individuals in one church. Having delivered these individual testimonies in meeting, she afterward

wrote out the instruction and sent it to the church concerned. A number of such communications are found in volume 2.

The thoughtful reader of this 711-page volume must be impressed not only with the great diversity of subjects covered, but also with the vast amount of writing devoted to such personal testimonies written during this brief time. Yet it should be noted that what was published represented only a portion of what Mrs. White wrote during this period.

A few weeks before the appearance of No. 15 elder white had penned a note for the *Review and Herald*, asking that those to whom oral testimony had been given by Mrs. White should patiently wait until they might receive written copies. Of Mrs. White's diligence and persistence in this work, he said:

“In this branch of her labor she has about two months' work on hand. On her eastern tour she improved all her spare time in writing such testimonies. She even wrote many of them in meeting while others were preaching and speaking. Since her return she has injured her health and strength in confining herself too closely to this work. She usually writes from twenty to forty pages each day.”—*The Review and Herald, March 3, 1868.*

We may well imagine Mrs. White's relief on the issuance of *Testimony* No. 15 and her anticipation of a much-needed rest, but ten days later she was again plunged into the task of delivering the many messages entrusted to her. On Friday evening, June 12, she was at [8] battle creek speaking “To the young generally,” and “had addressed several personally,” until nearly ten o'clock, when, as reported by Elder White:

“While speaking from the platform in front of the pulpit, in the most solemn and impressive manner, the power of God came upon her, and in an instant she fell upon the carpet in vision. Many witnessed this manifestation for the first time, with astonishment, and with perfect satisfaction that it was the work of God. The vision lasted twenty minutes.”—*The Review and Herald, June 16, 1868.*

By actual count 120 pages of *Testimonies* volume 2 are definitely stated to have been written setting forth counsel given in this vision of June 12, 1868, for the church or for individuals. Many more pages were written setting forth views given that same year at Pilot Grove, Iowa, October 2, and at Adams Center, New York, October 25.

These many visions led Mrs White to write almost incessantly. In giving a report of their traveling by boat up the Mississippi river in 1870, Elder White comments:

“Mrs. White is writing. Poor woman! This almost eternal writing for this one and that one, when she should rest and enjoy the beautiful scenery and the pleasant society, seems too bad, but God blesses and sustains, and we must be reconciled.”—*The Review and Herald, July 5, 1870.*

What a blessing these many testimonies addressed at first personally to individuals have been to the church. What church member, as he has read these earnest counsels and warnings, has not discovered that the problems, the temptations, and the privileges of Seventh-day Adventists of earlier years are his problems, temptations, and privileges today. We treasure these messages especially because Ellen G. White herself states in her introduction which opens volume 2: “There is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me.”

The Trustees of the

Ellen G. White Publications.

**Number Fifteen—Testimony for the
Church**

[9]

Introduction

My brethren and sisters will hardly expect this number of my Testimonies so soon. But I had many personal testimonies on hand, some of which are given in the following pages. And I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God and keep His commandments, than by giving these testimonies. Perhaps there is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me.

It seemed important that No. 14 should reach you several days before the General Conference. Therefore that number was hastened through the press before I could find time to prepare important matter designed for it. In fact, there was not room for this matter in No. 14. Therefore, having on hand matter sufficient for No. 15, I present it to you with the prayer that the blessing of God will attend it for the good of His dear people.

Chapter 1—Sketch of Experience

[10]

From February 7, 1868, to May 20, 1868

After we had reached our home, and ceased to feel the inspiring influence of journeying and laboring, we felt most sensibly the wearing labors of our eastern tour. Many were urging me by letters to write what I had related to them of what the Lord had shown me concerning them. And there were many others to whom I had not spoken whose cases were as important and urgent. But in my weary condition the task of so much writing seemed more than I could endure. A feeling of discouragement came over me, and I sank into a feeble state and remained so several days, frequently fainting. In this state of body and mind I called in question my duty to write so much, to so many persons, some of them very unworthy. It seemed to me that there was certainly a mistake in this matter somewhere.

On the evening of February 5 Brother Andrews spoke to the people in our house of worship. But most of that evening I was in a fainting, breathless condition, supported by my husband. When Brother Andrews returned from the meeting, they had a special season of prayer for me, and I found some relief. That night I slept well, and in the morning, though feeble, felt wonderfully relieved and encouraged. I had dreamed that a person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me cut it into garments for persons of all sizes and all descriptions of character and circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out and hang them up all ready to be made when called for. I had the impression that many for whom I was required to cut garments were unworthy. I inquired if that was the last piece of cloth I should have to cut, and was told that it was not; that as soon as I had finished this one, there were others for me to take hold of. I felt discouraged at the amount of work before me, and stated that I had been engaged in cutting garments for others for more than twenty years, and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that my work had accomplished much good. I spoke to the

[11]

person who brought the cloth to me, of one woman in particular, for whom he had told me to cut a garment. I stated that she would not prize the garment, and that it would be a loss of time and material to present it to her. She was very poor, of inferior intellect, and untidy in her habits, and would soon soil it.

The person replied: "Cut out the garments. That is your duty. The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that He would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that. It will be found that many such poor souls will go into the kingdom, while others, who are favored with all the blessings of life, having good intellects and pleasant surroundings, giving them all the advantages of improvement, will be left out. It will be seen that these poor souls have lived up to the feeble light which they had, and have improved by the limited means within their reach, and lived much more acceptably than some others who have enjoyed full light and ample means for improvement."

I then held up my hands, calloused as they were with long use of the shears, and stated that I could but shrink at the thought of pursuing this kind of labor. The person again repeated:

"Cut out the garments. Your release has not yet come."

[12] With feelings of great weariness I arose to engage in the work. Before me lay new, polished shears, which I commenced using. At once my feelings of weariness and discouragement left me; the shears seemed to cut with hardly an effort on my part, and I cut out garment after garment with comparative ease.

With the encouragement which this dream gave me, I at once decided to accompany my husband and Brother Andrews to Gratiot, Saginaw, and Tuscola Counties, and trust in the Lord to give me strength to labor. So, on the 7th of February, we left home, and rode fifty-five miles to our appointment at Alma. Here I labored as usual, with a comfortable degree of freedom and strength. The friends in Gratiot County seemed interested to hear, but many of them are far behind on the health reform and in the work of preparation generally. There seemed to be among this people a want of the order and efficiency necessary to prosperity in the work and spirit of the message. Brother Andrews, however, visited them three weeks later and enjoyed a good season with them. I will not pass over a matter of encouragement to me, that a very pointed testimony which

I had written to one family was received with profit to the persons addressed. We still feel a deep interest in that family and ardently desire that they may enjoy prosperity in the Lord, and although we feel some discouragement as to the cause in Gratiot County we shall be anxious to help the brethren when they feel anxious to be helped.

At the Alma meeting there were brethren present from St. Charles and Tittabawassee, Saginaw County, who urged us to visit them. We had not designed to enter this county at present, but to visit Tuscola County if the way opened. Not hearing from Tuscola, we decided to visit Tittabawassee, and meantime write to Tuscola County and inquire if we were wanted there. At Tittabawassee we were happily disappointed to find a large house of worship, recently built by our people, well filled with Sabbathkeepers. The brethren seemed ready for our testimony, and we enjoyed freedom. A great and good work had been done in this place through the faithful labors of Brother A. Much bitter opposition and persecution had followed, but this seemed to melt away with those who came to hear, and our labors seemed to make a good impression upon all. I attended eleven meetings in this place in one week, spoke several times from one to two hours, and took part in the other meetings. At one meeting an effort was made to induce certain ones who observe the Sabbath to move forward and take up the cross. The duty before most of these was baptism. In my last vision I saw places where the truth would be preached and bring out churches which we should visit. This was one of those places. I felt a peculiar interest for this people. The cases of certain ones in the congregation opened before me, and a spirit of labor for them came upon me which I could not throw off. For about three hours I labored for them, most of the time appealing to them with feelings of the deepest solicitude. All took the cross on that occasion and came forward for prayers, and nearly all spoke. The next day fifteen were baptized. [13]

No one can visit this people without being impressed with the value of Brother A's faithful labors in this cause. His work is to enter places where the truth has not been proclaimed, and I hope our people will cease their efforts to draw him from his specific work. In the spirit of humility he can go forth, leaning upon the arm of the Lord, and rescue many souls from the powers of darkness. May the blessing of God still be with him.

[14] As our series of meetings in this place was near its close, Brother Spooner of Tuscola came for us to visit that county. We sent appointments by him as he returned on Monday, and we followed on Thursday after the baptism. At Vassar we held our meetings Sabbath and first day at the union schoolhouse. This was a free place in which to speak, and we saw good fruit of our labors. First-day afternoon about thirty backsliders, and children who had made no profession, came forward. This was a very interesting and profitable meeting. Some were drawing back from the cause, for whom we especially felt to labor. But the time was short, and it seemed to me that we should leave the work unfinished. But our appointments were out for St. Charles and Alma, and to meet them we must close our labors in Vassar on Monday.

That night what I had seen in vision concerning certain persons in Tuscola County was revived in a dream, and I was still more impressed that my work for that people was not done. Yet I saw no other way only to go on to our appointments. Tuesday we journeyed thirty-two miles to St. Charles and stopped for the night with Brother Griggs. Here I wrote fifteen pages of testimony, and attended meeting in the evening. Wednesday morning we decided to return to Tuscola if Brother Andrews would fill the appointment at Alma. To this he agreed. That morning I wrote fifteen pages more, attended a meeting and spoke one hour, and we rode thirty-three miles with Brother and Sister Griggs to Brother Spooner's in Tuscola. Thursday morning we went to Watrousville, a distance of sixteen miles. I wrote sixteen pages, and attended an evening meeting, in which I gave a very pointed testimony to one present. The next morning I wrote twelve pages before breakfast, and returned to Tuscola, and wrote eight pages more.

Sabbath my husband spoke in the forenoon, and I followed for two hours before taking food. The meeting was then closed for a few moments, and I took a little food, and afterward spoke in a social meeting for one hour, bearing pointed testimonies for several present. These testimonies were generally received with feelings of humility and gratitude. I cannot, however, say that all were so received.

The next morning, as we were about to leave for the house of worship to engage in the arduous labors of the day, a sister for whom

I had a testimony that she lacked discretion and caution, and did not fully control her words and actions, came in with her husband and manifested feelings of great unreconciliation and agitation. She commenced to talk and to weep. She murmured a little, and confessed a little, and justified self considerably. She had a wrong idea of many things I had stated to her. Her pride was touched as I brought out her faults in so public a manner. Here was evidently the main difficulty. But why should she feel thus? The brethren and sisters knew these things were so, therefore I was not informing them of anything new. But I doubt not that it was new to the sister herself. She did not know herself, and could not properly judge of her own words and acts. This is in a degree true of nearly all, hence the necessity of faithful reproofs in the church and the cultivation by all its members of love for the plain testimony. [15]

Her husband seemed to feel unreconciled to my bringing out her faults before the church and stated that if Sister White had followed the directions of our Lord in [Matthew 18:15-17](#) he should not have felt hurt: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

My husband then stated that he should understand that these words of our Lord had reference to cases of personal trespass, and could not be applied in the case of this sister. She had not trespassed against Sister White. But that which had been reproved publicly was public wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church and the cause. Here, said my husband, is a text applicable to the case: [1 Timothy 5:20](#) : “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”

The brother acknowledged his error like a Christian and seemed reconciled to the matter. It was evident that since the meeting of Sabbath afternoon they had got many things about the matter wonderfully magnified and wrong. It was therefore proposed that the written testimony be read. When this was done, the sister who was reproved by it, inquired: “Is that what you stated yesterday?” I [16]

replied that it was. She seemed surprised and quite reconciled to the written testimony. This I gave her, without reserving a copy. Here I did wrong. But I had such tender regard for her and her husband, and such ardent desires and hopes for their prosperity, that, in this case, I broke over an established custom.

Already meeting time was passing, and we hastened one mile and a half to the waiting congregation. The reader may judge whether the scene of that morning was well adapted to aid us in the collection of thought and nerve necessary to stand before the people. But who thinks of this? Some may, and show a little mercy, while the impulsive and careless will come with their burdens and trials, generally just before we are to speak, or when perfectly exhausted by speaking. My husband, however, summoned all his energies, and by request spoke with freedom on the law and the gospel. I had received an invitation to speak in the afternoon in the new house of worship recently built and dedicated by the Methodists. This commodious building was crowded, and many were obliged to stand. I spoke with freedom for about an hour and a half upon the first of the two great commandments repeated by our Lord, and was surprised to learn that it was the same from which the Methodist minister had spoken in the forenoon. He and his people were present to hear what I had to say.

[17] In the evening we had a precious interview at Brother Spooner's with Brethren Miller, Hatch, and Haskell, and Sisters Sturges, Bliss, Harrison, and Malin. We now felt that our work for the present was done in Tuscola County. We became very much interested in this dear people, yet feared that the sister referred to, for whom I had a testimony, would let Satan take advantage of her and cause them trouble. I felt an earnest desire that she might view the matter in its true light. The course she had been pursuing was destroying her influence in the church and outside of it. But now, if she would receive the needed reproof, and humbly seek to improve by it, the church would take her anew into their hearts, and the people would think more of her Christianity. And what is better still, she could enjoy the approving smiles of her dear Redeemer. Would she fully receive the testimony? was my anxious inquiry. I feared that she would not and that the hearts of the brethren in that county would be saddened on her account.

After returning home, I sent to her for a copy of the testimony, and on the 15th of April received the following, dated at Denmark, April 11, 1868: "Sister White: Yours of the 23d ult. Is at hand. Am sorry I cannot comply with your request."

I shall still cherish the tenderest feelings of regard for this family, and shall be happy to help them when I can. It is true that such treatment from those for whom I give my life casts a shade of sadness over me; but my course has been so plainly marked out for me that I cannot let such things keep me from the path of duty. As I returned from the post office with the above note, feeling rather depressed in spirit, I took the Bible, and opened it with the prayer that I might find comfort and support therein, and my eye rested directly upon the following words of the prophet: "Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defensed city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." [Jeremiah 1:17-19](#).

[18]

We returned home from this tour just before a great fall of rain which carried off the snow. This storm prevented the next Sabbath meeting, and I immediately commenced to prepare matter for *Testimony* No. 14. We also had the privilege of caring for our dear Brother King, whom we brought to our home with a terrible injury upon the head and face. We took him to our house to die, for we could not think it possible for one with the skull so terribly broken in to recover. But with the blessing of God upon a very gentle use of water, a very spare diet till the danger of fever was past, and well-ventilated rooms day and night, in three weeks he was able to return to his home and attend to his farming interests. He did not take one grain of medicine from first to last. Although he was considerably reduced by loss of blood from his wounds and by spare diet, yet when he could take a more liberal amount of food he came up rapidly.

About this time we commenced labor for our brethren and friends near Greenville. As is the case in many places, our brethren needed

help. There were some who kept the Sabbath, yet did not belong to the church, and also some who had given up the Sabbath, who needed help. We felt disposed to help these poor souls, but the past course and present position of leading members of the church in relation to these persons made it almost impossible for us to approach them. In laboring with the erring, some of our brethren had been too rigid, too cutting in remarks. And when some were disposed to reject their counsel and separate from them, they would say: "Well, if they want to go off, let them go." While such a lack of the compassion, and long-suffering, and tenderness of Jesus was manifested by His professed followers, these poor, erring, inexperienced souls, buffeted by Satan, were certain to make shipwreck of faith. However great may be the wrongs and sins of the erring, our brethren must learn to manifest not only the tenderness of the Great Shepherd, but also His undying care and love for the poor, straying sheep. Our ministers toil and lecture week after week, and rejoice that a few souls embrace the truth; and yet brethren of a prompt, decided turn of mind may, in five minutes, destroy their work by indulging the feelings which prompt words like these: "Well, if they want to leave us, let them go."

We found that we could do nothing for the scattered sheep near us until we had first corrected the wrongs in many of the members of the church. They had let these poor souls wander. They felt no burden for them. In fact, they seemed shut up to themselves, and were dying a spiritual death for want of spiritual exercise. They still loved the general cause, and were ready to help sustain it. They would take good care of the servants of God. But there was a decided want of care for widows, orphans, and the feeble of the flock. Besides some interest for the cause in general, there was but little apparent interest for any only their own families. With so narrow a religion they were dying a spiritual death.

There were some who kept the Sabbath, attended meeting, and paid systematic benevolence, yet were out of the church. And it is true that they were not fit to belong to any church. But while leading church members stood as some in that church did, giving them little or no encouragement, it was almost impossible for them to arise in the strength of God and do better. As we began to labor with the church, and teach them that they must have a spirit of labor for

the erring, much that I had seen relative to the cause in that place, opened before me, and I wrote out pointed testimonies not only for those who had erred greatly and were out of the church, but for those members in the church who had erred greatly in not going in search of the lost sheep. And I was never more disappointed in the manner in which these testimonies were received. When those who had been greatly in fault were reprov'd by most pointed testimonies, read to them publicly, they received them, and confessed with tears. But some of those in the church, who claimed to be the fast friends of the cause and the *Testimonies*, could hardly think it possible that they had been as wrong as the testimonies declared them to be. When told that they were self-caring, shut up to themselves and families; that they had failed to care for others, had been exclusive, and had left precious souls to perish; that they were in danger of being overbearing and self-righteous, they were brought into a state of great agitation and trial.

[20]

But this experience was just what they needed to teach them forbearance toward others in a similar state of trial. There are many who feel sure that they will have no trial respecting the *Testimonies*, and continue to feel so till they are tested. They think it strange that any can doubt. They are severe with those who manifest doubts, and cut and slash, to show their zeal for the *Testimonies*, manifesting more self-righteousness than humility. But when the Lord reprov'es them for their wrongs, they find themselves as weak as water. Then they can hardly endure the trial. These things should teach them humility, self-abasement, tenderness, and undying love for the erring.

It seems to me that the Lord is giving the erring, the weak and trembling, and even those who have apostatized from the truth, a special call to come fully into the fold. But there are but few in our churches who feel that this is the case. And there are still fewer who stand where they can help such. There are more who stand directly in the way of these poor souls. Very many have an exacting spirit. They require them to come to just such and such terms before they will reach to them the helping hand. Thus they hold them off at arms' length. They have not learned that they have a special duty to go and search for these lost sheep. They must not wait till these come to them. Read the touching parable of the lost sheep. [Luke 15:1-7](#) : "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners

[21]

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

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

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

[22] When the lost sheep was found, it was borne home with joy, and much rejoicing followed. This illustrates the blessed, joyful work of laboring for the erring. The church that engages successfully in this work is a happy church. That man or that woman whose soul is drawn out in compassion and love for the erring, and who labors to bring them to the fold of the Great Shepherd, is engaged in a blessed work. And, oh, what a soul-enrapturing thought, that when one sinner is thus reclaimed, there is more joy in heaven than over ninety and nine just persons! Selfish, exclusive, exacting souls who seem to fear to help those in error, as though they would become polluted by so doing, do not taste of the sweets of this missionary work; they do not feel that blessedness which fills all heaven with rejoicing upon the rescue of one who has gone astray. They are shut up to their narrow views and feelings, and are becoming as dry and unfruitful as the mountains of Gilboa, upon which there was neither

dew nor rain. Let a strong man be shut away from labor, and he becomes feeble. That church or those persons who shut themselves away from bearing burdens for others, who shut themselves up to themselves, will soon suffer spiritual feebleness. It is labor that keeps the strong man strong. And spiritual labor, toil and burden bearing, is what will give strength to the church of Christ.

Sabbath and first day, April 18, 19, we enjoyed a good season with our people at Greenville. Brethren A and B were with us. My husband baptized eight. The 25th and 26th we were with the church in Wright. This dear people are ever ready to welcome us. Here my husband baptized eight.

May 2 we met a large congregation at the house of worship at Monterey. My husband spoke with clearness and force upon the parable of the lost sheep. The word was greatly blessed to the people. Some who had strayed were out of the church, and there was no spirit of labor to help them. In fact, the stiff, stern, unfeeling position of some in the church was calculated to prevent their return, should they be disposed thus to do. The subject touched the hearts of all, and all manifested a desire to get right. On first day we spoke three times in Allegan to good congregations. Our appointment was out to meet with the church at Battle Creek the 9th, but we felt that our work in Monterey was but just commenced, and we therefore decided to return to Monterey and labor with that church another week. The good work moved on, exceeding our expectations. The house was filled, and we never before witnessed such a work in Monterey in so short a time. First day, fifty came forward for prayers. Brethren felt deeply for the lost sheep, and confessed their coldness and indifference, and took a good stand. Brethren G. T. Lay and S. Rummery gave good testimonies, and were joyfully received by their brethren. Fourteen were baptized, one of them a man near the middle age of life, who had felt opposed to the truth. The work moved on with solemnity, confessions, and much weeping, carrying all before it. Thus closed the arduous labors of the Conference year. And still we felt that the good work in Monterey was by no means finished. We have made arrangements to return and spend several weeks in Allegan County.

[23]

The Conference just past has been a season of deepest interest. The labors of my husband have been very great during its numerous

sessions, and he must have rest. Our labors for the past year are regarded favorably by our people, and there was manifested to us at the Conference, sympathy, tender care, and benevolence. With them we have enjoyed great freedom, and we part, enjoying mutual confidence and love.

Chapter 2—Doing for Christ

[24]

From what has been shown me, Sabbathkeepers are growing more selfish as they increase in riches. Their love for Christ and His people is decreasing. They do not see the wants of the needy, nor feel their sufferings and sorrows. They do not realize that in neglecting the poor and the suffering they neglect Christ, and that in relieving the wants and sufferings of the poor as far as possible, they minister to Jesus.

Christ says to His redeemed people: “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

“Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

To become a toiler, to continue patiently in well-doing which calls for self-denying labor, is a glorious work, which Heaven smiles upon. Faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous and thought-to-be holiest worship. It is working together with Christ that is true worship. Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on; but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree.

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: “To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender

[25]

regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.

"Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." [Matthew 25:41-46](#).

[26] Jesus here identifies Himself with His suffering people. It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was naked. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison. When you were enjoying the food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing in the hovel or street not far from you. When you closed your doors against Me, while your well-furnished rooms were unoccupied, I had not where to lay My head. Your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered, which you might have given to the needy. I was destitute of comfortable apparel. When you were enjoying health, I was sick. Misfortune cast Me into prison and bound Me with fetters, bowing down My spirit, depriving Me of freedom and hope, while you roamed free. What a oneness

Jesus here expresses as existing between Himself and His suffering disciples! He makes their case His own. He identifies Himself as being in person the very sufferer. Mark, selfish Christian: every neglect of the needy poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect of Jesus in their person.

I am acquainted with persons who make a high profession, whose hearts are so encased in self-love and selfishness that they cannot appreciate what I am writing. They have all their lives thought and lived only for self. To make a sacrifice to do others good, to disadvantage themselves to advantage others, is out of the question with them. They have not the least idea that God requires this of them. Self is their idol. Precious weeks, months, and years pass into eternity, but they have no record in heaven of kindly acts, of sacrificing for others' good, of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or taking in the stranger. This entertaining strangers at a venture is not agreeable. If they knew that all who sought to share their bounty were worthy, then they might be induced to do something in this direction. But there is virtue in venturing something. Perchance we may entertain angels.

There are orphans that should be cared for; but some will not venture to undertake this, for it would bring them more work than they care to do, leaving them but little time to please themselves. But when the King shall make investigation, these do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will learn that heaven is for those who have been workers, those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provisions have been made for those who have ever taken such special care in loving and looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment which the King threatens those on His left hand, in this case, is not because of their great crimes. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. You did not those things which Heaven assigned you to do. You pleased yourself, and can take your portion with self-pleasers.

[27]

To my sisters I would say: Be daughters of benevolence. The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. You may have thought that if you could find a child without fault, you would take it, and care for it; but to perplex your mind with an erring child, to unlearn it many things and teach it anew, to teach it self-control, is a work which you refuse to undertake. To teach the ignorant, to pity

and to reform those who have ever been learning evil, is no slight task; but Heaven has placed just such ones in your way. They are blessings in disguise.

[28] Years ago I was shown that God's people would be tested upon this point of making homes for the homeless; that there would be many without homes in consequence of their believing the truth. Opposition and persecution would deprive believers of their homes, and it was the duty of those who had homes to open a wide door to those who had not. I have been shown more recently that God would specially test His professed people in reference to this matter. Christ for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. He made a sacrifice that He might provide a home for pilgrims and strangers in the world seeking for a better country, even an heavenly. Shall those who are subjects of His grace, who are expecting to be heirs of immortality, refuse, or even feel reluctant, to share their homes with the homeless and needy? Shall we, who are disciples of Jesus, refuse strangers an entrance to our doors because they can claim no acquaintance with the inmates?

Has the injunction of the apostle no force in this age: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"? I am daily pained with exhibitions of selfishness among our people. There is an alarming absence of love and care for those who are entitled to it. Our heavenly Father lays blessings disguised in our pathway, but some will not touch these for fear they will detract from their enjoyment. Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good—waiting to see if we will bless others, that they in their turn may bless us. The Lord Himself has made us to differ,—some poor, some rich, some afflicted,—that all may have an opportunity to develop character. The poor are purposely permitted to be thus of God, that we may be tested and proved, and develop what is in our hearts.

I have heard many excuse themselves from inviting to their homes and hearts the saints of God. "Why, I have nothing prepared, I have nothing cooked; they must go to some other place." And at that place there may be some other excuse invented for not receiving those who need hospitality, and the feelings of the visitors are deeply grieved, and they leave with unpleasant impressions in regard to the hospitality of these professed brethren and sisters. If you have no

bread, sister, imitate the case brought to view in the Bible. Go to your neighbor and say: "Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." We have not an example of this lack of bread ever being made an excuse to refuse entrance to an applicant. When Elijah came to the widow of Sarepta, she shared her morsel with the prophet of God, and he wrought a miracle, and caused that in that act of making a home for his servant, and sharing her morsel with him, she herself was sustained, and her life and that of her son preserved. Thus will it prove in the case of many, if they do this cheerfully, for the glory of God. [29]

Some plead their poor health—they would love to do if they had strength. Such have so long shut themselves up to themselves, and thought so much of their own poor feelings, and talked so much of their sufferings, trials, and afflictions, that it is their present truth. They can think of no one but self, however much others may be in need of sympathy and assistance. You who are suffering with poor health, there is a remedy for you. If thou clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, and deal thy bread to the hungry, "then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease. Those who engage in the work are invited to call upon God, and He has pledged Himself to answer them. Their soul shall be satisfied in drought, and they shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

Wake up, brethren and sisters. Do not be afraid of good works. "Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Do not wait to be told your duty. Open your eyes and see who are around you; make yourselves acquainted with the helpless, afflicted, and needy. Hide not yourselves from them, and seek not to shut out their needs. Who gives the proofs mentioned in James, of possessing pure religion, untainted with selfishness or corruption? Who are anxious to do all in their power to aid in the great plan of salvation?

I am acquainted with a widow who has two small children to support, wholly by the use of her needle. She looks pale and careworn. All through the hard winter she has struggled to sustain herself and her children. She has received a little help, but who would feel any [30]

lack if a still greater interest were manifested in this case? Here are her two boys, aged about nine and eleven years, who need homes. Who are willing to give them homes for Christ's sake? The mother should be released from this care and close confinement to her needle. These boys are in a village, their only guardian their hard-working mother. They need to be taught how to work as their age will admit. They need to be patiently, kindly, lovingly instructed. Some may say: "Oh, yes, I would take them and teach them how to work." But they should not lose sight of other things which these children need besides being taught to work. They need to be instructed how they shall develop good Christian character. They want love and affection, they need to be fitted to become useful here, and finally to be prepared for heaven. Disrobe yourselves of selfishness, and see if there are not many whom you can help and bless with your homes, your sympathy, your love, and in pointing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Do you wish to make any sacrifice to save souls? Jesus, the dear Saviour, is preparing a home for you; and why will not you in your turn prepare a home for those who need it, and in thus doing imitate the example of your Master? If you are not willing to do this, when you shall feel that you need a habitation in the heavens, none will be awarded you. For Christ declares: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." You that have been selfish, studying your own ease and advantage all your life, your hours of probation are fast closing. What are you doing to redeem your life of selfishness and uselessness? Wake up! wake up!

[31] As you regard your eternal interest, arouse yourselves, and begin to sow good seed. That which you sow, you shall also reap. The harvest is coming—the great reaping time, when we shall reap what we have sown. There will be no failure in the crop; the harvest is sure. Now is the sowing time. Now make efforts to be rich in good works, "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye "may lay hold on eternal life." I implore you, my brethren in every place, rid yourselves of your icy coldness. Encourage in yourselves a love of hospitality, a love to help those who need help.

You may say you have been taken in and have bestowed your means upon those unworthy of your charity, and therefore have

become discouraged in trying to help the needy. I present Jesus before you. He came to save fallen man, to bring salvation to His own nation; but they would not accept Him. They treated His mercy with insult and contempt, and at length they put to death Him who came for the purpose of giving them life. Did our Lord turn from the fallen race because of this? Though your efforts for good have been unsuccessful ninety-nine times, and you received only insult, reproach, and hate, yet if the one-hundredth time proves a success, and one soul is saved, oh, what a victory is achieved! One soul wrenched from Satan's grasp, one soul benefited, one soul encouraged. This will a thousand times repay you for all your efforts. To you will Jesus say: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Should we not gladly do all we can to imitate the life of our divine Lord? Many shrink at the idea of making any sacrifice for others' good. They are not willing to suffer for the sake of helping others. They flatter themselves that it is not required of them to disadvantage themselves for the benefit of others. To such we say: Jesus is our example.

When the request was made for the two sons of Zebedee to sit the one on His right hand and the other on His left in His kingdom, Jesus answered: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father." How many can answer: We can drink of the cup; we can be baptized with the baptism; and make the answer understandingly? How many imitate the great Exemplar? All who have professed to be followers of Christ have, in taking this step, pledged themselves to walk even as He walked. Yet the course of many who make high professions of the truth shows that they make but little reference to the Pattern in conforming their lives thereto. They shape their course to meet their own imperfect standard. They do not imitate the self-denial of Christ or His life of sacrifice for others' good.

The poor, the homeless, and the widows are among us. I heard a wealthy farmer describe the situation of a poor widow among them.

[32]

He lamented her straitened circumstances, and then said: "I don't know how she is going to get along this cold winter. She has close times now." Such have forgotten the pattern, and by their acts say: "Nay, Lord, we cannot drink of the cup of self-denial, humiliation, and sacrifice which You drank of, nor be baptized with the suffering which You were baptized with. We cannot live to do others good. It is our business to take care of ourselves." Who should know how the widow should get along unless it be those who have well-filled granaries? The means for her to get along are at hand. And dare [33] those whom God has made His stewards, to whom He has entrusted means, withhold from the needy disciples of Christ? If so, they withhold from Jesus. Do you expect the Lord to rain down grain from heaven to supply the needy? Has He not rather placed it in your hands, to help and bless them through you? Has He not made you His instrument in this good work to prove you, and to give you the privilege of laying up a treasure in heaven?

Fatherless and motherless children are thrown into the arms of the church, and Christ says to His followers: Take these destitute children, bring them up for Me, and ye shall receive your wages. I have seen much selfishness exhibited in these things. Unless there is some special evidence that they *themselves* are to be benefited by adopting into their family those who need homes, some turn away and answer: No. They do not seem to know or care whether such are saved or lost. That, they think, is not their business. With Cain they say: "Am I my brother's keeper?" They are not willing to be put to inconvenience or to make any sacrifice for the orphans, and they indifferently thrust such ones into the arms of the world, who are sometimes more willing to receive them than are these professed Christians. In the day of God, inquiry will be made for those whom Heaven gave them the opportunity of saving. But they wished to be excused, and would not engage in the good work unless they could make it a matter of profit to them. I have been shown that those who refuse these opportunities for doing good will hear from Jesus: "As ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." Please read [Isaiah 58](#):

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an

acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

[34]

This is the special work now before us. All our praying and abstinence from food will avail nothing unless we resolutely lay hold of this work. Sacred obligations are resting upon us. Our duty is plainly stated. The Lord has spoken to us by His prophet. The thoughts of the Lord and His ways are not what blind, selfish mortals believe they are or wish them to be. The Lord looks on the heart. If selfishness dwells there, He knows it. We may seek to conceal our true character from our brethren and sisters, but God knows. Nothing can be hid from Him.

The fast which God can accept is described. It is to deal thy bread to the hungry and to bring the poor which are cast out to thy house. Wait not for them to come to you. The labor rests not on them to hunt you up and entreat of you a home for themselves. You are to search for them and bring them to your house. You are to draw out your soul after them. You are with one hand to reach up and by faith take hold of the mighty arm which brings salvation, while with the other hand of love you reach the oppressed and relieve them. It is impossible for you to fasten upon the arm of God with one hand while the other is employed in ministering to your own pleasure.

[35]

If you engage in this work of mercy and love, will the work prove too hard for you? Will you fail and be crushed under the burden, and

your family be deprived of your assistance and influence? Oh, no; God has carefully removed all doubts upon this question, by a pledge to you on condition of your obedience. This promise covers all that the most exacting, the most hesitating, could crave. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Only believe that He is faithful that hath promised. God can renew the physical strength. And more, He says He will do it. And the promise does not end here. "Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." God will build a fortification around thee. The promise does not stop even here. "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am." If ye put down oppression and remove the speaking of vanity, if ye draw out your soul to the hungry, "then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought [famine], and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

[36] Read [Isaiah 58](#), ye who claim to be children of the light. Especially do you read it again and again who have felt so reluctant to inconvenience yourselves by favoring the needy. You whose hearts and houses are too narrow to make a home for the homeless, read it; you who can see orphans and widows oppressed by the iron hand of poverty and bowed down by hardhearted worldlings, read it. Are you afraid that an influence will be introduced into your family that will cost you more labor, read it. Your fears may be groundless, and a blessing may come, known and realized by you every day. But if otherwise, if extra labor is called for, you can draw upon One who has promised: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." The reason why God's people are not more spiritually minded and have not more faith, I have been shown, is because they are narrowed up with selfishness. The prophet is addressing Sabbathkeepers, not sinners, not unbelievers, but those who make great pretensions to godliness. It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is not the numerous prayers, but the rightdoing, doing the right thing and at the right time. It is to be less self-caring and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

Read [Isaiah 1](#): “And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

The gold mentioned by Christ, the True Witness, which all must have, has been shown me to be faith and love combined, and love takes the precedence of faith. Satan is constantly at work to remove these precious gifts from the hearts of God’s people. All are engaged in playing the game of life. Satan is well aware that if he can remove love and faith, and supply their place with selfishness and unbelief, all the remaining precious traits will soon be skillfully removed by his deceitful hand, and the game will be lost. [37]

My dear brethren, will you allow Satan to accomplish his purpose? Will you submit to lose the game in which you desire to win everlasting life? If God has ever spoken by me, you will just as surely be overcome by Satan, instead of being overcomers, as the throne of God stands sure, unless you are entirely transformed. Love and faith must be won back. Will you engage in this conflict anew and win back the precious gifts of which you are nearly destitute? You will have to make efforts more earnest, more persevering and untiring, than you have ever yet made. It is not merely to pray or fast, but it is to be obedient, to divest yourselves of selfishness, and keep the fast which God has chosen, which He will accept. Many may feel grieved because I have spoken plainly; but this I shall continue to do, if God lays the burden upon me.

God requires that those who occupy responsible positions should be consecrated to the work; for if they move wrong, the people feel at liberty to follow in their footsteps. If the people are wrong, and the leaders lift not their voice against the wrong, they sanction the same, and the sin is charged upon them as well as the offenders.

Those who occupy responsible positions should be men of piety, who continually feel the burden of the work resting upon them.

* * * * *

Chapter 3—Selling the Birthright

Dear Brother D,

I have been designing to write to you for some time, but our labors have been so constant and wearing that I have had no time nor strength to do so. In my last vision your case was shown me. You were in a critical condition. You knew the truth, you understood your duty, and you had rejoiced in the light of the truth; but because it interfered with your worldly pursuits, you were about to sacrifice truth and duty to your own convenience. You were looking at your own present pecuniary advantage and losing sight of the eternal weight of glory. You were about to make an immense sacrifice for the flattering prospect of present gain. You were just upon the point of selling your birthright for a mess of pottage. Had you turned from the truth for earthly gain, it would not have been a sin of ignorance on your part, but a willful transgression. [38]

Esau lusted for a favorite dish, and sacrificed his birthright to gratify appetite. After his lustful appetite had been gratified he saw his folly, but found no space for repentance though he sought it carefully and with tears. There are very many who are like Esau. He represents a class who have a special, valuable blessing within their reach,—the immortal inheritance, life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe, happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory,—but who have so long indulged their appetites, passions, and inclinations, that their power to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things is weakened.

Esau had a special, strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had so long gratified self that he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempting, coveted dish. He thought upon it, making no special effort to restrain his appetite, until the power of appetite bore down every other consideration and controlled him, and he imagined that he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he thought upon it, the more his desire strengthened, until his birthright, which

[39] was sacred, lost its value and its sacredness. He thought, If I now sell it, I can easily buy it back. He bartered it away for a favorite dish, flattering himself that he could dispose of it at will and buy it back at pleasure. But when he sought to buy it back, even at a great sacrifice on his part, he was not able to do so. He then bitterly repented his rashness, his folly, his madness. He looked the matter over on every side. He sought for repentance carefully and with tears, but it was all in vain. He had despised the blessing, and the Lord removed it from him forever. You have thought that if you should sacrifice the truth now, and go on in a course of open transgression and disobedience, you would not break over all restraint and become reckless, and if you should be disappointed in your hopes and expectations of worldly gain you could again interest yourself in the truth and become a candidate for everlasting life. But you have deceived yourself in this matter. Had you sacrificed the truth for worldly gain, it would have been at the expense of life everlasting.

Under the parable of a great supper, our Saviour shows that many will choose the world above Himself, and will, as the result, lose heaven. The gracious invitation of our Saviour was slighted. He had been to the trouble and expense to make great preparation at an immense sacrifice. Then he sent his invitation; but “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.” The Lord then turns from the wealthy and world-loving, whose lands and oxen and wives were of so great value in their estimation as to outweigh the advantages they would gain by accepting the gracious invitation he had given them to eat of his supper. The master of the house is angry, and turns from those who have thus insulted his bounty offered them, and he invites a class who are not full, who are not in possession of lands and houses, but who are poor and hungry, who are maimed and halt and blind, and who will appreciate the bounties provided, and in return will render the master sincere gratitude, unfeigned love and devotion.

[40]

Still there is room. The command is then given: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Here is a class rejected of God because they despised the invitation of the Master. The Lord declared to Eli: "Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." Says Christ: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." God will not be trifled with. If those who have the light reject it, or neglect to follow it out, it will become darkness to them.

An immense sacrifice was made on the part of God's dear Son, that He might have power to rescue fallen man and exalt him to His own right hand, make him an heir of the world and a possessor of the eternal weight of glory. Language fails to express the value of the immortal inheritance. The glory, riches, and honor offered by the Son of God are of such infinite value that it is beyond the power of men or even angels to give any just idea of their worth, their excellence, their magnificence. If men, plunged in sin and degradation, refuse these heavenly benefits, refuse a life of obedience, trample upon the gracious invitations of mercy, and choose the paltry things of earth because they are seen, and it is convenient for their present enjoyment to pursue a course of sin, Jesus will carry out the figure in the parable; such shall not taste of His glory, but the invitation will be extended to another class.

Those who choose to make excuses and continue in sin and conformity to the world will be left to their idols. There will be a day when they will not beg to be excused, when not one will wish to be excused. When Christ shall come in His glory and the glory of His Father, with all the heavenly angels surrounding Him, escorting Him on His way with voices of triumph, while strains of the most enchanting music fall upon the ear, all will then be interested; there will not be one indifferent spectator. Speculations will not then engross the soul. The miser's piles of gold, which have feasted his eyes, are no more attractive. The palaces which the proud men of earth have erected, and which have been their idols, are turned from with loathing and disgust. No one pleads his lands, his oxen, his wife that he has just married, as a reason why he should be excused

[41]

from sharing the glory that bursts upon his astonished vision. All want a share, but know that it is not for them.

In earnest, agonizing prayer they call for God to pass them not by. The kings, the mighty men, the lofty, the proud, the mean man, alike bow together under a pressure of woe, desolation, misery inexpressible; heart-anguished prayers are wrung from their lips. Mercy! mercy! Save us from the wrath of an offended God! A voice answers them with terrible distinctness, sternness, and majesty: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

[42] Then kings and nobles, the mighty man, and the poor man, and the mean man, alike, cry there most bitterly. They who in the days of their prosperity despised Christ and the humble ones who followed in His footsteps, men who would not humble their dignity to bow to Christ, who hated His despised cross, are now prostrate in the mire of the earth. Their greatness has all at once left them, and they do not hesitate to bow to the earth at the feet of the saints. They then realize with terrible bitterness that they are eating the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices. In their supposed wisdom they turned away from the high, eternal reward, rejected the heavenly inducement, for earthly gain. The glitter and tinsel of earth fascinated them, and in their supposed wisdom they became fools. They exulted in their worldly prosperity as though their worldly advantages were so great that they could through them be recommended to God, and thus secure heaven.

Money was power among the foolish of earth, and money was their god; but their very prosperity has destroyed them. They became fools in the eyes of God and His heavenly angels, while men of worldly ambition thought them wise. Now their supposed wisdom is all foolishness, and their prosperity their destruction. Again ring forth shrieks of fearful, heart-rending anguish: "Rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" To the caves of the earth they flee as a covert, but these fail to be such then.

Dear brother, life or death is before you. Do you know why your steps have faltered? why you did not persevere with courage and firmness? You have a violated conscience. Your business career has not been straightforward. You have something to do here. Your father did not look upon business principles in the correct light. You regard them as do worldlings in general, but not as God regards them. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Have you done this? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." If this commandment is obeyed, it prepares the heart to obey the second, which is like unto it: "Love thy neighbor as thyself." All the Ten Commandments are embodied in the two specified. The first includes the first four commandments, which show the duty of man to his Creator. The second embraces the last six, which show the duty of man to his fellow man. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. They are two great arms sustaining all ten of the commandments, the first four and the last six. These must be strictly obeyed.

[43]

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Very many who profess to be Christ's disciples will apparently pass along smoothly in this world, and will be regarded as upright, godly men, when they have a plague spot at the core, which taints their whole character and corrupts their religious experience. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This forbids us to take advantage of our fellow men in order to advantage ourselves. We are forbidden to wrong our neighbor in anything. We should not view the matter from the worldling's standpoint. To deal with our fellow men in every instance just as we should wish them to deal with us is a rule which we should apply to ourselves practically. God's laws are to be obeyed to the letter. In all our intercourse and deal with our fellow men, whether believers or unbelievers, this rule is to be applied: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Here many who profess to be Christians will not bear the measurement of God; when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, they will be found wanting. Dear brother, "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." What

[44] a promise is this! But we are not to lose sight of the fact that it is based upon obedience to the command. God calls you to separate from the world. You are not to follow their practices, nor conform to them in your course of action in any respect. “But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

God calls for separation from the world. Will you obey? Will you come out from among them, and remain separate and distinct from them? “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” You cannot mingle with worldlings, and partake of their spirit, and follow their example, and be at the same time a child of God. The Creator of the universe addresses you as an affectionate Father. If you separate from the world in your affections, and remain free from its contamination, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust, God will be your Father, He will adopt you into His family, and you will be His heir. In place of the world, He will give you, for a life of obedience, the kingdom under the whole heavens. He will give you an eternal weight of glory and a life that is as enduring as eternity.

Your heavenly Father proposes to make you a member of the royal family, that through His exceeding great and precious promises you may be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The more you partake of the character of the pure, sinless angels, and of Christ your Redeemer, the more vividly will you bear the impress of the divine, and the more faint will be the resemblance to the world. The world and Christ are at variance, because the world will not be in union with Christ. The world will also be at variance with Christ’s followers. In the prayer of our Saviour to His Father, He says: “I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

[45] Your calling is a high, an elevated one, to glorify God in your body and spirit, which are His. You are not to measure yourself by others. The word of God has presented you an unerring pattern, a faultless example. You have dreaded the cross. It is an inconvenient instrument to lift, and because it is covered with reproach and shame, you have shunned it. You need to carry out the health reform in

your life; to deny yourself, and eat and drink to the glory of God. Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. You need to practice temperance in all things. Here is a cross which you have shunned. To confine yourself to a simple diet, which will preserve you in the best condition of health, is a task to you. Had you lived up to the light which Heaven has permitted to shine upon your pathway, much suffering might have been saved your family. Your own course of action has brought the sure result. While you continue in this course, God will not come into your family and especially bless you and work a miracle to save your family from suffering. A plain diet, free from spices and flesh meats and grease of all kinds, would prove a blessing to you and would save your wife a great amount of suffering, grief, and despondency.

You have not pursued a course which would assure to you the blessing of God. If you would have His blessing attend you, and His presence abide in your family, you must obey Him, doing His will irrespective of losses or gains or your own pleasure. You are not to consult your desires, nor the approbation of worldlings who know not God and seek not to glorify Him. If you walk contrary unto God, He will walk contrary unto you. If you have other gods before the Lord, your heart will be turned away from serving the only true and living God, who requires the whole heart, the undivided affections. All the heart, all the soul, all the mind, and all the strength, does God require. He will accept of nothing short of this. No separation is allowed here; no half-hearted work will be accepted.

[46]

In order to render to God perfect service, you must have clear conceptions of His requirements. You should use the most simple food, prepared in the most simple manner, that the fine nerves of the brain be not weakened, benumbed, or paralyzed, making it impossible for you to discern sacred things, and to value the atonement, the cleansing blood of Christ, as of priceless worth. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

If men, for no higher object than a wreath or perishable crown as a reward of their ambition, subjected themselves to temperance in all things, how much more should those be willing to practice self-denial who profess to be seeking, not only a crown of immortal glory, but a life which is to endure as long as the throne of Jehovah, and riches that are eternal, honors which are imperishable, an eternal weight of glory. Will not the inducements presented before those who are running in the Christian race lead them to practice self-denial and temperance in all things, that they may keep their animal propensities in subjection, keep under the body, and control the appetite and lustful passions? Then can they be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

[47] If the exceeding precious and glorious reward promised will not lead us to welcome greater privations and endure greater self-denial than are cheerfully borne by worldly men who are seeking merely a bauble of earth, a perishable laurel which brings honors from a few of the worldly, and hate from more, we are unworthy of everlasting life. In the earnestness and intensity of our zeal, perseverance, courage, energy, self-denial, and sacrifice we should as much excel those who are engaged in any other enterprise as the object we are seeking to attain is of higher value than theirs. The treasure we are seeking is imperishable, eternal, immortal, all overglorious; while that of which the worldling is in pursuit, endures but a day; it is fading, perishable, fleeting as the morning cloud.

The cross, the cross; lift it, Brother D, and in the act of raising it you will be astonished to find that it raises you, it supports you. In adversity, privation, and sorrow it will be a strength and a staff to you. You will find it all hung with mercy, compassion, sympathy, and inexpressible love. It will prove to you a pledge of immortality. May you be able to say with Paul: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The Spirit of the Lord has been striving with your wife for some time. If you would yield all to God, she would have strength to take her position to seek to live out the truth. If you choose to turn from the truth, you will not go down alone; you will not only lose your own soul, but will be the means of turning others out of the

way, and the blood of souls will be on your garments. Had you maintained your integrity, your mother, your brother E, and one who now hovers over the brink of the grave, might now be enjoying the consolation of the Spirit of God and have a good experience in the truth. Ever bear in mind that we are accountable for the influence we exert. Our influence gathers with Christ or scatters abroad. We are either helping souls in the narrow path of holiness or we are a hindrance, a stumbling block to them, turning them out of the way. You, my much-esteemed brother, have no time to lose. Be in earnest to redeem the time, because the days are evil. Your associates, those whose company you have chosen, have been a hindrance to you. Come out from among them, and be separate. Draw near to God, and come into closer union with His people. Let your interest and your affections center in Christ and His followers. Love those best who love Christ most. Sever the links which have bound you to those who love not God and the truth. What communion hath light with darkness? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

[48]

You are in imminent danger of making shipwreck of faith. You need all the strength which you can obtain from the people of God, those who possess hope, courage, and faith. But do not neglect prayer, secret prayer. Be instant in prayer; encourage a spirit of true devotion. In your business career you have a work to do. Just what, I am unable to tell you; but something is wrong. Search carefully. We are doing up work for eternity. All our acts, all our words, are to be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. A just and impartial God is to determine all our cases, every event of our life history. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Let nothing obstruct your progress in the way to everlasting life. Your eternal interest is at stake. There must be a thorough work wrought in you. You must be fully converted, or you will fail of heaven. But Jesus invites you to make Him your strength, your support. He will be to you a present help in every time of need. He will be to you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Let it not be your great anxiety to succeed in this world, but let the burden of your soul be: How shall I secure the better world? what have I to do to be saved? In saving your own soul, you save others. In lifting yourself, you lift others. In fastening your grasp upon the truth and

[49]

upon the throne of God, you aid others to fix their trembling faith upon His promises and His eternal throne. The position you must come into is to value salvation dearer than earthly gain, to count everything but loss that you may win Christ. The consecration on your part must be entire. God will admit of no reserve, of no divided sacrifice; you can cherish no idol. You must die to self and to the world. Renew your consecration to God daily. Everlasting life is worth a lifelong, persevering, untiring effort.

I was shown that your brother had been convinced of the truth for some time, but influences had held him back. His wife had hindered him from obeying his convictions. But in her affliction she sought the Lord, and He was found of her. Then she felt an anxiety that her husband should embrace the truth; she repented that she had opposed him, that her pride and love of the world had so long kept him from receiving the truth. Like a weary child in search of rest but unable to obtain it, she at length complied with the gracious invitation: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Her weary, burdened soul sought her Lord, and with repentance, humiliation, and earnest prayer she cast her burden upon the great Burden Bearer, and in Him found rest; she received the evidence that her humiliation and earnest repentance were accepted of God, and that for Christ's sake He had forgiven her sins.

[50] I was shown, Brother D, that you have but a short time to work. Do up your work thoroughly, redeem the time. In your business transactions let not a blot tarnish your Christian character. Keep your garments unspotted from the world. Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. Temptations may be all around you, but you are not compelled to enter into them. You may obtain strength from Christ to stand unsullied amid the pollutions of this corrupt age. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Keep the eye steadily fixed upon Christ, upon the divine image. Imitate His spotless life, and you will be a partaker of His glory, and with Him inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Chapter 4—Evilspeaking

Brother F has had the cause of God at heart, but he has felt too deeply, and has taken on many burdens which he should not have borne. He has suffered in health in this way. He has sometimes viewed matters in a strong light, and has been too earnest and anxious to have all see them just as he did; and because they were backward in doing so, he has felt nearly crushed. He feels to the depths, and is in danger of urging his views of things too strongly.

Sister F wants to be a Christian, but she has not cultivated discretion and true courtesy. She is of a very sanguine turn of mind, ardent and self-confident. She shows the rough part of her character, and has not appeared to advantage. She has moved from impulse, acting just as she felt, and sometimes her feelings have been much excited and strong. She has strong likes and dislikes, and has permitted this unfortunate trait in her character to develop itself, greatly to the detriment of her own spiritual advancement and to the injury of the church. She has talked too much and unwisely, just as she felt. This has had a strong influence upon her husband, and has at times led him to move from excitement of feeling, when if he had waited and looked at matters calmly and weighed them properly, it would have been better for himself and for the church. Nothing is gained by moving hurriedly, moving from impulse, or from strong feeling. [51]

Sister F moves from impulse, and finds fault, and has had too much to say against her brethren and sisters. This will cause confusion in any church. If she could control her own spirit, a great victory would be gained. If she would seek the heavenly adorning, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, calls of great price, she would then be a real help to the church. If she would cherish the spirit of Christ, and become a peacemaker, her own soul would flourish, and she would be a blessing to the church wherever she might be located. Unless she is converted and an entire change is wrought in her, unless she educates herself to be slow to speak and slow to wrath, and cultivates

true Christian courtesy, her influence will prove injurious, and the happiness of others connected with her will suffer. She manifests an independence which is a damage to her and alienates her friends. This independence has caused her much trouble and has wounded her best friends.

If those who had means were close in their deal with her husband, and did not favor him more than worldlings in business transactions, she has felt and talked, and aroused feelings of dissatisfaction where none previously existed. This is a selfish world at best. Many of those who profess the truth are not sanctified by it, and may not have a heart to make even a trifling variation in the prices of produce when dealing with a poor brother, sooner than they would with an able worldling. They do not love their neighbors as themselves. It would be more pleasing to God were there less selfishness and more disinterested benevolence.

[52] As Sister F has seen a selfish spirit manifest in deal, she has committed a greater sin by feeling and talking in regard to the matter as she has. She has erred in expecting too much. The tongue has been truly an unruly member, a world of iniquity, set on fire of hell, untamed and untamable. Sister F has had a spirit of retaliation, manifesting by her deportment that she was offended. This was all wrong. She has cherished bitter feelings, which are foreign to the spirit of Christ. Anger, resentment, and all kinds of unkind tempers are indulged by speaking against those with whom we are displeased, and by reciting the errors and failings and sins of neighbors. The lustful desires are gratified.

Sister F, if you are grieved because your neighbors or friends are doing wrong to their own hurt, if they are overtaken in fault, follow the Bible rule. "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone." As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love. Be careful in your manner. Avoid anything in look or gesture, word or tone, that savors of pride or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt yourself, or place your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, overbearing, or contempt. With care

avoid every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of warmth but that of earnest love. Above all, let there be no shadow of hate or ill will, no bitterness or sourness of expression. Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. Yet all these precious fruits need not hinder you from speaking in the most serious, solemn manner, as though angels were directing their eyes upon you, and you were acting in reference to the coming judgment. Bear in mind that the success of reproof depends greatly upon the spirit in which it is given. Do not neglect earnest prayer that you may possess a lowly mind, and that angels of God may go before you to work upon the hearts you are trying to reach, and so soften them by heavenly impressions that your efforts may avail. If any good is accomplished, take no credit to yourself. God alone should be exalted. God alone has done it all.

[53]

You have excused yourself for speaking evil of your brother or sister or neighbor to others before going to him and taking the steps which God has absolutely commanded. You say: "Why, I did not speak to anyone until I was so burdened that I could not refrain." What burdened you? Was it not a plain neglect of your own duty, of a thus saith the Lord? You were under the guilt of sin because you did not go and tell the offender his fault between you and him alone. If you did not do this, if you disobeyed God, how could you be otherwise than burdened unless your heart was hardened while you were trampling the command of God underfoot, and in your heart hating your brother or neighbor? And what way have you found to unburden yourself? God reproves you for a sin of omission in not telling your brother his fault, and you excuse and comfort yourself by a sin of commission by telling your brother's faults to another person! Is this the right way to purchase ease—by committing sin?

All your efforts to save the erring may be unavailing. They may repay you evil for good. They may be enraged rather than convinced. What if they hear to no good purpose, and pursue the evil course they have begun? This will frequently occur. Sometimes the mildest and tenderest reproof will have no good effect. In that case the blessing you wanted another to receive by pursuing a course of righteousness, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, will return into your own bosom. If the erring persist in sin, treat them kindly, and leave them

[54]

with your heavenly Father. You have delivered your soul; their sin no longer rests upon you; you are not now partaker of their sin. But if they perish, their blood is upon their own head.

Dear friend, an entire transformation must take place in you, or you will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. The church at -----, especially talking women, have a lesson to learn. "If any man [or woman] among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Many will be weighed in the balance and found wanting in this matter of so great importance. Where are the Christians who walk by this rule? who will take God's part against the evilspeaker? who will please God, and set a watch, a continual watch, before the mouth, and keep the door of the lips? Speak evil of no man. Hear evil of no man. If there be no hearers, there will be no speakers of evil. If anyone speaks evil in your presence, check him. Refuse to hear him, though his manner be ever so soft and his accents mild. He may profess attachment, and yet throw out covert hints and stab the character in the dark.

Resolutely refuse to hear, though the whisperer complains of being burdened till he speak. Burdened indeed! with a cursed secret which separateth very friends. Go, burdened ones, and free yourselves from your burden in God's appointed way. First go tell your brother his fault between you and him alone. If this fail, next take with you one or two friends, and tell him in their presence. If these steps fail, then tell it to the church. Not an unbeliever is to be made acquainted with the slightest particular of the matter. Telling it to the church is the last step to be taken. Publish it not to the enemies of our faith. They have no right to the knowledge of church matters, lest the weakness and errors of Christ's followers be exposed.

[55] Those who are preparing for the coming of Christ should be sober and watch unto prayer, for our adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; whom we are to resist steadfast in the faith. "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers."

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Chapter 5—Selfishness and World Loving

Dear Brother and Sister G,

I have for some time designed to write to you. As the light which the Lord has given me came distinctly before me, some things pressed themselves forcibly upon my mind while standing before the people at -----. I had hoped that you would stay to another meeting, and that the labor there commenced could have been continued. But I am sorry to see that when our brethren attend a Conference, they do not generally feel the importance of first preparing for the meeting. Instead of consecrating themselves to God before they come, they wait till they get to the meeting to have the work done for them there. They bring *home* along with them, and the things that they have left behind are considered of more value and importance than a preparation of heart for His coming. Therefore nearly all leave no better than when they came. Such meetings are attended with great expense, and if those who come are not profited, there is a loss to them, and they make the labor exceedingly hard for those who feel the burden of the work upon them. Our people left that Conference too soon. We might have seen a more special work from God had all remained and engaged in the work.

[56] Sister G, I have a message to you. You are far from the kingdom. You love this world, and this love has made you cold, selfish, exacting, and penurious. The great object of interest with you is the powerful, mighty dollar. How little you know how God looks upon one in your condition. You are in a terrible deception. You are conformed to the world instead of being transformed by the renewing of your mind. Selfishness and self-love are exemplified in your life to a great degree. You have not overcome this unhappy defect in your character. If this is not remedied, you will lose heaven, and your happiness here will be greatly marred. This has been the case already. The dark cloud which has followed you, overshadowing your life, will grow larger and blacker until your whole sky is clouded.

You may turn to the right, and there will be no light, and to the left, and you cannot discover a ray.

You make trouble for yourself where there is no trouble, because you are not right. You are unconsecrated. Your complaining, penurious spirit makes you unhappy and displeases God. During your life you have been looking out for yourself, seeking to make yourself happy. It is poor work, unprofitable business. The more you invest here the heavier will be the loss. The less stock you take in this business of serving yourself the greater will be the saving on your part. You are a stranger to disinterested, unselfish love, and while you see no special sin in the absence of this precious trait you will not be diligent to cultivate it.

You loved your husband and married him. You knew that when you married him you covenanted to become a mother to his children. But I saw a lack in you in this matter. You are sadly deficient. You do not love the children of your husband, and unless there is an entire change, a thorough reformation in you, and in your manner of government, these precious jewels are ruined. Love, manifestation of affection, is not a part of your discipline. Shall I tell you the truth and become your enemy by so doing? You are too thoroughly selfish to love the children of another. I was shown that the fruit of your union would not be prospered and blessed with strength, life, and health, and God's spirit would leave you to yourself, unless you are thoroughly proved and tested, and right up those things in which you are so deficient. As your selfishness withers and blights the young hearts around you, so will the curse of God wither and blight the pledges of your selfish love and union. And if you continue your selfish course, God will come still closer to you and remove your idols one after another from before your face until you shall humble your proud, selfish, unsubdued heart before Him.

[57]

I saw that you would have a fearful account to render in the day of God because of your unfulfilled trust. You are making the lives of those dear children very bitter, especially the daughter's. Where is the affection, the loving caress, the patient forbearance? Hatred lives in your unsanctified heart more than love. Censure leaps from your lips more than praise and encouragement. Your manners, your harsh ways, your unsympathizing nature, are to that sensitive daughter like

desolating hail upon a tender plant; it bends to every blast until its life is crushed out, and it lies bruised and broken.

[58] Your administration is drying up the channel of love, hopefulness, and joy in your children. A settled sadness is expressed in the countenance of the girl, but, instead of awakening sympathy and tenderness in you, this arouses impatience and positive dislike. You can change this expression to animation and cheerfulness if you choose. "Does not God see? Does He take no knowledge?" were the words of the angel. He will visit for these things. You voluntarily took upon you this responsibility, but Satan has taken advantage of your unhappy, unlovable, and unloving disposition, your self-love, your closeness, your selfishness, and it now appears in all its deformity, uncorrected, unsubdued, girding you about as with iron bands. Children read the countenance of the mother; they understand whether love or dislike is there expressed. You know not the work you are doing. Does not the little sad face, the heaving sigh welling up from a pressed heart in its yearning call for love, awaken pity? No, not in you. It places the child at a still greater distance from you and increases your dislike.

I saw that the father had not taken the course that a father should. God is not pleased with his position. Another has stolen the father's heart from the blood of his blood and bone of his bone. Brother G, you have been very deficient in discernment. As the head of the house, you should have taken your position and not permitted things to go as they have gone. You have seen that things were not right and have sometimes felt anxious, but fear of displeasing your present wife and making unhappy discord in your family has led you to remain silent when you should have spoken. You are not clear in the matter. Your children have no mother to plead for them, to shelter them from censure by her judicious words.

Your children, and all other children who have lost the one in whose breasts maternal love has flowed, have met with a loss that can never be supplied. But when one ventures to stand in the place of mother to the little stricken flock, a double care and burden rests upon her, to be even more loving if possible, more forbearing of censure and threatening than their own mother could have been, and in this way supply the loss which the little flock have sustained. You, Brother G, have been like a man asleep. Take your children to your

heart, encircle them with your sheltering arms, love them tenderly. If you fail to do this, "Found wanting" will be written against you.

There is a work for you *both* to do. Forever cease your murmurings. Brother G, suffer not the close, penurious, selfish spirit of your wife to control *your* actions. You have been drinking in the same spirit, and you have both robbed God. The plea of poverty is upon you lips, but Heaven knows it is false; yet your words will be all true; you will be poor indeed, if you continue to cherish the love of the world as you have done. "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." Wipe off this curse as fast as possible.

[59]

Brother G, as God's steward, look to Him. It is He to whom you are to give account of your stewardship, not to your wife. It is God's means that you are handling. He has only lent it you a little while to prove you, to try you, to see if you will be "rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may lay hold on eternal life. God will require His own with usury. May He help you to prepare for the judgment. Let self be crucified. Let the precious graces of the Spirit live in your hearts. Turn out the world with its corrupting lust. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." If your profession is as high as heaven, and yet you are selfish and world-loving, you can have no part in the kingdom with the sanctified, the pure and holy. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If your treasure is in heaven, your heart will be there. You will talk of heaven, eternal life, the immortal crown. If you lay up your treasure on earth, you will be talking of earthly things, worrying about losses and gains. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

There is light and salvation for you if you will only feel that you must have it or perish. Jesus can save to the uttermost. But, Sister G, if God has ever spoken by me, you are terribly deceived in regard to yourself, and must have a thorough conversion, or you will never be one of that number who have come up through great tribulation,

[60]

having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

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Chapter 6—Flesh Meats and Stimulants

Dear Brother and Sister H,

I recollected your countenances as being among several that I had seen who need a work accomplished for them before they can be sanctified through the truth. You embraced the truth because you saw it to be truth, but it has not yet taken hold of you. You have not realized its sanctifying influence upon the life. The light has been shining upon your pathway in regard to health reform and the duty resting upon God's people in these last days to exercise temperance in all things. You, I saw, were among the number who would be backward to see the light and correct your manner of eating, drinking, and working. As the light of truth is received and followed out, it will work an entire reformation in the life and character of all those who are sanctified through it.

Your business is of a character that is not friendly to an advance in the divine life, but is one that will hinder the growth of grace and the knowledge of the truth. It has a tendency to lower, to debase the man, to make him more animal in his propensities. The higher powers of the mind are overpowered by the lower. The brutish part of your nature governs the spiritual. Those who profess to be fitting for translation should not become butchers.

Your family have partaken largely of flesh meats, and the animal propensities have been strengthened, while the intellectual have been weakened. We are composed of what we eat, and if we subsist largely upon the flesh of dead animals we shall partake of their nature. You have encouraged the grosser part of your organism, while the more refined has been weakened. You have repeatedly said in defense of your indulgence of meat eating: "However injurious it may be to others, it does not injure me, for I have used it all my life." But you know not how well you might have been if you had abstained from the use of flesh meats. As a family, you are far from being free from disease. You have used the fat of animals, which God in His word expressly forbids: "It shall be a perpetual statute for your

[61]

generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.” “Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings. Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.”

You have flesh, but it is not good material. You are worse off for this amount of flesh. If you should each come down to a more spare diet, which would take from you twenty-five or thirty pounds of your gross flesh, you would be much less liable to disease. The eating of flesh meats has made a poor quality of blood and flesh. Your systems are in a state of inflammation, prepared to take on disease. You are liable to acute attacks of disease and to sudden death because you do not possess the strength of constitution to rally and resist disease. There will come a time when the strength and health you have flattered yourself you possessed will prove to be weakness. It is not the chief end of man to glorify his stomach. You have animal wants to be supplied; but because of this necessity shall man become all animal?

[62] You have set for your children a table of unwholesome food, cooked in an unhealthful manner. You have placed flesh meats before them, and what is the result? Are they refined, intellectual, obedient, conscientious, and religiously inclined? You know this is not the case, but entirely the contrary. Your manner of living has strengthened the animal of your nature and weakened the spiritual. You have transmitted to your children a miserable legacy, a depraved nature rendered still more depraved by your gross habits of eating and drinking. Your table has completed the work of making them what they are. The sin lies at your door. You know that they are not religiously inclined, that they will not submit to restraint, but are inclined to disobedience and to disrespect your authority. Your eldest son especially is corrupt, partaking to a great degree of the animal. Scarcely a trace of the divine can be seen in his organism. You have brought up your children to indulge their appetite when they please and as they please. Your example has taught them that they live to eat, that the gratification of appetite is about all that is worth living for. There is a work for you to do, Brother H. You have been like a man asleep or paralyzed. It is time that you make a mighty effort to save the younger members of your family. The influence

of your eldest son is only evil over them. Correct your table. A depraved, stimulating diet is strengthening the animal passions of your children. Of all the families I am acquainted with, yours most needs to dispense with flesh meats and grease, and learn to cook hygienically.

Sister H is a woman whose blood is corrupt. Her system is full of scrofulous humors from the eating of flesh meats. The use of swine's flesh in your family has imparted a bad quality of blood. Sister H needs to confine herself strictly to a diet of grains, fruits, and vegetables, cooked without flesh or grease of any kind. It will take quite a length of time of strictly healthful diet to place you in better conditions of health, where you will be rightly related to life. It is impossible for those who make free use of flesh meats to have an unclouded brain and an active intellect.

We advise you to change your habits of living; but while you do this we caution you to move understandingly. I am acquainted with families who have changed from a meat diet to one that is impoverished. Their food is so poorly prepared that the stomach loathes it; and such have told me that the health reform did not agree with them, that they were decreasing in physical strength. Here is one reason why some have not been successful in their efforts to simplify their food. They have a poverty-stricken diet. Food is prepared without painstaking, and there is a continual sameness. There should not be many kinds at any one meal, but all meals should not be composed of the same kinds of food without variation. Food should be prepared with simplicity, yet with a nicety which will invite the appetite. You should keep grease out of your food. It defiles any preparation of food you may make. Eat largely of fruits and vegetables.

[63]

After they have reduced their physical strength by a reduced quantity and a poor quality of food, some conclude that their former way of living is the best. The system must be nourished. Yet we do not hesitate to say that flesh meat is not necessary for health or strength. If used it is because a depraved appetite craves it. Its use excites the animal propensities to increased activity and strengthens the animal passions. When the animal propensities are increased, the intellectual and moral powers are decreased. The use of the flesh

of animals tends to cause a grossness of body and benumbs the fine sensibilities of the mind.

[64] Will the people who are preparing to become holy, pure, and refined, that they may be introduced into the society of heavenly angels, continue to take the life of God's creatures and subsist on their flesh and enjoy it as a luxury? From what the Lord has shown me, this order of things will be changed, and God's peculiar people will exercise temperance in all things. Those who subsist largely upon flesh cannot avoid eating the meat of animals which are to a greater or less degree diseased. The process of fitting animals for market produces in them disease; and fitted in as healthful manner as they can be, they become heated and diseased by driving before they reach the market. The fluids and flesh of these diseased animals are received directly into the blood, and pass into the circulation of the human body, becoming fluids and flesh of the same. Thus humors are introduced into the system. And if the person already has impure blood, it is greatly aggravated by the eating of the flesh of these animals. The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating. The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the habitual use of flesh meats. Meat eating deranges the system, beclouds the intellect, and blunts the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to let meat alone.

The use of tea and coffee is also injurious to the system. To a certain extent, tea produces intoxication. It enters into the circulation and gradually impairs the energy of body and mind. It stimulates, excites, and quickens the motion of the living machinery, forcing it to unnatural action, and thus gives the tea drinker the impression that it is doing him great service, imparting to him strength. This is a mistake. Tea draws upon the strength of the nerves and leaves them greatly weakened. When its influence is gone and the increased action caused by its use is abated, then what is the result? Languor and debility corresponding to the artificial vivacity the tea imparted. When the system is already overtaxed and needs rest, the use of tea spurs up nature by stimulation to perform unwonted, unnatural action, and thereby lessens her power to perform and her ability to endure; and her powers give out long before Heaven designed they should. Tea is poisonous to the system. Christians should let

it alone. The influence of coffee is in a degree the same as tea, but the effect upon the system is still worse. Its influence is exciting, and just in the degree that it elevates above par it will exhaust and bring prostration below par. Tea and coffee drinkers carry the marks upon their faces. The skin becomes sallow and assumes a lifeless appearance. The glow of health is not seen upon the countenance. [65]

Tea and coffee do not nourish the system. The relief obtained from them is sudden, before the stomach has time to digest them. This shows that what the users of these stimulants call strength is only received by exciting the nerves of the stomach, which convey the irritation to the brain, and this in turn is aroused to impart increased action to the heart and short-lived energy to the entire system. All this is false strength that we are the worse for having. They do not give a particle of natural strength.

The second effect of tea drinking is headache, wakefulness, palpitation of the heart, indigestion, trembling of the nerves, with many other evils. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." God calls for a living sacrifice, not a dead or dying one. When we realize the requirements of God, we shall see that He requires us to be temperate in all things. The end of our creation is to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are His. How can we do this when we indulge the appetite to the injury of the physical and moral powers? God requires that we present our bodies a living sacrifice. Then the duty is enjoined on us to preserve that body in the very best condition of health, that we may comply with His requirements. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

You have a work to do to set your house in order. Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. You should make earnest efforts to discover your errors, and in the fear of God, relying upon His strength, put them away. Dear brother and sister, you need to reform in the matter of order. You should cultivate a love for neatness and strict cleanliness. God is a God of order. He will not sanction slack and disorderly habits in any of His people. In your dress, in your house, in all things, manifest taste and order. We are looked upon as a peculiar people. The dress reform is a striking contrast to the fashion [66]

of the world. Those who adopt this dress should manifest good taste and order and strict cleanliness in all their attire. The dress should not be adopted unless it is made right and arranged neatly. For we should seek not to disgust unbelievers by carelessness and slackness in our apparel, but should dress modestly, with reference to health and neatness, that our dress may commend itself to the judgment of candid minds.

You need clear, energetic minds, in order to appreciate the exalted character of the truth, to value the atonement, and to place the right estimate upon eternal things. If you pursue a wrong course, and indulge in wrong habits of eating, and thereby weaken the intellectual powers, you will not place that high estimate upon salvation and eternal life which will inspire you to conform your life to the life of Christ; you will not make those earnest, self-sacrificing efforts for entire conformity to the will of God, which His word requires, and which are necessary to give you a moral fitness for the finishing touch of immortality.

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Chapter 7—Neglect of Health Reform

Dear Brother and Sister I,

The Lord has shown some things in regard to you which I feel it a duty to write. You were among the number who were presented before me as backward in health reform. Light has shone upon the pathway in which the people of God are traveling, yet all do not walk in the light and follow as fast as the providence of God marks out and opens the way before them. Until they do this, they will be in darkness. If God has spoken to His people, He designs that they shall hear and obey His voice. Last Sabbath, as I was speaking, your pale faces rose distinctly before me as I had been shown them. I saw your condition of health and the ailments you have suffered under so long. I was shown that you have not lived healthfully. Your appetites have been unhealthy, and you have gratified the taste at the expense of the stomach. You have taken into your stomachs articles which it is impossible to convert into good blood. This has laid a heavy tax on the liver, for the reason that the digestive organs are deranged. You both have diseased livers. The health reform would be a great benefit to you both if you would strictly carry it out. This you have failed to do. Your appetites are morbid, and because you do not relish a plain, simple diet, composed of unbolting wheat flour, vegetables and fruits prepared without spices or grease, you are continually transgressing the laws which God has established in your system. While you do this you must suffer the penalty, for to every transgression is affixed a penalty. Yet you wonder at your continued poor health.

[67]

Be assured that God will not work a miracle to save you from the result of your own course of action. You have not had a liberal supply of air. Brother I has labored in his store, closely applying himself to his business and allowing himself but a limited amount of air and exercise. His circulation is depressed. He breathes only from the top of his lungs. It is seldom that he exercises the abdominal muscles in the act of breathing. Stomach, liver, lungs, and brain are

[68] suffering for the want of deep, full inspirations of air, which would electrify the blood and impart to it a bright, lively color, and which alone can keep it pure and give tone and vigor to every part of the living machinery.

You, my dear brother and sister, can have a much better condition of health than you now enjoy, and can avoid very many ill turns, if you will simply exercise temperance in all things—temperance in labor, temperance in eating and drinking. Hot drinks are debilitating to the stomach. Cheese should never be introduced into the stomach. Fine-flour bread cannot impart to the system the nourishment that you will find in the unbolted wheat bread. The common use of bolted wheat bread cannot keep the system in a healthy condition. You both have inactive livers. The use of fine flour aggravates the difficulties under which you are laboring.

There is no treatment which can relieve you of your present difficulties while you eat and drink as you do. You can do that for yourselves which the most experienced physician can never do. Regulate your diet. In order to gratify the taste, you frequently place a severe tax upon your digestive organs by receiving into the stomach food which is not the most healthful, and at times in immoderate quantities. This wearies the stomach and unfits it for the reception of even the most healthful food. You keep your stomachs constantly debilitated because of your wrong habits of eating. Your food is made too rich. It is not prepared in a simple, natural manner, but is totally unfitted for the stomach when you have prepared it to suit your taste. Nature is burdened, and endeavors to resist your efforts to cripple her. Chills and fevers are the result of those attempts to rid herself of the burden you lay upon her. You have to suffer the penalty of nature's violated laws. God has established laws in your system which you cannot violate without suffering the punishment. You have consulted taste without reference to health. You have made some changes, but have merely taken the first steps in reform diet. God requires of us temperance in all things. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

[69]

Of all the families I am acquainted with, none need the benefit of the health reform more than yours. You groan under pains and prostrations which you cannot account for, and you try to submit with as good a grace as you can, thinking affliction is your lot and

Providence has thus ordained it. If you could have your eyes opened and could see the steps taken in your lifetime to walk right into your present condition of poor health you would be astonished at your blindness in not seeing the real state of the case before. You have created unnatural appetites, and do not derive half that enjoyment from your food which you would if you had not used your appetites wrongfully. You have perverted nature, and have been suffering the consequences, and painful has it been.

Nature bears abuse as long as she can without resisting, then she arouses and makes a mighty effort to rid herself of the encumbrances and evil treatment she has suffered. Then come headache, chills, fevers, nervousness, paralysis, and other evils too numerous to mention. A wrong course of eating or drinking destroys health, and with it the sweetness of life. Oh, how many times have you purchased what you called a good meal at the expense of a fevered system, loss of appetite, and loss of sleep! Inability to enjoy food, a sleepless night, hours of suffering—all for a meal in which taste was gratified! Thousands have indulged their perverted appetites, have eaten a good meal, as they called it, and as the result, have brought on a fever, or some other acute disease, and certain death. That was enjoyment purchased at immense cost. Yet many have done this, and these self-murderers have been eulogized by their friends and the minister, and carried directly to heaven at their death. What a thought! Gluttons in heaven! No, no; such will never enter the pearly gates of the golden city of God. Such will never be exalted to the right hand of Jesus the precious Saviour, the suffering Man of Calvary, whose life was one of constant self-denial and sacrifice. There is a place appointed for all such among the unworthy, who can have no part in the better life, the immortal inheritance.

[70]

God requires all men to render their bodies to Him a living sacrifice, not a dead or a dying sacrifice, a sacrifice which their own course of action is debilitating, filling with impurities and disease. God calls for a living sacrifice. The body, He tells us, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, the habitation of His Spirit, and He requires all who bear His image to take care of their bodies for the purpose of His service and His glory. “Ye are not your own,” says the inspired apostle, “ye are bought with a price;” wherefore “glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” In order to do this, add to

virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience. It is a duty to know how to preserve the body in the very best condition of health, and it is a sacred duty to live up to the light which God has graciously given. If we close our eyes to the light for fear we shall see our wrongs, which we are unwilling to forsake, our sins are not lessened but increased. If light is turned from in one case, it will be disregarded in another. It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the Ten Commandments, for we cannot do either without breaking God's law. We cannot love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength while we are loving our appetites, our tastes, a great deal better than we love the Lord. We are daily lessening our strength to glorify God, when He requires all our strength, all our mind. By our wrong habits [71] we are lessening our hold on life, and yet professing to be Christ's followers, preparing for the finishing touch of immortality.

My brother and sister, you have a work to do which no one can do for you. Awake from your lethargy, and Christ shall give you life. Change your course of living, your eating, your drinking, and your working. While you pursue the course you have been following for years, you cannot clearly discern sacred and eternal things. Your sensibilities are blunted and your intellect beclouded. You have not been growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as was your privilege. You have not been increasing in spirituality, but growing more and more darkened. You have made too much haste to acquire property, and have been in danger of overreaching, looking out for your own interest and not regarding the interest of others as you would like to have them regard yours. You have encouraged selfishness in yourselves, which must be overcome. Closely examine your own hearts, and in your lives imitate the unerring Pattern, and all will be well with you. Preserve a clear conscience before God. In all you do glorify His name. Divest yourselves of selfishness and selfish love.

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” The customs and practices of men are not to be your criterion. However trying may be your circumstances, never allow yourselves to overreach. Satan is at hand to tempt you to do this, and he will not let you rest in this matter.

It is possible for a merchant to be a Christian and preserve his integrity before God. But in order to do this, constant watchfulness is necessary and earnest supplication before God to be kept from the evil tendency of this degenerate age to advantage self at others' disadvantage. You are in a hard place to advance in the divine life. You have a principle, but you do not hang all your weight upon God. You trust too much in your own feeble strength. You have great need of divine aid, of a power not to be found in yourself. There is One to whom you can go for counsel, whose wisdom is infinite. He has invited you to come to Him, for He will supply your need. If by faith you cast all your care upon Him who marks the falling of a sparrow, you will not trust in vain. If you will rest upon His sure promises, and maintain your integrity, angels of God will be round about you. Maintain good works in faith before God; then will your steps be ordered by the Lord, and His prospering hand will not be removed from you.

[72]

If you should be left to mark out your own course, you would make poor work of the matter, and would speedily make shipwreck of faith. Take all your cares and burdens to the Burden Bearer. But suffer not a blot to tarnish your Christian character. Never, never for the sake of gain stamp your life record in heaven, which is viewed by all the angelic host, and by your self-denying Redeemer, with avarice, penuriousness, selfishness, or false dealing. Such a course might bring you profit so far as this world views the matter; but, viewed in the light of heaven, it would prove an immense, an irreparable loss. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth." In trusting in God continually there is safety, there will not be a constant fear of future evil. This borrowed care and anxiety will cease. We have a heavenly Father who careth for His children, and will and does make His grace sufficient in every time of need. When we take into our own hands the management of things that concern us, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we may well have anxiety and anticipate danger and loss, for it will most certainly come upon us.

Full and entire consecration to God is required of us. While the Redeemer of sinful mortals was laboring and suffering for us, He denied Himself, and His whole life was one continued scene of toil and privation. Had He chosen to do so, He could have passed His days on earth in ease and plenty, and appropriated to Himself all the

[73]

pleasures and enjoyments of this life. But He did not; He considered not His own convenience. He lived not to gratify Himself, but to do good and to save others from suffering, to help those who most needed help. He endured to the end. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and He hath borne the iniquity of us all. The bitter cup was apportioned to us to drink. Our sins mingled it. But our dear Saviour took the cup from our lips and drank it Himself, and in its stead He presents to us a cup of mercy, blessing, and salvation. Oh, what an immense sacrifice was this for the fallen race! What love, what wondrous and matchless love! After all this manifestation of suffering to show His love, shall we shrink from the small trials we have to bear? Can we love Christ, and refuse to lift the cross? Can we love to be with Him in glory, and not follow Him even from the judgment hall to Calvary? If Christ be in us the hope of glory, we shall walk even as He walked; we shall imitate His life of sacrifice to bless others; we shall drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism; we shall welcome a life of devotion, trial, and self-denial, for Christ's sake. Heaven will be cheap enough whatever sacrifice we may make to obtain it.

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Chapter 8—Love for the Erring

I was shown that while Sister J and Brother and Sister K have seen wrongs in others, they have not made efforts to correct those wrongs and help those whom they ought to have helped. They have left them too much alone, and held them off at arms' length, and felt that it was of no use to try to do anything for them. This is wrong. They commit an error in so doing. Christ said: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The Lord would have us help those who most need help. While you have seen the errors and wrongs in others, you have shut yourselves too much to yourselves, and have been too selfish in your enjoyment of the truth. God does not approve this being satisfied with the truth and making no sacrifice to aid and strengthen those who need strength. We are not all organized alike, and many have not been educated aright. Their education has been deficient. Some have had a quick temper transmitted to them, and their education in childhood has not taught them self-control. With this fiery temper, envy and jealousy are frequently united. Others are faulty in other respects. Some are dishonest in deal, overreaching in trade. Others are arbitrary in their families, loving to rule. Their lives are far from being correct. Their education was all wrong. They were not told the sin of yielding to the control of these evil traits; therefore sin does not appear to them so exceedingly sinful. Others, whose education has not been so faulty, who have had better training, have developed a much less objectionable character. The Christian life of all is very much affected for good or for evil by their previous education.

[74]

Jesus, our Advocate, is acquainted with all the circumstances with which we are surrounded and deals with us according to the light we have had and the circumstances in which we are placed. Some have a much better organization than others. While some are continually harassed, afflicted, and in trouble because of their unhappy traits of character, having to war with internal foes and the corruption of their nature, others have not half so much to battle

[75] against. They pass along almost free from the difficulties which their brethren and sisters who are not so favorably organized are laboring under. In very many cases they do not labor half so hard to overcome and live the life of a Christian as do some of those unfortunate ones I have mentioned. The latter appear to disadvantage almost every time, while the former appear much better because it is natural for them so to do. They may not labor half as hard to watch and keep the body under, yet at the same time they compare their lives with the lives of others who are unfortunately organized and badly educated, and flatter themselves with the contrast. They talk of the failings, errors, and wrongs of the unfortunate, but do not feel that they have any burden in the matter, farther than to dwell upon those wrongs and shun those who are guilty of them.

The prominent position which you as a family occupy in the church makes it highly necessary for you to be burden bearers. Not that you are to take burdens for those who are able to bear their own and also to aid others; but you should help those who stand most in need of help, those who are less favorably situated, who are erring and faulty, and who may have injured you and tried your patience to the utmost. It is just such ones that Jesus pities, because Satan has more power over them and is constantly taking advantage of their weak points and driving his arrows to wound them where they are least protected. Jesus exercises His power and mercy for just such pitiable cases. When He asked who loved most, Simon answered: "He to whom he forgave most." Thus it will be. Jesus did not shun the weak, unfortunate, and helpless, but He helped such as needed help. He did not confine His visits and labors to a class more intelligent and less faulty, to the neglect of the unfortunate. He did not inquire whether it was agreeable for Him to be a companion of the poorest, the most needy. These are the ones whose company He sought, the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

[76] This is the work you have neglected. You have shunned disagreeable responsibilities and have not gone to the erring and visited them, and manifested an interest and love for them, and made yourselves familiar with them. You have not had a spirit of Christlike forgiveness. You have marked out just such a course that all must come up to before you could throw over them your mantle of charity.

You are not required to cloak sin, but to exercise that pitying love for the erring which Christ has exercised toward you.

You are placed under the most favorable circumstances for the development of good Christian characters. You are not where you feel pinching want, or where your souls are galled and distressed with the conduct of disobedient, rebellious children. In your family there is no dissenting voice. You have all that heart can wish. Yet, notwithstanding your favorable surroundings, you have faults and errors, and much to overcome in order to be free from spiritual pride, selfishness, a hasty spirit, jealousy, and evil surmisings.

Brother K has not the sin of evilspeaking to repent of, as very many have, but he lacks a willingness to help those who most need help. He is selfish. He loves his home, loves quiet, rest, freedom from care, perplexities, and trials; therefore he pleases himself too much. He does not bear the burdens which Heaven has assigned him. He shuns disagreeable responsibilities, and shuts himself up too much to his love of quietness. He has been quite liberal with means, but when it is necessary to deny self to do some needed good, when real sacrifice on his part is called for, he has but little experience, and must gain it.

He fears that he will be blamed if he ventures to help the erring. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me." All who are partakers of this great salvation have something to do to help those who are hanging on the skirts of Zion. They should not cut off their hold and thrust them away without making an effort to help them to overcome and prepare for the judgment. No, indeed! While these are bleating around the fold, they should be encouraged and strengthened by all the aid which it is in our power to bestow. You as a family have too rigid rules and set ideas which cannot be made to fit every case. You lack love, gentleness, tenderness, and pity for those who do not move as fast as they should. This spirit has prevailed to such an extent that you are withering spiritually instead of flourishing in the Lord. Your interest, and efforts, and anxieties are for your family and your relatives. But you have not entertained the idea of reaching out for others around you, overcoming your

reluctance to exert an influence outside of a special circle. You idolize yours, and shut yourselves within yourselves. That the Lord may save me and mine is the great burden. This spirit will have to die before you can flourish in the Lord and make spiritual advancement, before the church can grow and souls be added unto them of such as shall be saved.

You are all narrowed up as to labor for others, and must change your base of operations. Your relatives are no dearer in the sight of God than any other poor souls who need salvation. We must put self and selfishness under our feet, and exemplify in our lives the spirit of self-sacrifice and disinterested benevolence manifested by Jesus when He was upon earth. All should have an interest for their relatives, but should not allow themselves to be shut up to them as though they were the only ones whom Jesus came to save.

Chapter 9—Everyday Religion

[78]

Brother and Sister L,

I was shown that you have a work to do to set your house in order. Brother L, you have not properly represented the truth; you have loved the truth, but it has not had that sanctifying influence upon your life which it must have if you would be fitted for the society of heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory. You are a rough stick and need much hewing and need to remain in the workshop of God until the rough edges are removed, the uneven surface made smooth, and you are pronounced fit for the building.

You should be careful not to introduce the subjects of present truth everywhere. You can do more in living the truth than in talking it to others. You can do very much by example. You need to be very circumspect in your business transactions, to carry out in them the principles of your faith. Be faithful in deal, thorough in labor, ever bearing in mind that it is not your employer's eye alone that is to inspect your work, but that the eye of God is upon all the transactions of your life. Angels of God are viewing your work, and it should be a part of your religion to have every piece of work marked with truth and faithfulness. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." God wants to make you right, holy, and true.

You do not speak wisely and judiciously to your wife and children. You should cultivate kindness and gentleness. Your children have not had the best influence and example before them. They should not control you, but you them, not harshly, not overbearingly, but with firmness and steadiness of purpose.

Sister L, you have a great battle before you in order to overcome. You have let self keep the victory. Your stubborn will is the greatest enemy you have. You have an unsubdued temper, and do not control your tongue. The lack of self-control has been a great injury to yourself and to your family. Happiness, quietude, and peace have abode in your dwelling but a short period at a time. If your will

[79]

is crossed you are easily irritated, and then you speak and act as though a demon had possession of you. Angels turn from the scene of discord where angry words are exchanged. Many times have you driven the precious, heavenly angels from your family by the indulgence of passion.

Like begets like. The same spirit which you manifest has been reflected upon you again. Your children have seen so little affection, tenderness, and gentleness that they have had nothing to win them to the truth or inspire them with respect for your authority. They have so long partaken of the evil fruits borne by you that their disposition is bitterness. They are not altogether corrupt; there are left beneath the uncultivated exterior, good impulses, which might be reached and brought to the surface. If your religious life had been more even, exemplifying the life of Christ, things would be different in your family. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Just such as the seed you sow will be the harvest which you will gather. If gentle words were the order of the day in your dwelling, such fruit would you receive.

A heavy responsibility rests upon you. In view of this, how careful should you be in all your words and acts. What kind of seed are you sowing in the hearts of your children? The reaping time—oh! remember, the reaping time is not far distant. Sow no foul seed. Satan is ready to do that work. Sow only clean, pure seed.

[80] You, my dear sister, have been jealous, envious, and fault-finding. You have thought you were neglected and despised. You have been too much neglected, but you have a work to do for yourself which no one can do for you. It will require effort, perseverance, and earnestness to obtain the victory over long-established habits which have become as second nature. We have the tenderest feelings for you, with all your errors and faults; and while we shall take the liberty to tell you your faults, we pledge ourselves to help you in every way we can.

I was shown that you do not possess that filial love which you should. The evil in your nature is exercised in a most unnatural way. You are not tender and respectful to your parents. Whatever may be their faults, you have no excuse for the course you have pursued toward them. It has been most unfeeling and disrespectful. Angels turned from you in sadness, repeating these words: "That

which ye sow ye shall also reap.” Should time continue, you would receive from your children the same treatment which your parents have received from you. You have not studied how you could best make your parents happy, and then sacrificed your wishes and your pleasure to this end. Their days upon earth are few at most, and will be full of care and trouble even if you do all you can to smooth their passage to the grave. “Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” This is the first commandment with promise. It is binding upon childhood and youth, upon the middle-aged and the aged. There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. This solemn obligation is binding upon every son and daughter, and is one of the conditions to their prolonging their lives upon the land which the Lord will give the faithful. This is not a subject unworthy of notice, but a matter of vital importance. The promise is upon condition of obedience. If you obey you shall live long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. If you disobey you shall not prolong your life in that land. [81]

Here, my sister, is a subject for your prayerful consideration and earnest meditation. Closely examine your own heart as in the light of eternity. Hide nothing from your examination. Search, oh! search, as for your life, and condemn yourself, pass judgment upon yourself, and then by faith claim the cleansing blood of Christ to remove the stains from your Christian character. Do not flatter or excuse yourself. Deal truly with your own soul. And then as you view yourself a sinner, fall, all broken, at the foot of the cross. Jesus will receive you, all polluted as you are, and will wash you in His blood, and cleanse you from all pollution, and make you fit for the society of heavenly angels, in a pure, harmonious heaven. There is no jar, no discord, there. All is health, happiness, and joy.

Sister L, you have not been indifferent to your salvation. You have, at times, made earnest efforts, and have humbled yourself before the church and before God; but you have not received that encouragement which you needed, and which Jesus would have freely given you had He been upon earth. Love is wanting in the church. Love for the erring is covered up with selfishness. There is a great lack of this precious grace among God’s people. You have thought that the people of God were indifferent to you, and your

soul has rebelled against it. They have not felt right nor talked right. They have not pursued a right course. They are not justified in this. Heaven frowns upon it. Jesus pities you, and He invites you, weary, and heavy-laden, to come to Him and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your soul. The yoke of Christ is easy, and His burden is light. When perplexed, worried, and annoyed, flee to the Burden Bearer; tell it all to Jesus. Your [82] brethren and sisters may not appreciate your efforts, and may never know how hard you do try to obtain the victory; yet this should not discourage you. If Jesus knows, if He is acquainted with your sincere efforts, be satisfied.

There must be a thorough reformation in your life, a transformation by the renewing of your mind. God requires His people to help you because you need help, and you should be humble enough to be helped by them. When tempted to give loose rein to the unruly member, oh! bear in mind that the recording angel is noting every word. All are written in the book, and, unless washed away by the blood of Christ, you must meet them again. You now have a spotted record in heaven. Sincere repentance before God will be accepted. When about to speak passionately, close your mouth. Don't utter a word. Pray before you speak, and heavenly angels will come to your assistance and drive back the evil angels, who would lead you to dishonor God, reproach His cause, and weaken your own soul.

Especially have you a work to do to confess with humiliation your disrespectful course toward your parents. There is no reason for this unnatural manifestation toward them. It is purely a satanic spirit, and you have indulged in it because your mother has not sanctioned your course. Your feelings amount not only to positive dislike, decided disrespect, but to hatred, malice, envy, jealousy, which are manifested in your actions, causing them suffering and privation. You do not feel like making them happy, or even comfortable. Your feelings are changeable. Sometimes your heart softens, then it closes firmly as you see some fault in them, and the angels cannot impress it with one emotion of love. An evil demon controls you, and you are hateful and hating. God has marked your disrespectful words, your unkind acts to your parents, whom He has commanded you to [83] honor, and if you fail to see this great sin, and repent of it, you will grow darker until you will be left to your evil ways.

The Lord is ready to help all who need help and feel that need. If you see your poverty and wretchedness before God, and earnestly take hold of His strength, He will help, and bless, and impart to you strength, that by your good works you may lead others to glorify our Father who is in heaven. Will you see yourself? Will you submit your will and ways to God? Will you seek for pure and undefiled religion before God? Oh, what will it avail you to pass along in this wretched condition! You have no happiness yourself in this way of living, and those around you have no happiness in your society. Surely you make for yourself a great amount of misery; and such a life as you have led is not worth much. Why not, then, be reconciled to God? Die to self and be converted, that Jesus may heal you. He wants to save you, if you will consent to be saved in His appointed way. May the Lord help you to see and correct every error is my prayer.

Brother L, you should be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. Be careful of your words. Let not Satan make you a stumbling block to others. There is a failure in your business transactions. You slight your work. You get through with it as soon as you can, thinking that it will do, when it is not well done. You lack thoroughness. You should cultivate taste and order in all you do. That which is worth doing at all is worth doing well. If you lack faithfulness in your business life you will lack in your religious life, and in the day of God the balances of the sanctuary will reveal the fact that you are wanting. This lack is a reproach to your faith. Unbelievers charge it to dishonesty, and say: "If it is such men that keep the Sabbath, I don't choose to be of that sort."

As men prove your work and find it deficient in durability, nicety, and order, they say you are a cheat, and many hard speeches have been made over it. Many oaths have been uttered over your work, and God has been blasphemed. You do not mean to be dishonest, but there is a slackness in your jobs. You think your employers are too particular, that you know what will answer as well as they; and hence this slack, loose, unfinished style attends your labor to a great extent. You should improve in this matter. You should be honorable in all your labor, and close up your work in a manner that will bear the inspection of God. Scorn to slight any job. Be faithful in that which is least.

[84]

Try to help your wife in the conflict before her. Be careful of your words, cultivate refinement of manners, courtesy, gentleness, and you will be rewarded for so doing.

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Chapter 10—Reform at Home

Brother M,

From what was shown me, there is a great work to be accomplished for you before you can be accepted in the sight of God. Self is too prominent. You possess a hasty, passionate temper, and are arbitrary and overbearing in your family. Sister M is slack and untidy in her house. She has not the elements of order and neatness in her organization. Yet she can improve in these things. Brother M, you censure your wife, you are dictatorial, and do not have that love which you should have. She dreads your oppressive spirit, but does not do what she might to correct her wrong habits, which make home distasteful and disagreeable.

Brother M, you have not taken a judicious course with your family. Your children do not love you. They have more hatred than love. Your wife does not love you. You do not take a course to be loved. You are an extremist. You are severe, exacting, arbitrary, to your children. You talk the truth to them, but do not carry its principles into your everyday life. You are not patient, forbearing, and forgiving. You have so long indulged your own spirit, you are so ready to fly into a passion if provoked, that it looks exceedingly doubtful whether you will make efforts sufficient to meet the mind of Christ. You do not possess the power of endurance, forbearance, gentleness, and love. These Christian graces must be possessed by you before you can be truly a Christian. You reserve your encouraging words, your kindly acts, for those who are not entitled to them as much as your own wife and children. Cultivate kind words, pleasant looks, praise, and approbation for your own family, for this will materially affect your happiness. Never let censure or fretful words escape your lips. Subdue this desire to rule and to place your iron heel wherever you can. You possess a most disagreeable spirit, a close spirit. With some you are selfish and stingy; for others whom you wish to think highly of you, you would sacrifice anything, even the very things your own family need. You are liberal in these cases that you may

[85]

have the praise and esteem of men. If you could purchase heaven by a great sacrifice for those to whom you choose to be liberal, you would certainly obtain it. You do not object to being put to the greatest inconvenience to advantage others, if in so doing you can exalt yourself. In these things you tithe mint and rue, while you neglect the weightier matters, justice and the love of God.

[86] You are not just in your family. You have a work to do there. Make your wife comfortable and happy first; then consider the condition of your children. Provide them with comfortable food and clothing. Then if you can, without limiting your wife and children, help those who most need help, and bestow your favors where they will be appreciated; it will be praiseworthy for you to be liberal. But your first and most sacred duty is to your family. They should not be robbed for others to be favored. Let your benevolence, your liberality, be seen in your own family. Give them tangible proofs of your affection, interest, care, and love. This has much to do with your happiness. Cease finding fault and scolding your wife, for this only makes it much harder for you and makes a hell for her.

Angels of God will not abide in your family until there is a different order of things. It is not your means that is wanted. Yet when reproved you have thought it was your means that the church wanted. You are deceived here. You have been too liberal with your means, for the very reason that you have thought this was to obtain salvation for you and buy you a position in the church. No, indeed! it is you that is wanted, not the little means you possess. If you would be transformed by the renewing of your mind and be converted, deal truly with your own soul. It is all that the church require. You have deceived yourself. If any man seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain. Treat your family in a manner that Heaven can approve, and so that peace may be in your dwelling. There needs to be everything done for your family. Your children have had your bad example before them; you have blamed, and censured, and manifested a passionate spirit at home, while you would, at the same time, address the throne of grace, attend meeting, and bear testimony in favor of the truth. These exhibitions have led your children to despise you and the truth you profess. They have no confidence in your Christianity. They believe you to be a hypocrite, and it is true that you are a sadly deceived man. You can no more

enter heaven without a thorough change than could Simon Magus, who thought that the Holy Ghost could be bought with money. Your family have seen your overreaching spirit, your readiness to take advantage of others, your penurious spirit toward those with whom you sometimes deal, and they despise you for it; yet they will too surely follow in your footsteps of wrongdoing. [87]

Your deal is not what it should be. It is difficult for you to deal justly and to love mercy. You have dishonored the cause of God by your life. You have contended for the truth, but not in a right spirit. You have hindered souls from embracing the truth who otherwise would have done so. They have excused themselves by pointing to the errors and wrongs of professed Sabbathkeepers, saying: "They are no better than I; they will lie, cheat, exaggerate, get angry, and boastingly talk of their own praise; such a religion as this I do not want." Thus the unconsecrated lives of these shortcoming Sabbathkeepers make them stumbling blocks to sinners.

The work now before you must commence in your family. You have tried hard to improve outwardly; but the work has been too much on the surface, an outside work and not a work of the heart. Set your heart in order, humble yourself before God, and implore His grace to help you. Do not, like the hypocritical Pharisees, do things to make you appear devotional and righteous in the eyes of others. Break your heart before God, and know that it is impossible for you to deceive the holy angels. Your words and acts are all open to their inspection. Your motives and the intents and purposes of your heart stand revealed to their gaze. The most secret things are not hid from them. Oh, then, rend your heart, and be not overanxious to make your brethren think you are right when you are not! Be circumspect in your family. You are watching to see others' wrongs, but do this no more. The work you have now to do is to overcome your own wrongs, to battle with your strong internal foes. Deal justly with the widow and the fatherless. Do not throw over your acts the flimsy covering of deception, to influence those whom you greatly wish would think you right, while your motives and acts will not bear the construction you would have put upon them.

Cease all contention, and try to be a peacemaker. Love not in word, but in deed and in truth. Your works are to bear the inspection of the judgment. Will you deal truly with your own soul? Do not [88]

deceive yourself. Oh, remember that God is not mocked! Those who possess everlasting life will have all they can do to set their houses in order. They must commence at their own hearts and follow up the work until victories, earnest victories, are gained. Self must die, and Christ must live in you and be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life. You now have precious hours of probation granted you to form a right character even at your advanced age. You now have a period allotted you in which to redeem the time. You cannot in your own strength put away your errors and wrongs; they have been increasing upon you for years, because you have not seen them in their hideousness and in the strength of God resolutely put them away. By living faith you must lay hold on an arm that is mighty to save. Humble your poor, proud, self-righteous heart before God; get low, very low, all broken in your sinfulness at His feet. Devote yourself to the work of preparation. Rest not until you can truly say: My Redeemer liveth, and, because He lives, I shall live also.

If you lose heaven, you lose everything; if you gain heaven, you gain everything. Do not make a mistake in this matter, I implore you. Eternal interests are here involved. Be thorough. May the God of all grace so enlighten your understanding that you may discern eternal things, that by the light of truth your own errors, which are many, may be discovered to you just as they are, that you may make the necessary effort to put them away, and in the place of this evil, bitter fruit may bring forth fruit which is precious unto eternal life. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Every tree is known by its fruit.

[89] What kind of fruit shall henceforth be found upon this tree? The fruit you bear will determine whether you are a good tree, or one of which Christ shall say to his angel: "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

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Chapter 11—A Violated Conscience

Dear Brother N,

I feel compelled by a sense of duty to address you a few lines. I have been shown some things in regard to your case which I dare not withhold. I was shown that Satan took advantage of you because your wife did not embrace the truth. You were thrown into the society of a corrupt woman, one whose steps take hold on hell. She professed great sympathy for you because of the opposition you received from your wife. Like the serpent in Eden, she made her manners fascinating. She cast the impression on your mind that you were an abused man; that your wife did not appreciate your feelings and reciprocate your affections; that a mistake had been made in your marriage relation; until you imagined the marriage vows of lifelong constancy to her whom you had taken as your wife, to be as galling chains. You went for sympathy to this apparent angel in speech. You poured into her ears that which should have been entrusted alone to your wife whom you had vowed to love, honor, and cherish as long as you both should live. You forgot to watch and pray always lest you should *enter into* temptation. Your soul was marred by a crime. You stamped your life record in heaven with a fearful blot. Yet deep humiliation and repentance before God will be acceptable to Him. The blood of Christ can avail to wash these sins away.

You have fallen, terribly fallen. Satan lured you on into his net, and then left you to disentangle yourself as best you could. You have been harassed and perplexed, and fearfully tempted. A guilty conscience troubles you. You distrust yourself and imagine that everyone else distrusts you. You are jealous of yourself and imagine that jealousy exists in other hearts toward you. You have not confidence in yourself and imagine that your brethren have not confidence in you. Satan often presents the past before you and tells you that it is of no use for you to try to live out the truth, the way is too strait for you. You have been overcome; now Satan takes

[90]

advantage of your sinful course to make you believe that you are past redemption. You are on Satan's battlefield engaged in a severe conflict. The barrier which is thrown around every family circle, and which makes it sacred, you have broken down. And now Satan harasses you almost constantly. You are not at rest. You are not at peace, and you seek to make your brethren responsible for your conflicting feelings and doubts and jealousies; you feel that they are at fault, that they do not give you attention. The trouble is with yourself. You want your own way, and do not rend your heart before God, and with brokenness and contrition cast yourself all broken, sinful, and polluted, upon His mercy. Your efforts to save yourself, if persisted in, will result in your certain ruin.

Cease your jealousies and your faultfinding. Turn your attention to your own case and by humble repentance, relying alone upon the blood of Christ, save your own soul. Make thorough work for eternity. If you turn from the truth you are a ruined man, your family is ruined. After the fortifications preserving sacred the privacy and privileges of the family relation have been once broken down, it is difficult to build them up; but in the strength of God, and in His strength alone, you can do this. Truth, sacred truth, is your anchor, which will save you from drifting in the downward current to crime and destruction.

[91] A conscience once violated is greatly weakened. It needs the strength of constant watchfulness and unceasing prayer. You are standing in a slippery place. You need all the strength that the truth can give to fortify you and save you from making entire shipwreck. Life and death are before you; which will you choose? Had you seen the necessity of being firmly settled upon principle, not moving from impulse, and not being easily discouraged, but prepared to endure hardness, you would not have been overcome as you have been. You have moved from impulse. You have not, like our faultless Pattern, been willing to endure the contradiction of sinners against yourself. We are exhorted to remember Him who endured this, lest we become weary and faint in our minds. You have been weak as a child, having no power of endurance. You have not felt the necessity of being established, strengthened, settled, grounded, and built up in the faith.

You have felt that it might be your duty to teach the truth to others instead of being taught yourself. But you must be willing to be a learner, to receive the truth from others, and must cease your faultfinding, your jealousies, your complaining, and in meekness receive the engrafted word which is able to save your soul. It rests with you whether you will have happiness or misery. You have once yielded to temptation and cannot now trust your own strength. Satan has great power over your mind, and you will have nothing to hold you when you break from the restraining influence of the truth. This has been as a safeguard to you to restrain you from crime and iniquity. Your only hope is to seek for thorough conversion and redeem the past by your well-ordered life and godly conversation.

You have moved from impulse. Excitement has been agreeable to your organization. Your only hope now is to sincerely repent of your past transgressions of God's law and purify your soul by obeying the truth. Cultivate purity of thought and purity of life. The grace of God will be your strength to restrain your passions and curb your appetites. Earnest prayer and watching thereunto will bring the Holy Spirit to your aid to perfect the work and make you like your unerring Pattern. [92]

If you choose to throw off the sacred, restraining influence of the truth, Satan will lead you captive at his will. You will be in danger of giving scope to your appetites and passions, giving loose rein to lusts, to evil and abominable desires. Instead of bearing in your countenance a calm serenity under trial and affliction, like faithful Enoch, having your face radiant with hope and that peace which passeth understanding, you will stamp your countenance with carnal thoughts, with lustful desires. You will bear the impress of the satanic instead of the divine.

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the *divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” It is now your privilege, by humble confession and sincere repentance, to take words and return unto the Lord. The precious blood of Christ can cleanse you from all impurity, remove all your defilement, and make you perfect in Him. The mercies of Christ are still within your reach if you will accept them. For the sake of your wronged wife, and your children, the fruit of your own body, cease

to do evil, and learn to do well. That which you sow, you shall also reap. If you sow to the flesh you shall of the flesh reap corruption. If you sow to the Spirit you shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

[93] You must overcome your sensitiveness and faultfinding. You are jealous that others do not give you all the attention you think you should have. The experience founded in feeling, and savoring of fanaticism, you must not adhere to. It is unsafe. Move from principle, from thorough understanding. Search the Scriptures, and be able to give to every man that asketh you the reasons of the hope which is in you, with meekness and fear. Let self-exaltation die. “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.” When harassed with temptations and evil thoughts, there is but One to whom you can flee for relief and succor. Flee to Him in your weakness. When near Him, Satan’s arrows are broken and cannot harm you. Your trials and temptations borne in God will purify and humble, but will not destroy or endanger you.

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Chapter 12—Warnings and Reproofs

Dear Brother O,

I was shown that you were enshrouded in darkness, which was not relieved by rays of light from Jesus. You did not seem sensible of your danger, but were in a state of listless indifference, unfeeling and unconcerned. I inquired the cause of this much-to-be-dreaded condition, and was pointed back for years, and shown that you had not, since you embraced the truth, been sanctified through it. You have gratified your appetite and your lustful passions to the destruction of your own spirituality. I was shown that God had given light through the gifts placed in the church, which would instruct, counsel, guide, reprove, and warn. These testimonies which you have professed to believe were from God, you have not regarded to live them out. To disregard light is to reject it. The rejection of light leaves men captives bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief.

I was shown that you have increased your family without realizing the responsibility you were bringing upon yourself. It has been impossible for you to do justice to your companion or to your children. Your first wife ought not to have died, but you brought upon her cares and burdens which ended in the sacrifice of her life. Your present wife has a hard lot; her vitality is nearly exhausted. By increasing your family so rapidly, you have been kept in a state of poverty, and the mother, engaged in rearing the young members of the family, has not had a fair chance for her life. She has nursed her children under the most unfavorable circumstances, when heated over the cookstove. She could not instruct them as she should, nor regulate their habits of eating and working. The result of eating food not the most healthful, and otherwise violating the laws which God has established in our being, has brought disease and premature death upon your elder children. Disease has been transmitted to your offspring, and the free use of flesh meats has increased the difficulty. The eating of pork has aroused and strengthened a most deadly humor which was in the system. Your offspring are robbed of vitality

[94]

before they are born. You have not added to virtue knowledge, and your children have not been taught how to preserve themselves in the best condition of health. Never should one morsel of swine's flesh be placed upon your table.

[95] Your children have come up, instead of being brought up and educated to the end that they might become Christians. In many respects your cattle have received better treatment than your children. You have not done your duty to your children, but have left them to grow up in ignorance. You have not realized the responsibility you took upon yourself in bringing into the world so numerous a flock, that you were in a great measure accountable for their salvation. You cannot throw off this responsibility. You have robbed your children of their rights by not interesting yourself in their education and instructing them patiently and faithfully in regard to forming characters for heaven. Your course has done much to destroy their confidence in you. You are exacting, overbearing, tyrannical; you fret, and scold, and censure, and by so doing wean their affections from you. You treat them as though they had no just rights, as though they were machines to turn in your hands according to your pleasure. You provoke them to wrath, and often discourage them. You do not give them love and affection. Love begets love, affection begets affection. The spirit which you manifest toward your children will be reflected upon you.

You are in a critical condition, and have no true sense of it. It is impossible for an intemperate man to be a patient man. First temperance, then patience. You have so long lived for self, and followed the imagination of your own heart, that you cannot discern sacred things. Your lustful appetite and passions have controlled you. The higher order of mental organs has been weakened and controlled by the lower, baser organs. The animal propensities have been gaining strength. When reason is left to be controlled by appetite, the high sense of sacred things is impaired. The mind is debased, the affections are unsanctified, and the words and acts testify what is in the heart. God has been displeased and dishonored by your conversation and your deportment. Your words have not been select and well chosen; low, vulgar conversation comes naturally to your lips, even in the presence of children and youth. Your influence in this respect has been bad.

Your example has not been right, and you have stood directly in the way of your own children, and the children of Sabbathkeepers, seeking the Lord. Your course, in this respect, cannot be too severely censured. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Your heart needs to be purified, cleansed, sanctified, through obedience to the truth. Nothing can save you but a thorough conversion—a true sense of your sinful ways and a thorough transformation by the renewing of your mind.

[96]

You have been very zealous to plead the necessity of not denying our faith by our works, and have made your faith an excuse for not granting your children an opportunity to obtain an education in even the common branches. Knowledge in regard to yourself is what you need, and you will yet have to see the necessity of obtaining it. Knowledge is what your children need but do not have the privilege of obtaining. With this great lack they cannot become useful members of society, and they will be deficient in their religious education. A weighty responsibility rests at your door. You are shortening the life of your wife. How can she glorify God in her body and spirit, which are His?

God has given you light and knowledge, which you have professed to believe came direct from Him, instructing you to deny appetite. You know that the use of swine’s flesh is contrary to His express command, given not because He wished to especially show His authority, but because it would be injurious to those who should eat it. Its use would cause the blood to become impure, so that scrofula and other humors would corrupt the system, and the whole organism would suffer. Especially would the fine, sensitive nerves of the brain become enfeebled and so beclouded that sacred things would not be discerned, but be placed upon the low level with common things. Light showing that disease is caused by using this gross article of food has come just as soon as God’s people could bear it. Have you heeded the light?

[97] You have gone directly contrary to the light which God has been pleased to give in regard to the use of tobacco. The gratification of appetite has eclipsed the light given of Heaven, and you have made a God of this hurtful indulgence. It is your idol. You have bowed to this instead of God, at the same time professing great faith in the visions, but acting entirely contrary to them. For years you have not advanced one step in the divine life, but have been growing weaker and weaker, darker and darker. You have felt sadly afflicted over the course of Brother P in opposing the truth as he has done. You have ascribed the weak, discouraged state of the church to his opposition. It is true that he has been a great hindrance to the advancement of the cause of God in ----- . But the course you have pursued, while professing to know the truth and to have an experience in the cause of God, has been a greater hindrance than his course. If you had stood in the counsel of God and been sanctified through the truth which you professed to believe, Brother P would not have had all the doubts he has had. Your position as a defender of the visions has been a stumbling block to those who were unbelieving. I was shown that your brother tried to stand up under the heavy burdens which the sad condition of the church brought upon him until he nearly fell under the weight he was bearing, and left for his life. I saw that God's care was over Brother and Sister R, and if their faith remained unwavering they would yet see the salvation of God in their own house and in the church.

[98] I was shown the case of dear Brother and Sister S. They had been passing through the dark waters, and the billows had nearly gone over their heads; yet God loved them, and if they would only trust their ways to Him He would bring them forth from the furnace of affliction purified. Brother S has looked upon the dark side, and doubted whether he was a child of God—doubted his salvation. I saw that he should not labor too hard to believe, but should trust in God as a child would confide in its parents. He worries too much—he worries himself out of the arms of Jesus, and gives the enemy a chance to tempt and annoy him. God knows the feebleness of the body and of the mind, and will require no more of him than He will give him strength to perform. He has tried to be faithful and true to his profession. He has failed in his life in a number of things, all ignorantly. In regard to the discipline of his children, he

has considered it his duty to be strict, and has carried this discipline too far. He has treated small offenses with too great severity. This has had an influence to wean, in a degree, the affection of the son from the father. During his sickness Brother S has had a diseased imagination. His nervous system has been all deranged, and he has thought that his children did not feel for him and love him as they should; but this was the result of disease. Satan wished to destroy him and dishearten and discourage his poor children. But God has not laid this to his charge. His children have greater burdens to bear than many that are older than they, and they deserve careful discipline, judicious training, mingled with sympathy, love, and great tenderness.

The mother has had especial strength and wisdom from God to encourage and help her husband, and to do much in binding her children to her heart and strengthening their affection for their parents and for one another. I saw that angels of mercy were hovering over this family, although prospects looked so dark and foreboding. Those who have had bowels of compassion for Brother S will never have cause to regret it, for he is a child of God, beloved of Him. The depressed state of the church has been very detrimental to his health. I saw him looking on the dark side, distrustful of himself, and looking down into the grave. He must not dwell on these things, but look to Jesus, a pattern that is unerring. He must encourage cheerfulness and courage in the Lord—talk faith, talk hope; rest in God, and not feel that a severe, taxing effort is required on his part. [99] All that God requires is simple trust—to drop into His arms with all his weakness, and brokenness, and imperfection, and Jesus will help the helpless, and strengthen and build up those who feel that they are very weakness itself. God will be glorified in his affliction, through the patience, faith, and submission exemplified by him. Oh! this will prove the power of the truth we profess; it is consolation when we need it; it is support when every prop of an earthly nature, which has been a measurable support, is removed.

I was also shown the case of Brother T. He has placed himself in a condition of bondage to which God did not call him. God is not pleased when aged fathers give their stewardship into the hands of unconsecrated children, even though these profess the truth. But when the means which the Lord has entrusted to His people is placed

in the hands of unbelieving children who are enemies to God, He is dishonored; for that which should be retained in the ranks of the Lord is placed in the enemy's ranks.

Again, Brother T has acted the part of a deceiver. He has used tobacco, but would have his brethren think that he did not use it. I saw that this sin has prevented his advancement in the divine life. He has a work to do, at his advanced age, to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. He has loved the truth, and has suffered for the truth's sake. Now he should so estimate the eternal reward, the treasure in the heavens, the immortal inheritance, the crown of glory that is unfading, that he can cheerfully sacrifice the gratification of depraved appetite, let the consequence or suffering be ever so great, in order to accomplish the work of purification of the flesh and of the spirit.

[100] I was then shown his daughter-in-law. She is beloved of God, but held in servile bondage, fearing, trembling, desponding, doubting, and very nervous. This sister should not feel that she must yield her will to a godless youth who has less years upon his head than herself. She should remember that her marriage does not destroy her individuality. God has claims upon her higher than any earthly claim. Christ has bought her with His own blood. She is not her own. She fails to put her entire trust in God, and submits to yield her convictions, her conscience, to an overbearing, tyrannical man, fired up by Satan whenever his satanic majesty can work effectually through him to intimidate this trembling, shrinking soul. She has so many times been thrown into agitation that her nervous system is shattered, and she is merely a wreck. Is it the will of the Lord that this sister should be in this state and God be robbed of her service? No. Her marriage was a deception of the devil. Yet now she should make the best of it, treat her husband with tenderness, and make him as happy as she can without violating her conscience; for if he remains in his rebellion, this world is all the heaven he will have. But to deprive herself of the privilege of meetings, to gratify an overbearing husband possessing the spirit of the dragon, is not according to God's will. He wants this trembling soul to flee to Him. He will be a covert to her. He will be like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Only have faith, trust in God and He will strengthen and bless. All three of her children are susceptible to the

influences of the truth and Spirit of God. Could these children be as favorably situated as are many Sabbathkeeping children, all would be converted and enlist in the army of the Lord.

I was then shown a young girl of the same place, who had departed from God and was enshrouded in darkness. Said the angel: "She did run well for a season; what did hinder her?" I was pointed back and saw that it was a change of surroundings. She was associating with youth like herself, who were filled with hilarity and glee, pride, and love of the world. Had she regarded the words of Christ, she need not have yielded to the enemy. Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Temptation may be all around us, but this does not make it necessary that we should enter into temptation. The truth is worth everything. Its influence tends not to degrade, but to elevate, refine, purify, and exalt to immortality and the throne of God. Said the angel: "Will ye have Christ, or the world?" Satan presents the world with its most alluring, flattering charms to poor mortals, and they gaze upon it, and its glitter and tinsel eclipse the glory of heaven and that life which is as enduring as the throne of God. A life of peace, happiness, joy unspeakable, which shall know nothing of sorrow, sadness, pain, nor death, is sacrificed for a short lifetime of sin. All who will turn from the pleasures of earth, and with Moses choose 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 the world, will, with faithful Moses, receive the unfading crown of immortality and the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The mother of this girl has at different times been susceptible to the influence of the truth, but she has soon lost the impression through indecision. She lacks decision of character, is too vacillating, and is affected too much by unbelievers. She must encourage decision, fortitude, steadiness of purpose, which will not be swerved to the right or left by circumstances. She must not be in a state of such vacillation. If she does not reform in this respect she will be easily ensnared and taken captive by Satan at his will. She will have to possess perseverance and firmness in the work of overcoming, or she will be overcome and lose her soul. The work of salvation is not child's play, to be taken hold of at will and let alone at pleasure. It is the steady purpose, the untiring effort, that will gain the victory

[101]

[102]

at last. It is he who endureth to the end that shall be saved. It is they who patiently continue in well-doing that shall have eternal life and the immortal reward. If this dear sister had been true to her convictions, and had possessed steadiness of purpose, she might have exerted a saving influence in her family, over her husband, and she might have been a special help to her daughter. All who are engaged in this warfare with Satan and his host have a close work before them. They must not be as impressible as wax, that the fire can melt into any form. They must endure hardness as faithful soldiers, stand at their post, and be true every time.

God's Spirit is striving with this entire family. He will save them if they are willing to be saved in His appointed way. Now is the hour of probation. Now is the day of salvation. Now, now, is God's time. In Christ's stead we beseech them to become reconciled to God while they may, and in humility, with fear and trembling, work out their salvation. I was shown that it was the work of Satan to keep the church in a state of insensibility, that the youth may be secured in his own ranks. I saw that the youth were susceptible of the influence of the truth. If the parents would consecrate themselves to God and labor with interest for the conversion of their children, God would reveal Himself to them and magnify His name among them.

I was then shown the case of Brother U, that Satan had been fastening his bands about him and leading him away from God and his brethren. Brother V has had an influence to greatly darken this brother's understanding with his unbelief. I was pointed back and shown that the wisest course was not pursued in this brother's case. There was not sufficient reason why he should have been left out of the church. He should have been encouraged, even urged, to unite with his brethren in church capacity. He was in a more fit state to come into the church than several who were united with it. He did not understand things clearly, and the enemy used this misunderstanding to his injury. God, who sees hearts, has been better pleased with the life and deportment of Brother U than with the lives of some who were united with the church. It is the Lord's will that he should come close to his brethren, that he may be a strength to them and they a strength to him.

The wife of Brother U can be reached by the truth. In many respects her deportment is not as questionable as that of some who

profess to believe all the truth. Yet she must not look at the failures and wrongs of those who profess better things, but earnestly inquire: What is truth? She can exert an influence for good in connection with her companion. These souls, sanctified through the truth, can in the strength of God be pillars in the church and have a saving influence upon others. These dear souls are accountable to God for the influence they exert. They either gather with Christ or scatter abroad. God requires the weight of their influence in His cause on the side of truth. Jesus has bought them by His own blood. They are not their own, for they have been bought with a price. Therefore the work is before them to glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His. We are doing work for eternity. It is of the highest importance that every hour be employed in the service of God, and thus to secure a treasure in heaven.

I was shown your case, Brother V, in connection with the church at -----, two years ago. The vision related to the past, present, and future. As we travel and I stand before the people in different places, the Spirit of the Lord brings before me clearly the cases I have been shown, reviving the matter previously given me. I was shown you as receiving the Sabbath, while you stood opposed to important truths connected with the Sabbath. You were not fortified with all the truth. I then saw your mind directed in the channel of unbelief, of doubt and distrust, and seeking to obtain those things which were calculated to strengthen unbelief and darkness. Instead of searching for evidence to strengthen faith, you took the opposite course, and Satan directed your mind in a course to suit his own purposes. You love to combat, and when you enter the field of battle you know not when to lay down your arms. You love to argue, and have indulged in this until it has led you from the light, led you from the truth and from God, to where you have been enshrouded in darkness, and unbelief has taken possession of your mind. You have been blinded by Satan.

[104]

Like faithless Thomas, you have considered it a virtue to doubt unless you could have unmistakable evidence, removing from your mind all cause for doubt. Did Jesus commend the unbelieving Thomas while granting him the evidence which he declared he would have before he believed? Jesus said unto him: "Be not faithless, but believing." Thomas answered: "My Lord and my God."

He is now compelled to believe; there is no room to doubt. Jesus then said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have *not seen*, and yet *have believed*." You were represented to me as uniting with the rebel leader and his host to annoy, perplex, dishearten, discourage, and overthrow those who are battling for the right, who are standing under the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Your influence, I was shown, has turned souls from keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. You have employed your talents and your skill to manufacture weapons to place in the hands of the enemies of God, to fight those who are trying to obey God in keeping His commandments. While angels have been commissioned to strengthen the things that remain, to withstand and counteract your influence, they have looked with the deepest grief upon your work to dishearten and destroy. You have caused pure, sinless, holy angels to weep.

Those who are living amid the perils of the last days, days which are characterized by the masses turning from the truth of God to fables, will have close work to turn from the fables which are prepared for them on every hand, and have an appetite to feast upon unpopular truth. Those who turn from these fables to truth are despised, hated, and persecuted by those who are presenting fables to the people for their reception. Satan is at war with the remnant who are endeavoring to keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. Evil angels are commissioned to employ men as their agents upon the earth. These can the most successfully exert an influence to make Satan's attacks effective against the remnant whom God calls "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." This, Satan is determined to hinder. He will employ everyone who will engage in his service to hinder the chosen people of God from showing forth the praises of Him who has called them from darkness into His marvelous light. To hide, to cover up this light, to cause people to distrust it, to disbelieve it, is the work of the great rebel and his host. While Jesus is purifying His people unto Himself, redeeming them from all iniquity, Satan will employ his forces to hinder the work and prevent the perfection of the saints. He does not exert his power upon those who are all covered up with deception

and walled in by fables and error, and who make no effort to receive and obey the truth. He knows he is sure of them; but those who are seeking for truth, that they may obey it in the love of it, are the ones who excite his malice and stir his ire. He can never weaken them while they keep close to Jesus; therefore he is pleased when he can lead them in a course of disobedience.

When we sin against God, there is a disposition to fall behind Jesus a day's journey; we seek to separate from His company because it is distasteful, for every ray of light from His divine presence points to the sin of which we have been guilty. Satan exults over the sins which he has induced souls to commit, and he makes the most of all these failures and sins. He rehearses them to the angels of God, and taunts them with these weaknesses and failures. He is in every sense an accuser of the brethren, and exults over every sin and wrong which God's people are beguiled to commit. You, Brother V, have been engaged in this same work to quite an extent. You have taken what appeared to you like wrongs, weaknesses, and errors in the ranks of Sabbathkeeping Adventists, and have brought them to the notice of the enemies of our faith who were warring against that company unto whom angels of heaven were ministering, and whose cause Jesus, their Advocate, was pleading before His Father. He cries, "Spare them, Father, spare them, they are the purchase of My blood," and lifts to His Father His wounded hands. You have been guilty before God of a great sin. You have been taking advantage of those things which grieve, which bring anguish upon the people of God as they see some of their numbers unconsecrated and frequently overcome by Satan. Instead of aiding these erring souls to get right, you have triumphantly made their errors conspicuous to those who hated them because they professed to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. You have made it very hard for those who were engaged in the work of saving the erring, hunting up the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Because of Israel's disobedience and departure from God, they were allowed to be brought into close places and to suffer adversity; their enemies were permitted to make war with them, to humble them and lead them to seek God in their trouble and distress. "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim." This took place immediately after the children of Israel had given themselves up

to their rebellious murmurings and to unjust, unreasonable complaints against their leaders whom God had qualified and appointed to lead them through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. The Lord directed their course where there was no water, to prove them, to see if, after receiving so many evidences of His power, they had learned to turn to Him in their affliction, and had repented of their past rebellious murmurings against Him. They had charged Moses and Aaron with selfish motives in bringing them from Egypt to kill them and their children with hunger, that they might be enriched with their possessions. In doing this the Israelites ascribed to man that which they had received unmistakable evidence was from God alone, whose power is unlimited. These wonderful manifestations of the power of God He would have them ascribe to Him alone, and magnify His name upon the earth. The Lord brought them over the same ground of trial repeatedly to prove whether they had yet learned His dealings and repented of their sinful disobedience and rebellious murmurings. In Rephidim, when the people thirsted for water, they were again proud, and showed that they still possessed an evil heart of unbelief, of murmuring, of rebellion, which revealed the fact that it would not yet be safe to establish them in the land of Canaan. If they would not glorify God in their trials and adversity, in their travels through the wilderness to the Canaan in prospect, while God was continually giving them unmistakable evidence of His power and glory, and His care for them, they would not magnify His name and glorify Him when established in the land of Canaan, surrounded with blessings and prosperity. Because the people thirsted for water, they were provoked, so that Moses feared for his life.

[108] When Israel was assailed by the Amalekites, Moses gave Joshua directions to fight with their enemies while he would stand with the rod of God in his hand, with his hand raised toward heaven in the sight of the people, showing to rebellious, murmuring Israel that their strength and power was in God. He was their might and the source of their strength. There was no power in that rod; God wrought through Moses. Moses had to receive all his strength from above. When he held up his hands, Israel prevailed; when he let down his hands, Amalek prevailed. When Moses became weary, preparations were needful to keep his weary hands continually raised toward heaven. Aaron and Hur prepared a seat for Moses, and then

both engaged in holding up his weary hands until the going down of the sun. These men thus showed to Israel their duty to sustain Moses in his arduous work while he should receive the word from God to speak to them. This act was also to show Israel that God alone held their destiny in His hands, that He was their acknowledged leader. “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.... For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.” Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.”

As the angel of God presented these facts in the travels and experience of the children of Israel, I was deeply impressed with the especial regard of God for His people. Notwithstanding their errors, their disobedience, and their rebellion, they were still God’s chosen people. He had especially honored them by coming down from His holy habitation upon Mount Sinai and, in majesty and glory and awful grandeur, speaking the Ten Commandments in the audience of all the people and writing them with His own finger on the tables of stone. The Lord says of His people Israel: “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers.”

[109]

I was shown that those who are trying to obey God and purify their souls through obedience to the truth are God’s chosen people, His modern Israel. God says of them, through Peter: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar

people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” As it was a crime for Amalek to take advantage of the children of Israel in their weakness and weariness, to annoy, perplex, and discourage them, so it was no small sin for you to be closely watching to discover the weakness, the haltings, the errors and sins of God’s afflicted people, and expose the same to their enemies. You were doing Satan’s work, not the work of God. Many of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists in ----- have been very weak. They have been miserable representatives of the truth. They have not been an honor to the cause of present truth, and the cause would have been better off without them. You have taken the unconsecrated lives of Sabbathkeepers as an excuse for your occupying a position of doubt and unbelief. It has also [110] strengthened your unbelief to see that some of these unconsecrated ones were professing strong faith in the visions, vindicating them when opposed, and defending them with warmth, while, at the same time that they professed so much zeal, they were disregarding the teachings given through vision and were going directly contrary to them. In this respect they were stumbling blocks to Brother U, and were bringing the visions into disrepute by their course of action.

Brother V, I was shown that you had a proud heart, and when you thought your writings were slighted at the Review office, your pride was touched, and you commenced a warfare which has been like Saul’s kicking against the pricks. You have joined hands with those who turn the truth of God into a lie. You have strengthened the hands of sinners and opposed the counsel of God against your own soul. You have been warring against that of which you had no knowledge. You have not known what work you were doing. I saw your wife wrestling with God in prayer, her faith firmly grasping you and at the same time fixed upon the throne, pleading the never-failing promises of God. Her heart has ached as she has seen you persisting in your warfare against the truth. I was shown that you were doing this ignorantly, blinded by Satan. While engaged in this warfare you were not increasing in spirituality and devotion to God. You had not the witness that your ways pleased God. You had a zeal, but not according to knowledge. You had no experience in my calling, had scarcely seen me, and had no knowledge of my work.

Brother V, you possess qualifications which would make you of special service in the church at -----, or in any other church, were your talents devoted to the upbuilding of the cause of God. I saw that your children were now in a state to be impressed with the truth, and Jesus was pleading for you, Brother V: "Spare him a little longer." I was shown that if you were converted to the truth, you would make a pillar in the church, and could honor God by your influence, sanctified through the truth. [111]

I saw angels of mercy hovering about Brother V. I was shown that he was greatly deceived in the moral worth and standing before God of that class who have withdrawn from the body. A few honest ones are among them; these will be rescued; but the most of them have long been unconsecrated in heart, and the close testimonies have been in their way, a yoke of bondage to them. They have thrown off the yoke and retained their corrupt ways. God calls upon you to separate from them. Cut loose from these whose delight it is to war against the truth of God. A little from this, true character will be developed. They are of that class who love and make a lie.

If your whole interest is in the truth and the preparatory work for this time you will be sanctified through the truth and receive a fitness for immortality. You are in danger of being too exacting with your children and not as patient as is necessary. The thorough work of preparation must go on with all who profess the truth, until we stand before the throne of God without fault, without a spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. God will cleanse you if you will submit to the purifying process.

**Number Sixteen—Testimony for the
Church**

[112]

Chapter 13—Object of Personal Testimonies

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

The Lord has again manifested Himself to me. June 12, 1868, while speaking to the brethren in the house of worship at Battle Creek, Michigan, the Spirit of God came upon me, and in an instant I was in vision. The view was extensive. I had commenced to write the fifth volume of *Spiritual Gifts*; but as I had testimonies of a practical nature which you should have immediately, I left that work to prepare this little pamphlet.

In this last vision I was shown that which fully justifies my course in publishing personal testimonies. When the Lord singles out individual cases and specifies their wrongs, others, who have not been shown in vision, frequently take it for granted that they are right, or nearly so. If one is reproved for a special wrong, brethren and sisters should carefully examine themselves to see wherein they have failed and wherein they have been guilty of the same sin. They should possess the spirit of humble confession. If others think them right, it does not make them so. God looks at the heart. He is proving and testing souls in this manner. In rebuking the wrongs of one, He designs to correct many. But if they fail to take the reproof to themselves, and flatter themselves that God passes over their errors because He does not especially single them out, they deceive their own souls and will be shut up in darkness and be left to their own ways to follow the imagination of their own hearts.

[113]

Many are dealing falsely with their own souls and are in a great deception in regard to their true condition before God. He employs ways and means to best serve His purpose and to prove what is in the hearts of His professed followers. He makes plain the wrongs of some that others may thus be warned, and fear, and shun those errors. By self-examination they may find that they are doing the same things which God condemns in others. If they really desire to serve God, and fear to offend Him, they will not wait for their sins to be specified before they make confession and with humble

repentance return unto the Lord. They will forsake the things which have displeased God, according to the light given to others. If, on the contrary, those who are not right see that they are guilty of the very sins that have been reproved in others, yet continue in the same unconsecrated course because they have not been specially named, they endanger their own souls, and will be led captive by Satan at his will.

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Chapter 14—Moving to Battle Creek

In the vision given me June 12, 1868, I was shown that a great work might be accomplished in bringing souls to the knowledge of the truth, were proper exertions made. In every town, city, and village there are persons who would embrace the truth if it were brought before them in a judicious manner. Missionaries are needed among us, self-sacrificing missionaries, who, like our great Exemplar, would not please themselves, but live to do others good.

[114] I was shown that as a people we are deficient. Our works are not in accordance with our faith. Our faith testifies that we are living under the proclamation of the most solemn and important message that was ever given to mortals. Yet in full view of this fact, our efforts, our zeal, our spirit of self-sacrifice, do not compare with the character of the work. We should awake from the dead, and Christ will give us life.

With many of our brethren and sisters there is a strong inclination to live in Battle Creek. Families have been coming from all directions to reside there, and many more have their faces set that way. Some who have come to Battle Creek held offices in the little churches from which they moved, and their help and strength were needed there. When such arrive at Battle Creek, and meet with the numerous Sabbathkeepers there, they frequently feel that their testimonies are not needed, and their talent is therefore buried.

Some choose Battle Creek because of the religious privileges it affords, yet wonder that their spirituality decreases after their sojourn there a few months. Is there not a cause? The object of many has been to advantage themselves pecuniarily—to engage in business which will yield them greater profits. Their expectations in this particular may be realized, while they have dearth of soul and become dwarfed in spiritual things. They take no special burden upon themselves because they think they would be out of place. They do not know where to take hold to labor in so large a church, and therefore become idlers in their Master's vineyard. All who

pursue this course only increase the labor of those who have the burden of the work in the church. They are as so many dead weights. There are many in Battle Creek who are fast becoming withered branches.

Some who have been workers, and who have an experience in the cause of present truth, move to Battle Creek and lay off their burden. Instead of feeling the necessity of double energy, watchfulness, prayer, and diligent performance of duty, they do scarcely anything at all. Those who have burdens to bear in the office, and have not time for duties aside from their work, are obliged to fill responsible positions in the church and to perform important, taxing labor which if they do not do will remain undone because these others will not take the burden. [115]

Brethren who wish to change their location, who have the glory of God in view, and feel that individual responsibility rests upon them to do others good, to benefit and save souls for whom Christ withheld not His precious life, should move into towns and villages where there is but little or no light and where they can be of real service and bless others with their labor and experience. Missionaries are wanted to go into towns and villages and raise the standard of truth, that God may have His witnesses scattered all over the land, that the light of truth may penetrate where it has not yet reached, and the standard of truth be raised where it is not yet known. The brethren should not flock together because it is more agreeable to them, but should seek to fulfill their high calling to do others good, to be instrumental in the salvation of at least one soul. But more may be saved than one.

The sole object of this work should not be merely to increase our reward in heaven. Some are selfish in this respect. In view of what Christ has done for us, and what He has suffered for sinners, we should, out of pure, disinterested love for souls, imitate His example by sacrificing our own pleasure and convenience for their good. The joy set before Christ, which sustained Him in all His sufferings, was the salvation of poor sinners. This should be our joy and the spur of our ambition in the cause of our Master. In so doing we please God and manifest our love and devotion to Him as His servants. He first loved us, and withheld not from us His beloved Son, but gave Him from His bosom to die that we might have life. Love, true [116]

love for our fellow men, evinces love to God. We may make a high profession, yet without this love it is nothing. Our faith may lead us to even give our bodies to be burned, yet without self-sacrificing love, such as lived in the bosom of Jesus and was exemplified in His life, we are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

There are families that receive spiritual strength by moving to Battle Creek. It is just the place to help some, while it is the wrong place for others. Brother and Sister A are a sample of the class who may be benefited in moving to this place. The Lord directed them to take this course. Battle Creek was just the place to benefit them, and has proved a blessing to the entire family. They have, in coming here, gained strength to plant their feet firmly upon the platform of truth, and if they continue in the path of humble obedience they may rejoice for the help they have received in Battle Creek.

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Chapter 15—Caution to Ministers

In the vision given me June 12, 1868, I was deeply impressed with the great work to be accomplished to prepare a people for the coming of the Son of man. I saw that the harvest is great, but the laborers are few. Many who are at the present time in the field, laboring to save souls, are feeble. They have borne heavy burdens, which have tried and worn them. Yet, I was shown that with some of our ministers there has been too great an expenditure of strength which was not actually required. Some pray too long and too loud, which greatly exhausts their feeble strength and needlessly expends their vitality; others frequently make their discourses one third or one half longer than they should. In so doing they become excessively weary, the interest of the people decreases before the discourse closes, and much is lost to them, for they cannot retain it. One half that was said would have been better than more. Although all the matter may be important, the success would be much greater were the praying and talking less lengthy. The result would be reached without so great weariness. They are needlessly using up their strength and vitality, which, for the good of the cause, it is so necessary to retain. It is the long-protracted effort, after laboring to the point of weariness, which wears and breaks. [117]

I saw that it was this extra labor, when the system was exhausted, that consumed the life of dear Brother Sperry and brought him prematurely to the grave. Had he worked with reference to health he might have lived to labor until the present time. It was, also, this extra labor that exhausted the life force of our dear Brother Cranson and caused his life of usefulness to be extinguished.

Much singing, as well as protracted praying and talking, is extremely wearing. In most cases our ministers should not continue their efforts longer than one hour. They should leave preliminaries and come to the subject at once, and should study to close the discourse while the interest is the greatest. They should not continue the effort until their hearers desire them to cease speaking. Much

of this extra labor is lost upon the people, who are often too weary to be benefited by what they may hear; and who can tell how great is the loss sustained by the ministers who thus labor? In the end nothing is gained by this draft upon the vitality.

[118] Frequently the strength is exhausted at the commencement of a protracted effort. And at the very time when there is much to be gained or lost, the devoted minister of Christ, who has an interest, a will to labor, cannot command the strength. He has used it up in singing, in lengthy prayers and protracted preaching, and the victory is lost for want of earnest, well-directed labor at the right time. The golden moment is lost. The impressions made were not followed up. It would have been better had no interest been awakened; for when convictions have been once resisted and overcome, it is very difficult to impress the mind again with the truth.

I was shown that if our ministers would exercise care to preserve their strength, instead of needlessly expending it, their judicious, well-directed labor would accomplish more in a year than could be accomplished by long talking, praying, and singing, which are so wearisome and exhausting. In the latter case, the people are frequently deprived of labor which they much need at the right time, for the laborer is in need of rest and will endanger his health and life if he continues his effort.

Our dear Brethren Matteson and D. T. Bourdeau have made a mistake here, and should reform in their manner of labor. They should speak short and pray short. They should come to the point at once and stop short of exhaustion in their labors. They can both accomplish more good by doing this, and at the same time preserve strength to continue the labors which they love, without breaking down entirely.

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Chapter 16—Look to Jesus

In the vision given me June 12, 1868, I was shown the danger of the people of God in looking to Brother and Sister White and thinking that they must come to them with their burdens and seek counsel of them. This ought not so to be. They are invited by their compassionate, loving Saviour to come unto Him, when weary and heavy-laden, and He will relieve them. In Him they will find rest. In taking their perplexities and trials to Jesus, they will find the promise in regard to them fulfilled. When in their distress they feel the relief which is found alone in Jesus they obtain an experience which is of the highest value to them. Brother and Sister White are striving for purity of life, striving to bring forth fruit unto holiness; yet they are only erring mortals. Many come to us with the inquiry: Shall I do this? Shall I engage in that enterprise? Or, in regard to dress, Shall I wear this or that article? I answer them: You profess to be disciples of Christ. Study your Bibles. Read carefully and prayerfully the life of our dear Saviour when He dwelt among men upon the earth. Imitate His life, and you will not be found straying from the narrow path. We utterly refuse to be conscience for you. If we tell you just what to do, you will look to us to guide you, instead of going directly to Jesus for yourselves. Your experience will be founded in us. You must have an experience for yourselves, which shall be founded in God. Then can you stand amid the perils of the last days and be purified and not consumed by the fire of affliction through which all the saints must pass in order to have the impurities removed from their character preparatory to receiving the finishing touch of immortality. [119]

Many of our dear brethren and sisters think that they cannot have a large gathering unless Brother and Sister White attend. In many places they realize that something must be done to move the people to more earnestness and decided action in the work and cause of truth. They have had ministers to labor among them, yet they realize that a greater work must be done, and look to Brother and Sister

[120] White to do it. This, I saw, was not as God would have it. In the first place, there is a deficiency with some of our ministers. They lack thoroughness. They do not take on the burden of the work and reach out to lift just where the people need help. They do not possess discernment to see and feel just where the people need to be corrected, reproved, built up, and strengthened. Some of them labor weeks and months in a place, and there is actually more to do when they leave than when they commenced. Systematic benevolence is dragging. It is one part of the minister's labor to keep up this branch of the work; but, because this is not agreeable, some neglect their duty. They talk the truth from the word of God, but do not impress the people with the necessity of obedience. Therefore many are hearers, but not doers. The people feel the deficiency. Things are not set in order among them, and they look to Brother and Sister White to make up the deficiency.

Some of our ministering brethren have glided along without settling deep into the work and getting hold of the hearts of the people. They have excused themselves with the thought that Brother and Sister White would bring up the things that were lacking; that they were specially adapted to the work. These men have labored, but not in the right way. They have not borne the burden. They have not helped where help was needed. They have not corrected deficiencies which needed to be corrected. They have not entered, whole heart, and soul, and energies, into the wants of the people. Time has passed, and they have nothing to show for it. The burden of their deficiencies falls back on us. And they encourage the people to look to us, presenting the idea that nothing will accomplish the work but our special testimony. God is not pleased with this. Ministers should take greater responsibilities and not entertain the thought that they cannot bear that message which will help the people where they need help. If they cannot do this, they should tarry in Jerusalem till they are endowed with power from on high. They should not engage in a work which they cannot perform. They should go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and return from their effort rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.

[121] Ministers should impress upon the people the necessity of individual effort. No church can flourish unless its members are workers. The people must lift where the ministers lift. I saw that

nothing lasting can be accomplished for churches in different places unless they are aroused to feel that a responsibility rests upon them. Every member of the body should feel that the salvation of his own soul depends upon his own individual effort. Souls cannot be saved without exertion. The minister cannot save the people. He can be a channel through which God will impart light to His people; but after the light is given, it is left with the people to appropriate that light, and, in their turn, let it shine forth to others. The people should feel that an individual responsibility rests upon them, not only to save their own souls, but to earnestly engage in the salvation of those who remain in darkness. Instead of looking to Brother and Sister White to help them out of their darkness, they should be earnestly engaged in helping themselves. If they should begin to hunt up those worse off than themselves, and should try to help them, they would help themselves into the light sooner than in any other way. If the people lean upon Brother and Sister White, and trust in them, God will humble them among you or remove them from you. You must look to God and trust in Him. Lean upon Him, and He will not forsake you. He will not leave you to perish. Precious is the word of God. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." These are the words of Christ. The words of inspiration, carefully and prayerfully studied and practically obeyed, will thoroughly furnish you unto all good works. Ministers and people must look to God.

We are living in an evil age. The perils of the last days thicken around us. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. Enoch walked with God three hundred years. Now the shortness of time seems to be urged as a motive to seek righteousness. Should it be necessary that the terrors of the day of God be held before us in order to compel us to right action? Enoch's case is before us. Hundreds of years he walked with God. He lived in a corrupt age, when moral pollution was teeming all around him; yet he trained his mind to devotion, to love purity. His conversation was upon heavenly things. He educated his mind to run in this channel, and he bore the impress of the divine. His countenance was lighted up with the light which shineth in the face of Jesus. Enoch had temptations as well as we. He was surrounded with society no more friendly to righteousness than is that which surrounds us. The atmosphere he

[122]

breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he lived a life of holiness. He was unsullied with the prevailing sins of the age in which he lived. So may we remain pure and uncorrupted. He was a representative of the saints who live amid the perils and corruptions of the last days. For his faithful obedience to God he was translated. So, also, the faithful, who are alive and remain, will be translated. They will be removed from a sinful and corrupt world to the pure joys of heaven.

The course of God's people should be upward and onward to victory. A greater than Joshua is leading on the armies of Israel. One is in our midst, even the Captain of our salvation, who has said for our encouragement: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He will lead us on to certain victory. What God promises, He is able at any time to perform. And the work He gives His people to do, He is able to accomplish by them. If we live a life of perfect obedience, His promises will be fulfilled toward us.

[123]

God requires His people to shine as lights in the world. It is not merely the ministers who are required to do this, but every disciple of Christ. Their conversation should be heavenly. And while they enjoy communion with God they will wish to have intercourse with their fellow men in order to express by their words and acts the love of God which animates their hearts. In this way they will be lights in the world, and the light transmitted through them will not go out or be taken away. It will indeed become darkness to those who will not walk in it, but it will shine with increasing brightness on the path of those who will obey and walk in the light.

The spirit, wisdom, and goodness of God, revealed in His word, are to be exemplified by the disciples of Christ, and are thus to condemn the world. God requires of His people according to the grace and truth given them. All His righteous demands must be fully met. Accountable beings must walk in the light that shines upon them. If they fail to do this, their light becomes darkness, and their darkness is great in the same degree as their light was abundant. Accumulated light has shone upon God's people; but many have neglected to follow the light, and for this reason they are in a state of great spiritual weakness.

It is not for lack of knowledge that God's people are now perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, but which has been neglected or refused, will condemn them. Those who never had the light to reject will not be in condemnation. What more could have been done for God's vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon God's people; but it will not save them unless they consent to be saved by it, fully live up to it, and transmit it to others in darkness. God calls upon His people to act. It is an individual work of confessing and forsaking sins and returning unto the Lord that is needed. One cannot do this work for another. Religious knowledge has accumulated, and this has increased corresponding obligations. Great light has been shining upon the church, and by it they are condemned because they refuse to walk in it. If they were blind they would be without sin. But they have seen light and have heard much truth, yet are not wise and holy. Many have for years made no advancement in knowledge and true holiness. They are spiritual dwarfs. Instead of going forward to perfection, they are going back to the darkness and bondage of Egypt. Their minds are not exercised unto godliness and true holiness.

[124]

Will the Israel of God awake? Will all who profess godliness seek to put away every wrong, to confess to God every secret sin, and afflict the soul before Him? Will they, with great humility, investigate the motives of every action, and know that the eye of God reads all, searches out every hidden thing? Let the work be thorough, the consecration to God entire. He calls for a full surrender of all that we have and are. Ministers and people need a new conversion, a transformation of the mind, without which we are not savorers of life unto life, but of death unto death. Great privileges belong to the people of God. Great light has been given them, that they may attain to their high calling in Christ Jesus; yet they are not what God would have them to be and what He designs they shall be.

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Chapter 17—Separation From the World

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

[125] God designed that the light of the church should increase and grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Precious promises are made to God's people upon condition of obedience. If, like Caleb and Joshua, you had wholly followed the Lord, He would have magnified His power in your midst. Sinners would have been converted, and backsliders reclaimed, by your influence; and even the enemies of our faith, although they might oppose and speak against the truth, could but admit that God was with you.

Many of the professed, peculiar people of God are so conformed to the world that their peculiar character is not discerned, and it is difficult to distinguish "between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." God would do great things for His people if they would come out from the world and be separate. If they would submit to be led by Him, He would make them a praise in all the earth. Says the True Witness: "I know thy works." Angels of God who minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation are acquainted with the condition of all and understand just the measure of faith possessed by each individual. The unbelief, pride, covetousness, and love of the world, which have existed in the hearts of God's professed people, have grieved the sinless angels. As they have seen that grievous and presumptuous sins exist in the hearts of many professed followers of Christ, and that God has been dishonored by their inconsistent, crooked course, they have been caused to weep. And yet those most at fault, those who cause the greatest feebleness in the church and bring a stain upon their holy profession, do not seem to be alarmed or convicted, but seem to feel that they are flourishing in the Lord.

Many believe that they are on the right foundation, that they have the truth; they rejoice in its clearness and boast of the powerful arguments in proof of the correctness of our position. Such reckon themselves among the chosen, peculiar people of God, yet they experience not His presence and power to save them from yielding

to temptation and folly. These profess to know God, yet in works deny Him. How great is their darkness! The love of the world with many, the deceitfulness of riches with others, have choked the word, and they have become unfruitful. [126]

I was shown that the church at ----- have partaken of the spirit of the world and become lukewarm to an alarming extent. When efforts are made to set things in order in the church and bring the people up to the position God would have them occupy, a class will be affected by the labor, and will make earnest efforts to press through the darkness to the light. But many do not persevere in their efforts long enough to realize the sanctifying influence of the truth upon their hearts and lives. The cares of the world engross the mind to that degree that self-examination and secret prayer are neglected. The armor is laid off and Satan has free access to them, benumbing their sensibilities and causing them to be unsuspecting of his wiles.

Some do not manifest a desire to know their true state and escape from Satan's snares. They are sickly and dying. They are occasionally warmed by the fire of others, yet are so nearly chilled by formality, pride, and the influence of the world that they have no sense of their need of help.

There are many who are deficient in spirituality and the Christian graces. A weight of solemn responsibility should daily rest upon them as they view the perilous times in which we live and the corrupting influences which are teeming around us. Their only hope of being partakers of the divine nature is to escape the corruption that is in the world. These brethren need a deep and thorough experience in the things of God, and this can only be obtained by an effort on their part. Their position requires them to possess earnestness and unabated diligence, so as not to be found sleeping at their post. Satan and his angels sleep not.

Christ's followers should be instruments of righteousness, workmen, living stones, emitting light, that they may encourage the presence of heavenly angels. They are required to be channels, as it were, through which the spirit of truth and righteousness shall flow. Many have partaken so largely of the spirit and influence of the world that they act like the world. They have their likes and dislikes, and discern not excellence of character. Their conduct is not governed by the pure principles of Christianity; therefore they think [127]

only of themselves, their pleasure and enjoyment, to the disregard of others. They are not sanctified through the truth, therefore realize not the oneness of Christ's followers the world over. Those who are most loved of God are those who possess the least self-confidence and are adorned with a meek and quiet spirit; whose lives are pure and unselfish, and whose hearts are inclined, through the abundant measure of the spirit of Christ, to obedience, justice, purity, and true holiness.

If all were devoted to God, a precious light would shine forth from them, which would have a direct influence upon all who are brought in contact with them. But all need a work done for them. Some are far from God, variable and unstable as water; they have no idea of sacrifice. When they desire any special indulgence or pleasure, or any article of dress, they do not consider whether or not they can do without the article, or deny themselves the pleasure, and make a freewill offering to God. How many have considered that they were required to make some sacrifice? Although it may be of less value than that of the wealthy man who possesses his thousands, yet that which really costs self-denial would be a precious sacrifice, an offering to God. It would be a sweet-smelling savor, and come up from his altar like sweet incense.

[128] The youth are not authorized to do just as they please with their means, regardless of the requirements of God. With David they should say: "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." Quite an amount of means has been expended to multiply copies of their pictures. Could all enumerate the amount given to the artist for this purpose, it would swell to quite a large sum. And this is merely one way in which means is squandered, invested for self-gratification, from which no profit is received. By this outlay, they are not clothed or fed, the widow and the fatherless are not relieved, the hungry are not fed, the naked are not clothed.

While money is spent lavishly in self-gratification, stinted offerings are brought to God almost unwillingly. How much of the wages earned by the young finds its way into the treasury of God to aid in the advancement of the work of saving souls? They give a mite each week and feel that they do much. But they have no sense that they are just as much stewards of God over their little as are the wealthy

over their larger possessions. God has been robbed and themselves indulged, their pleasure consulted, their taste gratified, without a thought that He would make close investigation of how they have used His goods. While such unhesitatingly gratify their supposed wants and withhold from God the offering they ought to make, He will no more accept the little pittance they hand into the treasury than He accepted the offering of Ananias and his wife Sapphira, who purposed to rob Him in their offerings.

As a general thing, the young among us are allied to the world. But few maintain a special warfare against the internal foe, few have an earnest, anxious desire to know and do the will of God. But few hunger and thirst after righteousness, and few know anything of the Spirit of God as a reprover or comforter. Where are the missionaries? Where are the self-denying, self-sacrificing ones? Where are the cross bearers? Self and self-interest have swallowed up high and noble principles. Things of eternal moment bear with no special weight upon the mind. God requires them individually to come up to the point to make an entire surrender. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." You cannot serve self and at the same time be servants of Christ. You must die to self, die to your love of pleasure, and learn to inquire: Will God be pleased with the objects for which I purpose to spend this means? Shall I glorify Him? [129]

We are commanded, whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God. How many have conscientiously moved from principle rather than from impulse, and obeyed this command to the letter? How many of the youthful disciples in ----- have made God their trust and portion, and have earnestly sought to know and do His will? There are many who are servants of Christ in name, but who are not so in deed. Where religious principle governs, the danger of committing great errors is small; for selfishness, which always blinds and deceives, is subordinate. The sincere desire to do others good so predominates that self is forgotten. To have firm religious principles is an inestimable treasure. It is the purest, highest, and most elevated influence mortals can possess. Such have an anchor. Every act is well considered, lest its effect be injurious to another and lead away from Christ. The constant inquiry of the mind is: Lord, how shall I best serve Thee, and glorify Thy name in the earth? How shall I conduct my life to make Thy name a praise

in the earth, and lead others to love, serve, and honor Thee? Let me only desire and choose Thy will. Let the words and example of my Redeemer be the light and strength of my heart. While I follow and trust in Him, He will not leave me to perish. He will be my crown of rejoicing.

[130] If we mistake the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God we are led astray by the foolishness of man's wisdom. Here is the great danger of many in ----- . They have not an experience for themselves. They have not been in the habit of prayerfully considering for themselves, with unprejudiced, unbiased judgment, questions and subjects that are new and that are ever liable to arise. They wait to see what others will think. If these dissent, that is all that is needed to convince them that the subject under consideration is of no account whatever. Although this class is large, it does not change the fact that they are inexperienced and weak-minded through long yielding to the enemy, and will always be as sickly as babes, walking by others' light, living on others' experience, feeling as others feel, and acting as others act. They act as though they had not an individuality. Their identity is submerged in others; they are merely shadows of those whom they think about right. Unless these become sensible of their wavering character and correct it, they will all fail of everlasting life; they will be unable to cope with the perils of the last days. They will possess no stamina to resist the devil, for they do not know that it is he. Someone must be at their side to inform them whether a foe or a friend is approaching. They are not spiritual, therefore spiritual things are not discerned. They are not wise in those things which relate to the kingdom of God. Neither young nor old are excusable in trusting to another to have an experience for them. Said the angel: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." A noble self-reliance is needed in the Christian experience and warfare.

Men, women, and youth, God requires you to possess moral courage, steadiness of purpose, fortitude and perseverance, minds that cannot take the assertions of another, but which will investigate for themselves before receiving or rejecting, that will study and weigh evidence, and take it to the Lord in prayer. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Now the condition: "But

let him ask in *faith*, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” This petition for wisdom is not to be a meaningless prayer, out of mind as soon as finished. It is a prayer that expresses the strong, earnest desire of the heart, arising from a conscious lack of wisdom to determine the will of God.

[131]

After the prayer is made, if the answer is not realized immediately, do not weary of waiting and become unstable. Waver not. Cling to the promise, “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” Like the importunate widow, urge your case, being firm in your purpose. Is the object important and of great consequence to you? It certainly is. Then waver not, for your faith may be tried. If the thing you desire is valuable, it is worthy of a strong, earnest effort. You have the promise; watch and pray. Be steadfast and the prayer will be answered; for is it not God who has promised? If it costs you something to obtain it you will prize it the more when obtained. You are plainly told that if you waver you need not think that you shall receive anything of the Lord. A caution is here given not to become weary, but to rest firmly upon the promise. If you ask, He will give you liberally and upbraid not.

Here is where many make a mistake. They waver from their purpose, and their faith fails. This is the reason they receive nothing of the Lord, who is our Source of strength. None need go in darkness, stumbling along like a blind man; for the Lord has provided light if they will accept it in His appointed way, and not choose their own way. He requires of all a diligent performance of everyday duties. Especially is this required of all who are engaged in the solemn, important work in the office of publication, both of those upon whom rest the more weighty responsibilities of the work, and of those who bear the least responsibilities. This can be done only by looking to God for ability to enable them faithfully to perform what is right in the sight of Heaven, doing all things as though governed by unselfish motives, as if the eye of God were visible to all, looking upon all, and investigating the acts of all.

[132]

The sin which is indulged to the greatest extent, and which separates us from God and produces so many contagious spiritual disorders, is selfishness. There can be no returning to the Lord

except by self-denial. Of ourselves we can do nothing; but, through God strengthening us, we can live to do good to others, and in this way shun the evil of selfishness. We need not go to heathen lands to manifest our desire to devote all to God in a useful, unselfish life. We should do this in the home circle, in the church, among those with whom we associate and with whom we do business. Right in the common walks of life is where self is to be denied and kept in subordination. Paul could say: "I die daily." It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers. We should forget self in the desire to do good to others. With many there is a decided lack of love for others. Instead of faithfully performing their duty, they seek rather their own pleasure.

God positively enjoins upon all His followers a duty to bless others with their influence and means, and to seek that wisdom of Him which will enable them to do all in their power to elevate the thoughts and affections of those who come within their influence. In doing for others, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace which will be a sufficient reward. When actuated by a high and noble desire to do others good, they will find true happiness in a faithful discharge of life's manifold duties. This will bring more than an earthly reward; for every faithful, unselfish performance of duty is noticed by the angels and shines in the life record. In heaven [133] none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.

Every act of our lives affects others for good or evil. Our influence is tending upward or downward; it is felt, acted upon, and to a greater or less degree reproduced by others. If by our example we aid others in the development of good principles, we give them power to do good. In their turn they exert the same beneficial influence upon others, and thus hundreds and thousands are affected by our unconscious influence. If we by acts strengthen or force into activity the evil powers possessed by those around us, we share their sin, and will have to render an account for the good we might have done them and did not do, because we made not God our strength, our guide, our counselor.

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Chapter 18—True Love

True love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. On the contrary, it is calm and deep in its nature. It looks beyond mere externals and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding. God tests and proves us by the common occurrences of life. It is the little things which reveal the chapters of the heart. It is the little attentions, the numerous small incidents and simple courtesies of life, that make up the sum of life's happiness; and it is the neglect of kindly, encouraging, affectionate words, and the little courtesies of life, which helps compose the sum of life's wretchedness. It will be found at last that the denial of self for the good and happiness of those around us constitutes a large share of the life record in heaven. And the fact will also be revealed

[134] that the care of self, irrespective of the good and happiness of others, is not beneath the notice of our heavenly Father.

Brother B, the Lord is working for you, and will bless and strengthen you in the course of right. You understand the theory of truth, and should be obtaining all the knowledge you can of God's will and work, that you may be prepared to fill a more responsible position if He, seeing you can glorify His name best in so doing, should require it of you. But you have yet an experience to gain. You are too impulsive, too easily affected by circumstances. God is willing to strengthen, stablish, settle you, if you will earnestly and humbly seek wisdom of Him who is unerring, and who has promised that you shall not seek in vain.

In teaching the truth to others, you are in danger of talking too strong, in a manner not in keeping with your short experience. You take in things at a glance, and can see the bearing of subjects readily. All are not organized as you are, and cannot do this. You will not be prepared to patiently, calmly wait for those to weigh evidence who cannot see as readily as you do. You will be in danger of urging others too much to see at once as you see and feel all that zeal and necessity of action that you feel. If your expectations are not

realized, you will be in danger of becoming discouraged and restless, and wishing a change. You must shun a disposition to censure, to bear down. Keep clear of everything that savors of a denunciatory spirit. It is not pleasing to God for this spirit to be found in any of His servants of long experience. It is proper for a youth, if graced with humility and the inward adorning, to manifest ardor and zeal; but when a rash zeal and a denunciatory spirit are manifested by a youth who has but a few years of experience, it is most unbecoming and positively disgusting. Nothing can destroy his influence as soon as this. Mildness, gentleness, forbearance, long-suffering, being not easily provoked, bearing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things—these are the fruit growing upon the precious tree of love, which is of heavenly growth. This tree, if nourished, will prove to be an evergreen. Its branches will not decay, its leaves will not wither. It is immortal, eternal, watered continually by the dews of heaven.

[135]

Love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated from it. The power of wealth has a tendency to corrupt and destroy; the power of force is strong to do hurt; but the excellence and value of pure love consist in its efficiency to do good, and to do nothing else than good. Whatsoever is done out of pure love, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God regards more with how much love one worketh than the amount he doeth. Love is of God. The unconverted heart cannot originate nor produce this plant of heavenly growth, which lives and flourishes only where Christ reigns.

Love cannot live without action, and every act increases, strengthens, and extends it. Love will gain the victory when argument and authority are powerless. Love works not for profit nor reward; yet God has ordained that great gain shall be the certain result of every labor of love. It is diffusive in its nature and quiet in its operation, yet strong and mighty in its purpose to overcome great evils. It is melting and transforming in its influence, and will take hold of the lives of the sinful and affect their hearts when every other means has proved unsuccessful. Wherever the power of intellect, of authority, or of force is employed, and love is not manifestly present, the affections and will of those whom we seek to reach assume a defensive, repelling position, and their strength of resistance is increased. Jesus was the Prince of Peace. He came into the world to

[136] bring resistance and authority into subjection to Himself. Wisdom and strength He could command, but the means He employed with which to overcome evil were the wisdom and strength of love. Suffer nothing to divide your interest from your present work until God shall see fit to give you another piece of work in the same field. Seek not for happiness, for it is never to be found by seeking for it. Go about your duty. Let faithfulness mark all your doings, and be clothed with humility.

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Blessed results would appear as the fruit of such a course. “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Here are strong motives which should constrain us to love one another with a pure heart, fervently. Christ is our example. He went about doing good. He lived to bless others. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. We are not commanded to do to *ourselves* what we wish others to do unto us; we are to *do unto others* what we wish them to do to us under like circumstances. The measure we mete is always measured to us again. Pure love is simple in its operations, and is distinct from any other principle of action. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life and frequently a blameless conversation. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions, acknowledge the present truth, and express humility and affection in an outward manner, yet the motives may be deceptive and impure; the actions that flow from such a heart may be destitute of the savor of life and the fruits of true holiness, being destitute of the principles of pure love. Love should be cherished and cultivated, for its influence is divine.

Chapter 19—Amusements at the Institute

[137]

When the amusements were introduced into the Institute, some in ----- manifested their superficial character. They were well pleased and gratified; their frivolous turn of mind was just suited. The things recommended for invalids they thought good for themselves; and Dr. C is not accountable for all the results accruing from the counsel given to his patients. Those in different churches abroad, who were unconsecrated, seized upon the first semblance of an excuse to engage in pleasure, hilarity, and folly. As soon as it was known that the physicians at the Institute had recommended plays and amusements in order to divert the minds of the patients from themselves into a more cheerful train of thought, it went like fire in the stubble; the young in ----- and other churches thought that they had need of just such things, and the armor of righteousness was laid off by many. As they were no longer held in by bit and bridle, they engaged in these things with as much earnestness and perseverance as though everlasting life depended upon their zeal in this direction. Here was an opportunity to discern between the conscientious followers of Christ and those who were self-deceived. Some had not the cause of God at heart. They had not the work of true holiness wrought in the soul. They had failed to make God their trust, and were unstable, and only needed a wave to raise them from their feet and toss them to and fro. Such showed that they possessed but little stability and moral independence. They had not an experience for themselves, and therefore walked in the sparks of others' kindling. They had not Christ in their hearts to confess to the world. They professed to be His followers, but earthly and temporal things held their frivolous, selfish hearts in subjection. [138]

There were others who did not seem to possess anxiety in regard to the amusement question. They felt such confidence that God would make all right that their peace of mind was not disturbed. They decided that a prescription for invalids was not for them, therefore they would not be troubled. Whatever others in the church or in the

world might do was nothing to them; for, said they, whom have we to follow but Christ? He has left us a command to walk even as He walked. We must live as seeing Him who is invisible, and do what we do heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men.

When such things arise, character is developed. Moral worth can then be truly estimated. It is not difficult to ascertain where those are to be found who profess godliness, yet have their pleasure and happiness in this world. Their affections are not upon things above, but upon things on the earth, where Satan reigns. They walk in darkness, and cannot love and enjoy heavenly things because they cannot discern them. They are alienated from the life of Christ, having their understanding darkened. The things of the Spirit are foolishness unto them. Their pursuits are according to the course of this world, and their interests and prospects are joined with the world and with earthly things. If such can pass along bearing the name of Christians, yet serving both God and mammon, they are satisfied. But things will occur to reveal the hearts of these, who are only a burden and a curse to the church.

[139] The spirit existing in the church is such as to lead away from God and the path of holiness. Many of the church have ascribed their state of spiritual blindness to the influence growing out of the principles taught at the Institute. This is not entirely correct. Had the church stood in the counsel of God, the Institute would have been controlled. The light of the church would have been diffused to that branch of the work, and the errors would not have existed there that did. It was the moral darkness of the church that had the greatest influence to create the moral darkness and spiritual death in the Institute. Had the church been in a healthy condition, she could have sent a vitalizing, healthful current to this arm of the body. But the church was sickly and did not enjoy the favor of God nor the light of His countenance. A sickly, deathly influence was circulated all through the living body until the disease was apparent everywhere.

Dear Brother D has not understood the condition of his own heart. Selfishness has found a lodgment there, and peace, healthful, calm peace, has departed. What you all lack is the element of love—love to God and love to your neighbor. The life that you now live you do not live by faith in the Son of God. There is a lack of firm trust, a fearfulness to resign all into the hands of God, as though He

could not keep that which is committed to His trust. You are afraid some evil is designed which will do you harm unless you assume the defensive and commence a warfare in your own favor. The children of God are wise and powerful according to their reliance upon His wisdom and power. They are strong and happy according to their separation from the wisdom and help of man.

Daniel and his companions were captives in a strange land, but God suffered not the envy and hatred of their enemies to prevail against them. The righteous have ever obtained help from above. How often have the enemies of God united their strength and wisdom to destroy the character and influence of a few simple persons who trusted in God. But because the Lord was for them, none could prevail against them. Only let the followers of Christ be united, and they will prevail. Let them be separated from their idols and from the world, and the world will not separate them from God. Christ is our present, all-sufficient Saviour. In Him all fullness dwells. It is the privilege of Christians to know indeed that Christ is in them of a truth. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." All things are possible to him that believeth; and whatsoever things we desire when we pray, if we believe that we receive them we shall have them. This faith will penetrate the darkest cloud and bring rays of light and hope to the drooping, desponding soul. It is the absence of this faith and trust which brings perplexity, distressing fears, and surmisings of evil. God will do great things for His people when they put their entire trust in Him. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Pure and undefiled religion will be exemplified in the life. Christ will prove a never-failing source of strength, a present help in every time of trouble.

[140]

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Chapter 20—Neglect of Hannah More

In the case of Sister Hannah More, I was shown that the neglect of her was the neglect of Jesus in her person. Had the Son of God come in the humble, unpretending manner in which He journeyed from place to place when He was upon earth, He would have met with no better reception. It is the deep principle of love that dwelt in the bosom of the humble Man of Calvary that is needed. Had the church lived in the light, they would have appreciated this humble missionary whose whole being was aglow to be engaged in her Master's service. Her very earnest interest was misconstrued. Her externals were not just such as would meet the approval of the eye of taste and fashion, for familiarity with strict economy and poverty had left its impress upon her apparel. Her hard-earned means had been exhausted as fast as obtained to benefit others, to get light to those whom she hoped to lead to the cross of truth.

Even the professed church of Christ, with their exalted privileges and high professions, discerned not the image of Christ in this self-denying child of God because they were so far removed from Christ themselves that they reflected not His image. They judged by the external appearance and took no special pains to discern the inward adorning. Here was a woman whose resources of knowledge and genuine experience in the mysteries of godliness exceeded those of anyone residing at -----, and whose manner of address to the youth and children was pleasing, instructive, and salutary. She was not harsh, but correct and sympathetic, and would have proved one of the most useful laborers in the field as an instructor of the youth and an intelligent, useful companion and counselor to mothers. She could reach hearts by her earnest, matter-of-fact presentation of incidents in her religious life, which she had devoted to the service of her Redeemer. Had the church emerged from darkness and deception into the clear light, their hearts would have been drawn out after the lonely stranger. Her prayers, her tears, her distress, at seeing no way of usefulness open to her, have been seen and heard in heaven.

The Lord offered to His people talented help; but they were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. They turned from and rejected a most precious blessing of which they will yet feel the need. Had Elder E stood in the clear light of God and been imbued with His Spirit when this servant of Jesus, lonely, homeless, and thirsting for a work to do for her Master, was brought to his notice, spirit would have answered to spirit, as face answereth to face in a mirror; his heart would have been drawn out after this disciple of Christ, and he would have understood her. Thus also with the church. They had been in such spiritual blindness they had lost the sound of the voice of the True Shepherd and were following the voice of a stranger, who was leading them from the fold of Christ.

[142]

Many look upon the great work to be accomplished for God's people, and their prayers go up to Him for help in the great harvest. But, if help does not come in just the manner they expect, they will not receive it, but turn from it as the Jewish nation turned from Christ because disappointed in the manner of His appearing. Too much poverty and humility marked His advent, and in their pride they refused Him who came to give them life. In this God would have the church humble their hearts and see the great need of correcting their ways before Him, lest He visit them in judgment. Many who profess godliness make the external adorning far more important than the inward adorning. Had the church all humbled themselves before the Lord and corrected their past errors so fully as to meet His mind, they would not be so deficient in estimating moral excellence of character.

The light of Sister Hannah More has gone out, whereas it might now be burning brightly to illuminate the pathway of many who are walking in the dark paths of error and rebellion. God calls upon the church to arouse from their slumber and with deep earnestness inquire into the cause of this self-deception among professors whose names are on the church book. Satan is deluding and cheating them in the great concern of salvation. Nothing is more treacherous than the deceitfulness of sin. It is the god of this world that deludes, and blinds, and leads to destruction. Satan does not enter with his array of temptations at once. He disguises these temptations with a semblance of good; he mingles some little improvement with the folly and amusements, and deceived souls urge as an excuse for

[143] engaging in them that great good is to be derived. This is only the deceptive part; Satan's hellish arts are masked. Beguiled souls take one step, then are prepared for the next. It is much more pleasant to follow the inclination of their own hearts than to stand on the defensive and resist the first insinuation of the wily foe, and thus shut out his incomings. Oh, how Satan watches to see his bait taken so readily and to see souls walking in the very path he has prepared! He does not want them to give up praying and maintaining a form of religious duties, for while they do this he can make them more useful in his service. He unites his sophistry and deceptive snares with their experience and profession, and thus wonderfully advances his cause. The hypocritical Pharisees prayed and fasted, and observed the forms of godliness, while they were corrupt at heart. Satan stands by to taunt Christ and His angels with insults, saying: "I have them! I have them! I have prepared my deception for them. Your blood is worthless here. Your intercessions and power and wonderful works may as well cease; I have them! They are mine! Notwithstanding their high profession as subjects of Christ, notwithstanding they once enjoyed the illumination of His presence, I will secure them to myself in the very face of heaven, which they are talking about. It is such subjects as these that I can use to decoy others."

[144] Solomon says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool;" and there are hundreds of such to be found among professors of godliness. Says the apostle: "We are not ignorant of his devices." Oh, what art, what skill, what cunning, is exercised to lead the professed followers of Christ to a union with the world by seeking for happiness in the amusements of the world, under the delusion that some good is to be gained! And thus the unguarded walk right into the net, flattering themselves that there is no evil in the way. The affections and sympathies of such are wrought upon, and this lays a slim foundation upon which they build their confidence that they are the children of God. They compare themselves with others and settle down satisfied that they are even better than many true Christians. But where is the deep love of Christ shining forth in their lives, its bright rays blessing others? Where is their Bible? and how much is it studied? Where are their thoughts? Are they upon heaven and heavenly things? It is not natural for their minds to go forth in that direction. The study of God's word is uninteresting to them.

It does not possess that which excites and fevers the mind, and the natural, unrenewed heart prefers some other book to the word of God. Their attention is engrossed in self. They have no deep, earnest longings for the influence of the Spirit of God upon the mind and heart. God is not in all their thoughts.

How can I endure the thought that most of the youth in this age will come short of everlasting life! Oh, that the sound of instrumental music might cease and they no more while away so much precious time in pleasing their own fancy. Oh, that they would devote less time to dress and vain conversation, and send forth their earnest, agonizing prayers to God for a sound experience. There is great necessity for close self-examination in the light of God's word; let each one raise the inquiry: "Am I sound, or am I rotten at heart? Am I renewed in Christ, or am I still carnal at heart, with a new dress put on the outside?" Rein yourself up to the great tribunal, and in the light of God examine to see if there be any secret sin that you are cherishing, any idol that you have not sacrificed. Pray, yes, pray as you have never prayed before, that you may not be deluded by Satan's devices, that you may not be given up to a heedless, careless, vain spirit, and attend to religious duties to quiet your own conscience.

It is inappropriate for Christians in any age of the world to be lovers of pleasure, but how much more so now when the scenes of this earth's history are so soon to close. Surely the foundation of your hope of everlasting life cannot be laid too sure. The welfare of your soul and your eternal happiness depend upon whether your foundation is built upon Christ. While others are panting after earthly enjoyments, be ye panting after the unmistakable assurance of the love of God, earnestly, fervently crying: Who will show me how to make my calling and election sure? One of the signs of the last days is, that professed Christians are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Deal truly with your own soul. Search carefully. How few, after a faithful examination, can look up to heaven and say: "I am not one of those thus described! I am not a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God!" How few can say: "I am dead to the world; the life I now live is by faith in the Son of God! My life is hid with Christ in God, and when He who is my life shall appear, then shall I also appear with Him in glory." The love and

[145]

grace of God! Oh, precious grace! more valuable than fine gold. It elevates and ennobles the spirit beyond all other principles, and sets the affections upon heaven. While those around us may be vain and engaged in pleasure-seeking and folly, our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour; the soul is reaching out after God for pardon and peace, for righteousness and true holiness. Converse with God and contemplation of things above transform the soul into the likeness of Christ.

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Chapter 21—Prayer for the Sick

In the case of Sister F, there needed to be a great work accomplished. Those who united in praying for her needed a work done for them. Had God answered their prayers, it would have proved their ruin. In such cases of affliction, where Satan has control of the mind, before engaging in prayer there should be the closest self-examination to discover if there are not sins which need to be repented of, confessed, and forsaken. Deep humility of soul before God is necessary, and firm, humble reliance upon the merits of the blood of Christ alone. Fasting and prayer will accomplish nothing while the heart is estranged from God by a wrong course of action. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” “Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” [146]

It is heartwork that the Lord requires, good works springing from a heart filled with love. All should carefully and prayerfully consider the above scriptures, and investigate their motives and actions. The promise of God to us is on condition of obedience, compliance with all His requirements. “Cry aloud,” saith the prophet Isaiah, “spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteous-

[147] ness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?"

A people are here addressed who make high profession, who are in the habit of praying, and who delight in religious exercises; yet there is a lack. They realize that their prayers are not answered; their zealous, earnest efforts are not observed in heaven, and they earnestly inquire why the Lord makes them no returns. It is not because there is any neglect on the part of God. The difficulty is with the people. While professing godliness, they do not bear fruit to the glory of God; their works are not what they should be. They are living in neglect of positive duties. Unless these are performed, God cannot answer their prayers according to His glory. In the case of offering prayer for Sister F, there was confusion of sentiment. Some were fanatical and moved from impulse. They possessed a zeal, but not according to knowledge. Some looked at the great thing to be accomplished in this case and began to triumph before the victory was gained. There was much of the Jehu spirit manifested: "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." In place of this self-confident assurance, the case should have been presented to God with a spirit of humbleness and distrustfulness of self, and with a broken and a contrite heart.

[148] I was shown that in case of sickness, where the way is clear for the offering up of prayer for the sick, the case should be committed to the Lord in calm faith, not with a storm of excitement. He alone is acquainted with the past life of the individual and knows what his future will be. He who is acquainted with the hearts of all men knows whether the person, if raised up, would glorify His name or dishonor Him by backsliding and apostasy. All that we are required to do is to ask God to raise the sick up if in accordance with His will, believing that He hears the reasons which we present and the fervent prayers offered. If the Lord sees it will best honor Him, He will answer our prayers. But to urge recovery without submission to His will is not right.

What God promises He is able at any time to perform, and the work which He gives His people to do He is able to accomplish by them. If they will live according to every word He has spoken, every

good word and promise will be fulfilled unto them. But if they come short of perfect obedience, the great and precious promises are afar off, and they cannot reach the fulfillment.

All that can be done in praying for the sick is to earnestly implore God in their behalf, and in perfect confidence rest the matter in His hands. If we regard iniquity in our hearts the Lord will not hear us. He can do what He will with His own. He will glorify Himself by working in and through them who wholly follow Him, so that it shall be known that it is the Lord and that their works are wrought in God. Said Christ: "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." When we come to Him we should pray that we may enter into and accomplish His purpose, and that our desires and interests may be lost in His. We should acknowledge our acceptance of His will, not praying Him to concede to ours. It is better for us that God does not always answer our prayers just when we desire, and in just the manner we wish. He will do more and better for us than to accomplish all our wishes, for our wisdom is folly.

We have united in earnest prayer around the sickbed of men, women, and children, and have felt that they were given back to us from the dead in answer to our earnest prayers. In these prayers we thought we must be positive and, if we exercised faith, that we must ask for nothing less than life. We dared not say, "If it will glorify God," fearing it would admit a semblance of doubt. We have anxiously watched those who have been given back, as it were, from the dead. We have seen some of these, especially youth, raised to health, and they have forgotten God, become dissolute in life, causing sorrow and anguish to parents and friends, and have become a shame to those who feared to pray. They lived not to honor and glorify God, but to curse Him with their lives of vice. [149]

We no longer mark out a way nor seek to bring the Lord to our wishes. If the life of the sick can glorify Him, we pray that they may live; nevertheless, not as we will but as He will. Our faith can be just as firm, and more reliable, by committing the desire to the all-wise God, and, without feverish anxiety, in perfect confidence, trusting all to Him. We have the promise. We know that He hears us if we ask according to His will. Our petitions must not take the form of a command, but of intercession for Him to do the things we desire of Him. When the church are united, they will have strength and

power; but when part of them are united to the world, and many are given to covetousness, which God abhors, He can do but little for them. Unbelief and sin shut them away from God. We are so weak that we cannot bear much spiritual prosperity, lest we take the glory, and accredit goodness and righteousness to ourselves as the reason of the signal blessing of God, when it was all because of the great mercy and lovingkindness of our compassionate heavenly Father, and not because any good was found in us.

[150] We should ever exert an influence which will be sanctifying on those around us. This saving, ennobling influence has been very feeble at ----- . Many have mingled with the world and partaken of its spirit and influence, and its friendship has separated them from God. Jesus has passed a day's journey in advance of them. They can no longer hear His voice of counsel and warning, and they follow their own wisdom and judgment. They follow a course which appears right in their own eyes, but which afterward proves to be folly. God will not allow His work to be mixed with worldly policy. Shrewd, calculating men of the world are not the men to take leading positions in this most solemn, sacred work. They must either be converted, or engage in that calling which is appropriate to their world-loving inclinations, and which does not involve such eternal consequences. God will never enter into partnership with worldlings. Christ gives everyone his choice: Will you have Me or the world? Will you suffer reproach and shame, be peculiar, and zealous of good works, even if hated of the world, and take My name, or will you choose the esteem, the honor, the applause and profits the world has to give, and have no part in Me? "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

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Chapter 22—Courage in the Minister

Dear Brother G,

I have been shown that you were greatly deficient in your duties as a minister. You lack essential qualifications. You do not possess a missionary spirit. You have not a disposition to sacrifice your ease and pleasure to save souls. There are men, women, and youth to be brought to Christ who would embrace the truth could they have the light presented to them. In your own vicinity there are those who have an ear to hear.

I saw you seeking to instruct some; but at the very time when you needed perseverance, courage, and energy, you became fainthearted, distrustful, discouraged, and dropped the work. You desired your own ease, and allowed an interest which might have increased, to go down. There might have been an ingathering of souls; but the golden opportunity passed for that time, because of your lack of energy. I saw that unless you decide to gird on the whole armor, and are willing to endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross of Christ, and feel that you can spend and be spent to bring souls to Christ, you should give up your profession as a minister and choose some other calling. [151]

Your soul is not sanctified to the work. You do not take the burden of the work upon you. You choose an easier lot than that which is appointed to the minister of Christ. He counted not His life dear unto Himself. He pleased not Himself, but lived for others' good. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. It is not enough to be able to present the arguments of our position before the people. The minister of Christ must possess an undying love for souls, a spirit of self-denial, of self-sacrifice. He should be willing to give his life, if need be, to the work of saving his fellow men, for whom Christ died.

You need a conversion to the work of God. You need wisdom and judgment to apply yourself to the work and direct your labor. Your labors are not required among the churches. You should go

out in new places and prove your work. Go with a spirit to labor to convert souls to the truth. If you feel the worth of souls, the least indication for good will rejoice your heart, and you will persevere, although there may be labor and weariness in the effort. After you have once agitated the subject of truth, do not leave that place if there is the least indication for good. Do you expect a harvest without labor? Do you expect that Satan will readily allow his subjects to pass from his ranks to the ranks of Christ? He will make every effort to keep them bound in fetters of darkness under his black banner. Can you expect to be victorious in winning souls to Christ without earnest effort, when you have such a foe to face and battle?

[152] You must have more courage, more zeal, and put forth greater efforts, or you will have to decide that you have mistaken your calling. An easily discouraged minister does injury to the cause he desires to promote, and injustice to himself. All who profess to be ministers of Christ should learn wisdom by studying the history of the Man of Nazareth, and also the history of Martin Luther and the lives of other Reformers. Their labors were arduous, but they endured hardness as faithful soldiers of the cross of Christ. You should not shun responsibilities. With modesty, you should be willing to be advised, to be instructed. After you have received counsel from the wise, the judicious, there is yet a Counselor whose wisdom is unerring. Fail not to present your case before Him and entreat His direction. He has promised that if you lack wisdom and ask of Him, He will give it to you liberally and upbraid not. The sacred, solemn work in which we are engaged calls for wholehearted, thoroughly converted men, whose lives are interwoven with the life of Christ. They draw sap and nourishment from the living Vine, and flourish in the Lord. Although they feel the magnitude of the work, and are led to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" yet they will not shrink from labor and toil, but will labor earnestly and unselfishly to save souls. If the undershepherds are faithful in all their duty, they will enter into the joy of their Lord and have the satisfaction of seeing souls saved in heaven through their faithful efforts.

Chapter 23—Closeness in Deal

Dear Brother H,

I have been waiting for an opportunity to write you, but have been hindered. After my last vision I felt it to be my duty to speedily lay before you what the Lord was pleased to present to me. I was pointed back and shown that for years in the past, even before your marriage, there had been in you a disposition to overreach in trade. You possessed a spirit of acquisitiveness, a disposition for close dealing, which was detrimental to your spiritual advancement and greatly injured your influence. Your father's family viewed these matters from the world's standpoint rather than from the high, exalted standard quoted by our divine Lord: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." In this you have failed. To deal in any way closely and unjustly is displeasing to God. He will not pass over errors and sins in this direction without thorough confession and forsaking. [153]

I was pointed far back and shown the loose manner in which you regarded these things. The Lord marked the transaction of carrying to market that load of animals that were so inferior that they could not be profitable to keep, therefore were prepared for food and carried to market to be bought and introduced into the human stomach. One of these was placed upon our table for some time to feed our large family in the days of our poverty. You were not the only one to be blamed in this. Others of your family were alike guilty. It matters not whether it was designed that they should be bought and eaten by us or by worldlings. It is the principle of the thing which displeased God; you transgressed His command. You did not love your neighbor as you did yourself, for you would be unwilling to have the same thing done to you. You would consider yourself insulted. An avaricious spirit led to this departure from Christian principles, and caused you to descend to a species of trading which advantaged yourself at others' disadvantage.

[154] When the meat-eating question was presented before me five years ago, showing how little the people knew what they were eating for food in the shape of flesh meats, this transaction of yours was shown. The effect of eating the meat of these unhealthy animals is diseased blood, sickness, and fevers. Many instances of the kind were shown me as being acted over daily by worldlings. You, my dear brother, have not seen this wrong on your part as the Lord sees it. You have never felt that it was a great sin on your part. Many things of like character have taken place in your life, which you will find that the recording angel has faithfully chronicled, and which you will meet again, unless by repentance and confession you make these wrongs right.

I was bidden to wait and see. I was directed to speak plainly, give general principles, and leave you to make the application yourself. I was shown that God would not frequently point out the wrongs committed by His people, but would cause to be given in their hearing general principles, close, pointed truths, and all should be open to conviction to see, to feel, and understand whether or not they are condemned. You have not dealt closely and faithfully with your own soul. Said the angel: "I will prove him, I will test him, I will walk contrary unto him, until he acknowledges the hand of God in thus dealing with him."

[155] I saw that while in ----- those connected with your family did not move right. You manifested a close spirit, savoring of overreaching and dishonesty. You could have had no influence for good in that place until you had redeemed the past by an entire change of conduct in dealing with your fellow men. Your light was darkness to the people, and your influence while there was a great detriment to the cause of present truth. You brought reproach upon the truth, and your close dealing caused your name to be a byword among the people. You frequently fell below the standard of many worldlings in regard to honorable dealing. Elder I can do no good in ----- His words are as water spilled upon the ground, for the reason that he was connected with you and took part in this close trading. In many respects he became like a worldling in business transactions. He was close and was fast becoming selfish. His course in many things was calculated to destroy his influence and was not becoming a minister of Christ. Said the angel in the vision given at Rochester, New York,

in 1866: "My hand shall bring adversity. He may gather, but I will scatter until he redeems the past and makes clean work for eternity." Every true Christian should feel above condescending to the low, bartering, trading spirit of worldlings.

You are not a miser; you love to be benevolent, free, open-hearted, and openhanded; but that which is wrong in you is the spirit mentioned in this letter, of not loving your neighbor as yourself; it is the neglect of seeing your wrongs and making them right when the clear, forcible light of truth has told you too plainly your duty. You are a lover of hospitality, and God will not give you over to be deceived by the great deceiver of mankind, but will come directly to you and show you where you err that you may retrace your steps. He now calls upon you to redeem the past, and to come up upon a higher plane of action, and let your life record be unspotted with avarice or selfish love of gain.

Your judgment in worldly things will become foolishness unless you dedicate all to God. You and your wife are not devotional. Your spirituality is not what God would have it to be. Paralysis seems to be upon you; yet you are both capable of exerting a strong influence for God and for His truth, if you adorn your profession with well-ordered lives and godly conversation. You frequently get in too great a hurry, and then become impatient and fretful, and order your help in a hurried manner. This is detrimental to your spiritual advancement.

Time is short, and you have no time to delay the preparation of heart necessary to labor earnestly and faithfully for your own soul, and for the salvation of your friends and neighbors, and all who come under your influence. Ever aim to so live in the light that your influence can be sanctifying upon those with whom you are associated in a business capacity or in common intercourse. There is fullness in Jesus. You can obtain strength from Him which will qualify you to walk even as He walked, but there must be no separation of affections from Him. He requires the entire man, the soul, body, and spirit. When you do all on your part which He requires, He will work for you, and bless and strengthen you by His rich grace.

[156]

Chapter 24—Oppressing the Hireling

Dear Brother J,

A great solemnity has rested upon my mind since the vision given Friday evening, June 12, 1868. I was shown that you do not know yourself. You have not felt reconciled to the testimony given in your case and have not made thorough work to reform. I was referred to Isaiah: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” If you do these things, the blessings promised will be given.

You may raise the inquiry, “Wherefore have we fasted,” “and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?” God has given reasons why your prayers were not answered. You have thought that you had found reasons in others and have charged the fault upon them. But I saw that there are sufficient reasons in yourself. You have a work to do to set your own heart in order. You should realize that the work must begin with yourself. You have oppressed the destitute and have benefited [157] yourself by taking advantage of their necessities. In regard to means, you have been close and dealt unjustly. You have not possessed that kind, noble, and generous spirit which should ever characterize the life of a follower of Christ. You have oppressed the hireling in her wages. You saw a poorly clad, hard-working person who you knew was conscientious and God-fearing; yet you took advantage of her because you could do so. I saw that the neglect of seeing and understanding her wants, and the small wages paid her, are all written in heaven as done to Jesus in the person of one of His saints. As you have done this unto the least of Christ’s disciples, you have done it unto Him. Heaven has regarded all your closeness to those who have served in your house, and it will stand faithfully chronicled

against you unless it is repented of and restitution made. One wrong move does more harm than can be undone in years; if the wrongdoer could see the extent of the evil, it would wring from his soul cries of anguish. You are selfish in regard to means. In the case of Brother K the angel of God pointed to you and said: "Inasmuch as ye have done this to one of Christ's disciples, ye have done it to Jesus in His person."

The cases I have mentioned are not the only ones. I would you could see these things as Heaven has opened them before me. There is a sad deception upon minds. It is the religion of Christ that you need. He pleased not Himself, but lived to benefit others. You have a work to do, and should lose no time in humbling your heart before God, and by humble confessions remove the blots from your Christian character. Then can you engage in the solemn work of laboring for the salvation of others without making so many mistakes.

What has your time amounted to, spent as it has been spent while engaged in a work which God did not set you about? Impressions have been made on minds, and experiences gained, which it will require much labor for them to efface. Souls will wander in darkness, perplexity, and unbelief, and some will never recover. With fasting and earnest prayer, with deep heart searching, stern self-examination, lay bare the soul; let no act escape your critical examination. Then, with self dead and your life hid with Christ in God, offer your humble petitions. If you regard iniquity in your heart, the Lord will not hear you. If He had heard your prayers, you would have been exalted. Satan has stood by, prepared to make the most of the advantage he has gained. [158]

Oh, how important it is that faithfulness in little things characterize our lives, that true integrity mark all our course of action, and that we ever bear in mind that angels of God are taking cognizance of every act! That which we mete to others shall be meted to us again. A fearfulness should ever attend you lest you should deal unjustly, selfishly. By sickness and adversity the Lord will remove from us much more than we obtain by grinding the face of the poor. A just God truly estimates all our motives and actions.

I was shown Brother and Sister L. The love of the world has so eaten out true godliness and benumbed the powers of the mind

that the truth fails to have a transforming influence upon the life and character. The love of the world has closed their hearts to compassion and to a consideration of the wants of others; its spirit has separated them from God. Brother and sister, you have a work to do to get from beneath the rubbish of the world; you need to make earnest efforts to overcome your love of the world, your selfishness, and your penuriousness. These are sins which are cursing God's people. I was pointed back to the community in which you lived previous to your moving to ----. You were close and exacting in deal there, taking advantage every time that you could well do so. I tried to find in your lives acts of noble self-sacrifice and benevolence, but [159] could not, they were so rare. Your light has shone before others in such a manner that they have felt disgusted with you and your faith. The truth has been reproached by your closeness and overreaching in deal. May God help you to see all, and to have that hatred for this evil that He has. Let your light so shine that others by seeing your good works may be led to glorify your Father who is in heaven. God has been displeased with your course, for it has been marked by self-interest. He is still displeased with it, and will deal with you in judgment, unless you rid yourself of this spirit of littleness, and seek to be sanctified through the truth. Faith without works is dead, being alone. Faith will never save you unless it is justified by works. God requires of you to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that you may lay hold on eternal life.

I was shown that you have oppressed hirelings in their wages. You have taken advantage of circumstances and secured your help at the lowest figure. This has not been pleasing to God. You should have paid your help liberally, all that they earned. God sees and knows. The Searcher of hearts is acquainted with the thoughts, the intents and purposes of the heart. Every dollar that has been gained by you in this way, if retained, will be scattered through adversity and affliction. The world, the world, the world, has been the order of the day with you. The salvation of the soul has become secondary. Oh, that you could see, in the light of eternity, just how God views these things. You would be alarmed and would not rest until you had made restitution.

You had light upon health reform, but you did not receive and live up to it. You gratified the appetite and taught your boy a sad lesson by indulging him in eating when and what he chose. In your love for the world you continued to work upon the high-pressure plan. The hand of God was removed, and you were left to your own weakness. Then you both tottered over the brink of the grave, yet you failed to learn the lesson in many things which God would have you learn. You retained your love for the world. Your selfish love for gain, your small, close dealing, was not put away. You did not appreciate the sympathy, kind care, and watchful tenderness of the one who had the care of you in your sickness. If you had, it would have led you to manifest a spirit of noble benevolence above any cheap dealing with her who had been true to you. You have ground the face of the poor; you have dealt unjustly. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

It seemed to me, as these things were presented before me, that Satan had possessed such power to blind minds through a love of the world, that even professed Christians forgot, or lost all sense of the fact that God lives and that His angels are making a record of all the doings of the children of men; that every mean act, every small deal, is placed upon the life record. Every day bears its burden of record of unfulfilled duties, of neglect, of selfishness, of deception, of fraud, of overreaching. What an amount of evil works is accumulating for the final judgment! When Christ shall come, "His reward is with Him, and His work before Him," to render to every man according as his works have been. What a revelation will then be made! What confusion of face to some as the acts of their lives are revealed upon the pages of history!

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye have despised the poor." "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." You

may believe all the truth; yet if its principles are not carried out in your lives, your profession will not save you. Satan believes and trembles. He works. He knows his time is short, and he has come down in great power to do his evil works according to his faith. But God's professed people do not support their faith by their works. They believe in the shortness of time, yet grasp just as eagerly after this world's goods as though the world were to stand a thousand years as it now is.

Selfishness marks the course of many. "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in *deed* and in *truth*. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

Divest yourselves of selfishness and make thorough work for eternity. Redeem the past and do not represent the holy truth you profess where you now live as you have where you have lived hitherto. Let your light so shine that others by seeing your good works may be led to glorify our Father in heaven. Stand upon the elevated platform of eternal truth. Regulate all your business transactions in this life in strict accordance with the word of God.

Chapter 25—Combateness Reproved

[162]

Dear Brother M,

When we met you at -----, we were anxious to help you, and we feared you would not receive the help there which you needed. I proposed your coming to our place and associating with us, and others of God's dear children, that you might be learning the lessons so important for you to learn before you could be strong to endure the temptations and perils of these last days. I recollected your countenance as that of one whom the Lord had shown me had been struggling for the mastery over powerful evil habits, which were leading not only to the destruction of your body but to your eternal destruction hereafter. You have gained victories, but you have still great victories to gain; you have battles to fight with internal foes which, unless overcome, will greatly mar your own happiness and that of all who associate with you.

The evil traits in your character must be overcome. You must take hold of the work with earnest, humble prayer to God, feeling your helplessness without His special grace. The belief of the truth has already wrought a reformation in your life, yet this reform is not as thorough as it must be in order for you to meet the measurement of God. You love the truth, but it must take a deeper hold of your life and influence your words and all your deportment. You have a great lesson to learn, and should lose no time in learning it. You have not educated yourself to self-control. Here is a special victory for you to gain. In your organization are more of the elements of war than of peace. You need to cultivate courtesy and true Christian politeness. "In honor preferring one another." "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

Your combateness is large, and you stand braced, prepared to rebut everything where you have a chance. You do not labor to see how near you can make your ideas and views harmonize with those of others, but you stand all ready to differ if there is a possible

[163]

chance for you to do so. This injures your own soul, retards your spiritual advancement, and not only grieves and wounds those who would be your sincere friends, but sometimes disgusts them, so that your society is not agreeable and pleasant, but annoying. It is as natural as your breath for you to consider the views and opinions of others inferior to yours. You often greatly err here, for you have not all that wisdom and knowledge for which you give yourself credit. You often set your opinions up above men and women who have had many more years of experience than yourself, and who are far better qualified to direct and give words of wise judgment than yourself. But you have not seen these disagreeable besetments, and therefore have not realized the ill and bitter fruit they have produced. You have long indulged a spirit of contention, of war. Your peculiar turn of mind leads you to exult in opposites.

Your education has been deplorable; it has not been favorable to your now having a correct religious experience. You have had almost everything to unlearn and learn anew. You possess a hasty temper, which grieves your friends and the holy angels, and wounds your own soul. This is all contrary to the spirit of truth and true holiness. You must learn to cultivate modesty in speaking. Self must be subdued and kept in subjection. A Christian will not pursue a course of bickering and contention with even the most wicked and unbelieving. How wrong to indulge this spirit with those who believe the truth and who are seeking for peace, love, and harmony! Says Paul: "Be at peace among yourselves." This spirit of contention [164] is opposed to all the principles of heaven. In Christ's Sermon on the Mount He says: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." You will have trouble wherever you go, unless you learn the lesson God designs you to learn. You should be less confident and forward in your own opinion, and possess a teachable spirit, that of a learner. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." Says James: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

A spirit of self-confidence is in keeping with your experience. Had you a more thorough experience in the things of God you would realize that the fruits you bear are bad. They contain no nourishment, but fill all who partake of them with bitterness. You must overcome your overbearing, dictatorial spirit. I have strong hope, my dear brother, that you, who have shown that you have moral courage to face an enemy in yourself, and fortitude to battle with the foe of appetite and strong evil habits which girded you about as with iron bands, will go to work right here and gain the victory. You have possessed a reckless spirit, have felt that no one cared specially for you, that almost everybody was your enemy, and that it was of no consequence what became of you.

The truth found you miserable. You saw in it a power that would exalt you and impart to you the force and strength that you had not. You grasped the rays of light that shone upon you; and if you will now yield yourself fully to the influence of the truth, it will thoroughly convert and sanctify you, and prepare you for the finishing touch of immortality. You possess many good traits of character; you have a liberal heart. God wants you to be right, just right. You are unwilling to be dictated to or directed. You want to do all the dictating yourself. But you must possess a humble, teachable spirit, and be affable, patient, long-suffering, full of gentleness and mercy.

[165]

We have an interest for you, and want to help you. I pray you to receive these lines with a right spirit, and let them suitably affect your heart and life.

Response

Sister White,

The testimony I received yesterday I look upon as a well-merited rebuke for which I feel truly thankful to you. I earnestly hope to be an overcomer. I am fully sensible of the magnitude of the work I have to do, yet I trust that by God's assisting grace I shall be able to conquer.

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Chapter 26—Burden Bearers in the Church

Dear Brother and Sister N,

June 12, 1868, I was shown some things in reference to you. You have a work to do but see it not; you have not been burden bearers. You should feel greater interest in the work and cause of God than you do. You are so blinded by the love of the world that you do not see how great an influence the world has over you. You do not feel that a special weight of responsibility rests upon you, nor do you realize the importance of the time and the work to be accomplished. You are like persons asleep. Unity is strength. There is great feebleness in the church because there are in it so many backward ones who take no burdens. You are not workers with Christ. The spirit of the world is shutting from your hearts impressions which the truth should make.

[166] It is important that all now come up to the work and act as though they were living men, laboring for the salvation of souls who are perishing. If all in the church would come up to the help of the Lord, we would see such a revival of His work as we have not hitherto witnessed. God requires this of you and of each member of the church. It is not left with you to decide whether it is best for you to obey the call of God. Obedience is required; and unless you obey you will stand on worse than neutral ground. Unless you are favored with the blessing of God you have His curse. He requires you to be willing and obedient, and says that you shall eat the good of the land. A bitter curse is pronounced on those who come not to the help of the Lord. “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” Satan and his angels are in the field to oppose every advance step that God’s people take, therefore the help of everyone is required.

Brother and Sister N, the influence of unbelieving friends affects you more than you are aware of. They bring you no strength, but darkness and unbelief. You have an individual work in the vineyard

of the Lord. You have thought and cared too much for yourselves. Set your hearts in order, and then be in earnest. Inquire: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" God requires of you an earnest reaching out after Him. He bids you search your own hearts diligently to discover all there that prevents your bringing forth much fruit, and that which will remain. The reason you possess no more of the Spirit of God is that you do not cheerfully bear the cross of Christ. In the last vision I saw that you were deceived in regard to the strength of your love for this world. The cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and you become unfruitful. God requires us to bear much fruit. He will not give commands without giving with them power for their performance. He will not do our part of the work, neither does He require that we do His. It is God that worketh in us, but we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Faith must be sustained by works; the doers of the work are justified before God. You displease God in talking of your poverty, while you have abundance. All that you possess belongs to Him, yet He has seen fit to make you a steward of it for a short time, He is testing and proving you. How will you bear the test? He will require His own with usury. [167]

You have fixed your eyes upon what you have given to different enterprises, and it looks large to you. But had you done very much more, had your hearts expanded, and your hands dispensed to the cause of God and to the needy, you would have done no more than your duty, and you would have been far happier. The Lord calls upon you to bring your offering to the altar, and not hold it within reach merely, but lay it on the altar. The altar sanctifies the gift when it is placed upon it, and not before.

You are not as separate from the world as God requires you to be, but you do not see and understand your danger. You are led astray by your love of the world. You both need to take a deeper draught at the Fountain of truth. Unless you do come into a different condition where you can honor God with your influence and your substance, His curse will come upon you. You may gather, but He will scatter. Instead of your health springing forth speedily, you will become like a withered branch. The Lord calls for workers—men who can and will feel for the salvation of souls, and who will sacrifice anything

[168] that they may be saved. No one else can do this work for you; the offerings of others, if ever so liberal, cannot take the place of yours. It is a surrender to God which you have to make, which no other one can make for you. It is only the Spirit's power, working through mighty faith, that can make you able to successfully resist the many snares Satan has laid for your feet. The words and example of your Redeemer will be the light and strength of your heart. If you follow and trust in Him, He will not leave you to perish. You fear too much the displeasure of those who do not love and serve God. Why should you wish to keep the friendship of your Lord's enemies or be influenced by their opinions? "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" If the heart were right, there would be a more decided separation from the world.

The Lord would have done a great and good work in this vicinity last spring had all felt the need of this work and come up to the help of the Lord. There was not unity of action. All did not feel the necessity of the work and engage in it heartily. There was not a surrendering of all to God. You were shown me as being troubled and perplexed, a mist of darkness gathering over you. You were questioning and were not in a position to receive strength yourselves nor to impart it to others. It is a solemn, fearful time. There is no time now for cherishing idols, no place for concord with Belial or for friendship with the world. Those whom God accepts and sanctifies to Himself are called to be diligent and faithful in His service, being set apart and devoted to Him. It is not a form of godliness, nor a name upon the church records, that constitutes "a living stone" in the spiritual building. It is being renewed in knowledge and true holiness, being crucified to the world and made alive in Christ, that unites the soul to God. The followers of Christ have one leading object in view, one great work: the salvation of their fellow men. Every other interest should be inferior to this; it should engage the most earnest effort and the deepest interest.

God first requires the heart, the affections. He requires His followers to love and serve Him with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their strength.

[169] His commandments and grace are adapted to our necessities, and without them we cannot be saved, do what we may. Acceptable obedience He requires. The offering of goods, or any service, will

not be accepted without the heart. The will must be brought into subjection. The Lord requires of you a greater consecration to Him and a greater separation from the spirit and influence of the world.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” Christ has called you to be His followers, to imitate His life of self-sacrifice and self-denial, to be interested in the great work of the redemption of the fallen race. You have no just sense of the work that God requires you to perform. Christ is your pattern. That in which you are deficient is love. This pure and holy principle distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from those of worldlings. Divine love has a powerful, purifying influence. It is to be found only in renewed hearts, and naturally flows out to their fellow men.

“Love one another,” says our Saviour, “as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Christ has given us an example of pure, disinterested love. You have not as yet seen your deficiency in this respect, and your great need of this heavenly attainment, without which all your good purposes, and your zeal, even if it be of that nature that you could give your goods to feed the poor and your body to be burned, is nothing. You need that charity which suffereth long, is not easily provoked, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Without the spirit of love, no one can be like Christ. With this living principle in the soul, no one can be like the world.

The conduct of Christians is like that of their Lord. He erected the standard, and it is left for us to say whether or not we will rally around it. Our Lord and Saviour laid aside His dominion, His riches and glory, and sought after us, that He might save us from misery and make us like Himself. He humbled Himself and took our nature that we might be able to learn of Him and, imitating His life of benevolence and self-denial, follow Him step by step to heaven. You cannot equal the copy; but you can resemble it and, according to your ability, do likewise. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength, and with *all* thy mind; and thy neighbor as *thyself*.” Such love must dwell in your hearts, that you will be ready to give the treasures and honors

[170]

of this world if thereby you may influence one soul to engage in the service of Christ.

God bids you with one hand, faith, take hold of His mighty arm, and with the other hand, love, reach perishing souls. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Follow Him. Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Walk even as He walked. This is the will of God, even your sanctification. The work you have to perform is to do the will of Him who sustains your life for His glory. If you labor for yourselves, it can profit you nothing. To labor for others' good, to be less self-caring and more in earnest to devote all to God, will be acceptable to Him and be returned by His rich grace.

God has not apportioned you your lot to merely watch over and care for yourselves. You are required to minister to, and watch over, others, and in this exercise you will manifest those evils in your character which need correcting, and will strengthen those weak points that need strengthening. This is the part of the work we have to perform; not impatiently, fretfully, unwillingly, but cheerfully, gladly, in order to reach Christian perfection. To remove from us everything which is not exactly agreeable is not imitating Christ.

[171] You should be very jealous for the honor of God. How circumspectly should you walk, where now your course is not as it should be. If you could see the pure angels with their bright, searching eyes intently fixed on you, watching to record how the Christian glorifies his Master; or could you observe the exulting, sneering triumph of the evil angels, as they trace out every crooked way, and then quote Scripture which is violated, and compare the life with this Scripture which you profess to follow but from which you swerve, you would be astonished and alarmed for yourselves. It takes the entire man to make a valiant Christian. Oh, what blind, shortsighted creatures we are! How little do we discern sacred things, and how feebly do we comprehend the riches of His grace!

One thing I wish to impress upon your minds. You have the special mediums of Satan closely connected with you, and their power and influence have a manifest effect upon you, because you do not remain near enough to God to ensure the special aid of angels that excel in strength. Your union is altogether too strong with your Lord's enemies, and you perceive not that you are in danger of making shipwreck of your faith. If you encourage, in the least, the

temptations of Satan, you place yourself upon his battleground, and then the conflict will be long and sore before you obtain the victory and triumph in the name of Jesus, who has conquered him.

Satan has great advantages. He possessed the wonderful intellectual power of an angel, of which few form any just idea. Satan was conscious of his power, or he would not have engaged in a conflict with the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Satan closely watches events, and when he finds one who has a specially strong spirit of opposition to the truth of God he will even reveal to him unfulfilled events, that he may more firmly secure himself a seat in his heart. He who did not hesitate to brave a conflict with Him who holds creation as in His hand, has malignity to persecute and deceive. He holds mortals in his snare at the present time. During his experience of nearly six thousand years he has lost none of his skill and shrewdness. All this time he has been a close observer of all that concerns our race.

[172]

Those who have bitterly opposed the truth of God, Satan uses as his mediums. To such he will appear in the assumed person and garb of another, it may be a friend of the medium. He will increase their faith by using the words of this friend and relating circumstances which are about to take place or which really have taken place and of which the medium knew nothing. Sometimes previous to a death or an accident he gives a dream or, personating another, converses with the medium, even imparting knowledge by means of his suggestions. But it is wisdom from beneath and not from above. The wisdom taught by Satan is opposed to the truth, unless, to serve his purpose, he apparently clothes himself with the light which enshrouds angels. To a certain class of minds he will come sanctioning a part of what Christ's followers believe to be truth, while he warns them to reject the other part as dangerous and fatal error.

Satan is a master workman. His infernal wisdom he employs with good success. He is ready and able to teach those who reject the counsel of God against their own souls. The bait which he has found will avail in bringing souls into his net, that he may fasten his hellish grasp upon them, he will clothe with every possible good and make as attractive as possible. All who are thus ensnared will learn at a dreadful expense the folly of selling heaven and immortality for a deception that is fatal in its consequences. Our adversary, the

[173] devil, is not void of wisdom or strength. He goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He will work “with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” Because they rejected the truth, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” We have a powerful, deceptive foe with whom to contend, and our only safety is in Him who is to come, who will consume this archdeceiver with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

I commend this to you in the fear of God, and implore you to arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life.

* * * * *

Chapter 27—Pride in the Young

Dear Sister O,

It was my intention to have some conversation with you before leaving -----, but I was prevented by many things. I do not write with very hopeful feelings that this letter will make any special change in your course of conduct so far as your religious experience is concerned.

I have felt very sad in regard to you. In the meetings held in -----, I dwelt upon general principles, and sought to reach hearts by bearing a testimony which I hoped would effect a change in your religious life. I have tried to write, as given in *Testimony* No. 12, in regard to the dangers of the young. That view was given in Rochester. There I was shown that a mistake had been made in your instruction from your childhood up. Your parents had thought, and had talked it in your hearing, that you were a natural Christian. Your sisters had a love for you which savored of idolatry more than of sanctification. Your parents have had an unsanctified love for their children, which has blinded their eyes to their defects. At times, when they have been somewhat aroused, this has been different. But you have been petted and praised until your eternal interest is endangered. [174]

I saw that you do not know yourself. You have a self-righteousness which fastens you in deception in regard to your spiritual attainments. At times you have felt something of the influences of the Spirit of God. But to the transformation by the renewing of the mind you are a stranger. “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” You have not had this experience, therefore have no anchor. You are not a Christian, and yet it has been talked to you all your life that you were a natural Christian. You have taken it for granted that you were all right, when you were very far from being accepted of God. This deception has grown with your growth, and strengthened with your

strength, and threatens to prove your ruin. Your parents have felt jealous for their children, and if reports of supposed slights have been brought to them by their children, they have felt interested and aroused at once, and have sympathized with them, and stood directly in the way of their spiritual good.

You and your sister P have had a great amount of pride, which will be as stubble in the day of God. Self-love and self-pride, pride of dress and appearance, have prevailed. Selfishness has kept you from good. You both must have a thorough conversion, a thorough renewing of the mind, a thorough transformation, or you will have no part in the kingdom of God. Your appearance, your good looks, your dress, will not bring you into favor with God. It is moral worth that the great I AM notices. There is no real beauty of person or of character out of Christ, no real perfection of manners or deportment without the sanctifying graces of the spirit of humility, sympathy, and true holiness.

[175] I have been shown that souls will be lost through your influence and example. You have had light and privileges, and for them you will have to render an account. You are not naturally religious or devotional, but have to make special effort to keep your minds upon religious things. Self is prominent with you. Your self-esteem is very large; but remember that Heaven looks at moral worth, and estimates the character as precious and valuable by the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Costly array, outward adorning, personal attractions, all sink into insignificance in comparison with this valuable attainment, a meek and quiet spirit. Your love for your own enjoyment and gratification, your lack of consecration and of devotion, have been detrimental to many. Those who were backslidden you could not benefit, for your lives were like the worldlings' in general.

Those who visit ----- carry away the impression made by you and other of the youth who do not enjoy experimental religion, that there is no reality in religion. Pride is strengthened in them; love of show, love of lightness and of pleasure are increased, and sacred things are not discerned. They receive the impression that they have been too conscientious, too particular. For if those who live right at the center of the great work are influenced so little by the solemn truths so often presented, why should they be so particular? Why

should they be afraid of enjoying themselves, when this seemed to be the aim of those who were of longer experience in -----?

The influence of the youth in ----- extends as far as they are known, and their unconsecrated lives are proverbial; and none have had more influence in the wrong direction than you. You have dishonored your profession and been miserable representatives of the truth. Says the True Witness: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth." Were you cold, there would be some hope that you would be converted; but where self-righteousness girds one about, instead of the righteousness of Christ, the deception is so difficult to be seen, and the self-righteousness so hard to be put away, that the case is the most difficult to reach. An unconverted, godless sinner stands in a more favorable condition than such.

[176]

You are a stumbling block to sinners. Your lack of consecration is marked. You are scattering from Christ instead of gathering with Him. If God will help me to tear off your self-righteous garments, I will have hope that you may yet redeem the time and lead exemplary lives. You have been frequently aroused, but as often have sunk back into your former do-nothing, self-righteous condition, having a name to live while you are dead. Your pride threatens to be your ruin. God has spoken to you upon this point. If you make no reformation, affliction will come upon you, and your joy be turned to heaviness, until you humble your hearts under the hand of God. Your prayers God does not accept. They come from hearts filled with pride and selfishness. You, my dear sister, are vain; you have lived an aimless life, when, had you been humble and lived to bless others, you would have been a blessing to yourself and to all around you. May God forgive your parents and sisters for the part they have acted in making you what you are—just that which God cannot accept, just that which, if you remain the same, will be stubble for the fire to consume in the day of God.

When I was shown in regard to the spirit of selfishness existing in those who were working in the office, that there were some who were merely working for wages, as though engaged in any common enterprise, you were both among the number. You were both selfish and self-caring. Your anxiety was to please yourselves and to obtain

[177]

higher wages. This spirit has, to quite an extent, cursed the office, and Heaven frowns upon it. Many have been too eager to grasp means. All this is wrong. A worldly spirit has come in, and Christ has been shut out. May God pity His people. And I hope you will be converted.

You have possessed a spirit of levity, and have been vain and trifling in your conversation. Oh, how seldom has Jesus been mentioned! His redeeming love has not called forth gratitude and praise, and expressions calculated to magnify His name and His undying, self-sacrificing love. What has been the theme for your conversation? What thoughts have been dwelt upon with the greatest pleasure? In truth it can be said that Jesus and His life of sacrifice, His exceeding precious grace and the redemption He has so dearly earned for you, are scarcely in all your thoughts; but trifling things occupy the mind. To please yourselves, to accomplish objects in life which suit your pleasure, this is the burden of the mind. I can but wish you had not professed to be risen with Christ, for you have not complied with the requirement. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Ask yourselves the questions: Have I complied with the requirements here laid down by the inspired apostle? Have I evidenced by my life, my death to the world, that my life is hid with Christ in God? Am I submerged in Christ? Do I draw sustenance and support from Him who has promised to be to me a present help in every time of need? You have a formal religion, but have not a special sense of your weakness, your corruption, and your vileness by nature.

[178] "A natural Christian!" This deceptive idea has served many as a garment of self-righteousness, and has led many to a supposed hope in Christ, who had no experimental knowledge of Him, of His experience, His trials, His life of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Their righteousness which they count upon so much is only as filthy rags. Says Christ, the beloved Teacher: "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Yes, follow Him through evil as well as through good report. Follow Him in befriending the most needy and friendless. Follow Him in being forgetful of self, abundant in acts of self-denial and self-sacrifice to

do others good; when reviled, reviling not again; manifesting love and compassion for the fallen race. He counted not His life dear, but gave it up for us all. Follow Him from the lowly manger to the cross. He was our example. He tells you that if you would be His disciple you must take the cross, the despised cross, and follow Him. Can ye drink of the cup? Can ye be baptized with the baptism?

Your actions testify that you are strangers to Christ. “Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and *good fruits*, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

Here are enumerated the fruits which are marked evidences that one who has been walking in the vigor of life has met with a change—a change so marked as to be represented by death. From living, active life, to death! What a striking figure! None need be deceived here. If this transformation has not been experienced by you, rest not. Seek the Lord with all your hearts. Make this the all-important business of your lives.

[179]

You have an account to render for the good you might have done during your life, had you been in the position in which God required you to be, and which He has made ample provision that you might occupy. But you have failed to glorify God upon the earth, and to save souls around you, because you did not avail yourselves of that grace and strength, wisdom and knowledge, which Christ has provided for you. You knew His will, but did it not. There will have to be a most manifest reformation in you both, or you will never hear from Jesus: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

In the evening of June 12, after reading the foregoing to the church, I was shown that while you are careless, proud, selfish, and indifferent to the salvation of souls, death is doing its work.

One after another is leaving you, and passing to the grave. What has been your influence over those who assembled in your social gatherings? What has been said or done to lead souls to Christ? Have you been instant in season, out of season, to do your whole duty? Are you ready to meet at the bar of God those with whom you have mingled in your social gatherings, especially that class who have been thrown under your influence and who have died out of Christ? Are you prepared to say that your skirts are clear of their blood? I will mention one case, that of Q. Will no reproach fall upon you from her, upon you who were surrounded with good home influences, you who had every favorable opportunity to develop good Christian characters, but who have felt no burden for souls? [180] Pride, vanity, and love of pleasure were fostered by you, and you acted your part in disgracing your profession and leading this poor soul, who had been tossed about and buffeted by Satan, to doubt the reality of the truth and the genuineness of the Christian religion.

Your frivolous conversation, in common with that of other of the young people, was disgusting. There was nothing noble and elevated in the turn your minds took. It was common chitchat and gossip, the silly, vain laugh, the jesting, and the joking. Angels have written the scenes you have acted over and over again. Notwithstanding the most solemn appeals have been made to you, and you have been reproved, rebuked, and warned, you are more censurable than other youth. You have had longer experience and greater knowledge of the truth. You have lived the longest at ----- . You were among the first to profess to believe the truth and to be Christ's followers, and your course of vanity and pride has done more toward shaping the experience of the youth in that place than has that of any of the others. Those who have been converted to the truth you have taken by the hand, as it were, and united to the world.

Great guilt rests upon you and also upon your parents, who have flattered your pride and folly. They have sympathized with you when reproved, and have given you to understand that they thought it uncalled for. You, Sister O, have thought yourself handsome. Your parents have flattered you. You have sought acquaintance with unbelievers. Aside from your profession, your actions have been unbecoming a prudent, modest girl. But when it is taken into the account that you profess to be a follower of the meek and lowly

Jesus, you have disgraced your profession. O my sister, did you think those clerks could not see through the gloss you threw about you? Did you think they were so captivated with your pretty face that they could not see beneath the surface and read your true, superficial character? When you placed upon your head the adorning borrowed from Sister R's store, and then displayed yourself as if on exhibition before those clerks, did you think this was not discerned? Did you forget that angels of God were in attendance, and that their pure eyes were reading your thoughts, the intents and purposes of the heart, and taking cognizance of every act, and delineating your true, frivolous character? While you were engrossed with your small talk to the clerk with whom you were fascinated, because he flattered your vanity, could you have stood before the looking glass you would have seen the gestures, the whisperings, among those who were observing you, and laughing because you were making such a foolish show. You were bringing a stain upon the cause of truth. Could you have entered that store unobserved a short time after you stepped out, and have heard the conversation after you had lingered as long as decency would permit, you would have learned some things you never thought of before. You would have been wounded and humbled to learn how you were viewed by even frivolous clerks. The very one who flattered you to your face joined in the laugh and sport of his companions upon your vain course. [181]

You might have an influence for good in ----- and honor your Redeemer. But instead of this you have made yourself the speech of flattering clerks and beardless youth. This unbecoming course has been remarked by very many, and those who have noticed these inconsistencies, even though they may be unbelievers and profess respect for you, despise you in their hearts. You are following in the footsteps of S, and unless your parents awake and open their eyes to your folly, they will share in your guilt. Sin is upon them and upon your sisters for the course they have taken in fostering your pride and flattering your vanity. If you and your sisters were in a saved state, you would all feel the perilous condition of the unsaved. The day will come, unless a great change is wrought in you, when you will hear from many lips. "I associated with these Christians, yet they never told me of my danger. They never warned me. I thought that if I was in danger of being lost, they would not rest day or night [182]

without arousing me to see my lost condition. Now I am lost. If I had been in their place and had seen one in a similar condition, I would not have rested until I had made them sensible of their state and pointed them to the only One who can save them.” You have been good and pleasing servants of Satan while you have professed to be servants of Christ.

Sister O, you have been so exalted by the esteem you have had of yourself that you have had no just sense of the estimate observers have placed upon your shallowness of character. They count you a coquette, and you have justly earned this reputation. It would have been much more profitable for you to have heeded the exhortation of the apostle: “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning; ... 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.”

Your parents have greatly failed in the education of their children. They have suffered them to be released from burdens which it was highly important for them to bear. Because they chose to please themselves, they were permitted to remain in bed, dozing away the sweetest and loveliest hours of the morning, while their indulgent parents were up, toiling with life’s burdens. These children have not learned to resist their inclinations, to wrestle against their own desires; they have not learned to endure hardness. They have been excused in a great measure from home burdens, and this has been an injury to them. They have never learned the act of self-denial or self-sacrifice. They would not submit to apply themselves to a task which did not meet their taste. Their education is greatly deficient. Yet [183] pride—vain, vaunting pride—fills their hearts. Sister O has thought herself superior to her associates, that they were not worthy of much attention and courtesy from her. With this she has a stubborn will to do about as she pleases regardless of the wishes, conveniences, and necessities of others. Her disposition is an unhappy one, which, unless entirely overcome, will cause many a shadow to darken her pathway and embitter the lives of her best friends.

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Chapter 28—Worldliness in the Church

Dear Brethren and Sisters in -----,

June 12, 1868, I was shown that the love of the world was to a great extent taking the place of love to God. You are situated in a pleasant country, one that is favorable to worldly prosperity. This places you where you are in constant danger of having your interest swallowed up in the world, in laying up treasure upon the earth. Your hearts will be where your treasure is. You are situated where there are temptations to be plunging deeper and deeper into the world, to be continually accumulating; and while you are thus engaged, the mind becomes engrossed with the cares of this life to such an extent as to shut out true godliness. But few realize the deceitfulness of riches. Those who are anxious to acquire means are so bent upon this one object as to make the religion of Christ a secondary matter. Spiritual things are not valued and are not sought after, for the love of gain has eclipsed the heavenly treasure. If the prize of eternal life were to be valued by the zeal, perseverance, and earnestness exhibited by those who profess to be Christians, it would not be half as valuable as earthly possessions. Compare the earnest effort made to obtain the things of this earth with the languid, weak, inefficient effort to gain spirituality and a heavenly treasure. No wonder that we experience so little of the illuminating influence from the heavenly sanctuary. Our desires are not in that direction; they are mostly confined to earthly pursuits, seeking for worldly things, and neglecting the eternal. Prosperity is blinding the eyes and deceiving the soul. God may speak, but the rubbish of earth prevents His voice from being heard. [184]

Our aged father T has his affections upon the things of this earth when they should be removed and he be ripening up for heaven. The life that he now lives he should live by faith in the Son of God; his affections should be on the better land. He should have less and less interest in the perishable treasures of earth, while eternal things, which are of the greatest consequence, should engage his whole

interest. The days of his probation are nearly ended. Oh, how little time remains to devote to God! His energies are worn, his mind broken, and at best his services must be weak; yet if given heartily and fully, they are wholly acceptable. With your age, Brother T, has come an increase of selfishness and a more firm, earnest love for the treasures of this poor world.

[185] Sister T loves this world. She is naturally selfish. She has suffered much with bodily infirmities. God permitted this affliction to come upon her, and yet would not permit Satan to take her life. God designed through the furnace of affliction to loosen her grasp upon earthly treasures. Through suffering alone could this be done. She is one of those whose systems have been poisoned by drugs. By taking these she has ignorantly made herself what she is; yet God did not suffer her life to be taken, but lengthened her years of probation and suffering that she might become sanctified through the truth, be purified, made white and tried, and, through the furnace of affliction, lose her dross, and become more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Ophir. Love of the world has become so deeply rooted in the hearts of this brother and sister that it will require a severe trial to remove it. Dear brother and sister, you lack devotion to God. You are insane in regard to worldly things. The world has power to conform your mind to it, while the spiritual and heavenly do not bear with sufficient weight to transform the mind.

Men and women in ----- who profess to be Christ's followers, why do you not follow Him? Why do you exhibit such insanity to acquire an earthly treasure, which misfortune can so easily remove, and neglect the riches of heaven, the immortal, imperishable treasure?

I was shown the case of Brother U's wife. She has a desire to do right, but has failings which cause herself and her friends much trouble. She talks too much. She lacks experience in the things of God, and unless she is converted and transformed by the renewing of the mind, she will be unable to stand amid the perils of the last days. Heart work is needed. Then the tongue will be sanctified. There is much talking which is sinful and should be avoided. She should set a strict watch before the door of her lips and keep her tongue as with a bridle, that her words may not work wickedness. She should cease talking of others' faults, dwelling upon others' peculiarities,

and discovering others' infirmities. Such conversation is censurable in any person. It is unprofitable and positively sinful. It tends only to evil. The enemy knows that if this course is pursued by Christ's professed followers, it is opening a door for him to work.

I saw that when sisters who are given to talk get together, Satan is generally present, for he finds employment. He stands by to excite the mind and make the most of the advantage he has gained. He knows that all this gossip, and tale-bearing, and revealing of secrets, and dissecting of character, separate the soul from God. It is death to spirituality and a calm religious influence. Sister U sins greatly with her tongue. She ought by her words to have an influence for good, but she frequently talks at random. Sometimes her words put a different construction upon things than they will bear. Sometimes there is exaggeration. Then there is misstatement. There is no intention to misstate, but the habit of much talking and talking upon things that are unprofitable has been so long cherished that she has become careless and reckless in her words, and frequently does not know what she is stating herself. This destroys any influence for good she might have. It is time there was an entire reform in this respect. Her society has not been prized as it would have been had she not indulged in this sinful talking. [186]

Christians should be careful in regard to their words. They should never carry unfavorable reports from one of their friends to another, especially if they are aware that there is a lack of union between them. It is cruel to hint and insinuate, as though you knew a great deal in regard to this friend or that acquaintance of which others are ignorant. Such hints go further, and create more unfavorable impressions, than to frankly relate the facts in an unexaggerated manner. What harm has not the church of Christ suffered from these things! The inconsistent, unguarded course of her members has made her weak as water. Confidence has been betrayed by members of the same church, and yet the guilty did not design to do mischief. Lack of wisdom in the selection of subjects of conversation has done much harm. The conversation should be upon spiritual and divine things; but it has been otherwise. If the association with Christian friends is chiefly devoted to the improvement of the mind and heart, there will be no after regrets, and they can look back on the interview with a pleasant satisfaction. But if the hours are spent in levity and

[187] vain talking, and the precious time is employed in dissecting the lives and character of others, the friendly intercourse will prove a source of evil, and your influence will be a savor of death unto death.

I cannot distinctly call to mind all the persons in your church who were shown me; but I saw that many had a great work to perform. There is too much talking by nearly all, and too little meditation and prayer. With many there is too much selfishness. The mind is devoted to self and not to the good of others. Satan's power is upon you in a great degree. Yet there are precious lights among you, and those who are seeking to walk according to the will of God. Pride and the love of the world are the snares which are so great a hindrance to spirituality and a growth in grace.

This world is not the Christian's heaven, but merely the workshop of God, where we are to be fitted up to unite with sinless angels in a holy heaven. We should be constantly training the mind to noble, unselfish thoughts. This education is necessary to so bring into exercise the powers which God has given us that His name shall best be glorified upon the earth. We are accountable for all the noble qualities which God has given us, and to put these faculties to a use He never designed we should is showing base ingratitude to Him. The service of God demands all the powers of our being, and we fail of meeting the design of God unless we bring these powers to a high state of cultivation, and educate the mind to love to contemplate heavenly things, and strengthen and ennoble the energies of the soul by right actions, operating to the glory of God.

[188] Women professing godliness generally fail to train the mind. They leave it uncontrolled, to go where it will. This is a great mistake. Many seem to have no mental power. They have not educated the mind to think; and because they have not done this, they suppose they cannot. Meditation and prayer are necessary to a growth in grace. Why there is no more stability among women is because of so little mental culture, so little reflection. Leaving the mind in a state of inaction, they lean upon others to do the brainwork, to plan, and think, and remember for them, and thus grow more and more inefficient. Some need to discipline the mind by exercise. They should force it to think. While they depend upon someone to think for them, to solve their difficulties, and they refuse to tax the mind with thought, the inability to remember, to look ahead

and discriminate, will continue. Efforts must be made by every individual to educate the mind.

I was shown that Brother V should seek for more spirituality. You do not possess that calm trust in God which He requires you to have. You do not train the mind to run in the channel of spirituality. You indulge in too much vain, unnecessary talk, which injures your own soul and injures your influence. You must encourage calmness and fortitude of mind. You are easily excited; you have strong feelings, and express in strong terms your likes and dislikes. You need more good religion to have a soothing influence upon you. You have been invited to learn of Christ, who is meek and lowly of heart. Precious lesson! If well learned, it will transform the whole life. Lightness and cheap talk are injurious to your spiritual advancement. You should seek after perfection of character and let your influence tell for God in your words and acts. You need to earnestly seek the Lord and to take a deeper draught at the fountain of truth, that its influence may sanctify your life. Your mind is too much on the world. You should have your interest in the better life than this. You have no time to lose; make haste and improve the few hours of probation.

Your wife has had too much pride and selfishness. God has been bringing her through the furnace of affliction to remove these spots from her character. She must be very careful that the fire of affliction does not kindle upon her in vain. It should remove the dross and bring her nearer to God, making her more spiritual. Her love of the world must die. Love of self must be overcome and her will swallowed up in the will of God.

[189]

I was shown that love of the world has to a great extent shut Jesus from the church. God calls for a change, a surrender of all to Him. Unless the mind is educated to dwell upon religious themes, it will be weak and feeble in this direction. But while dwelling upon worldly enterprises, it will be strong; for in this direction it has been cultivated, and has strengthened with exercise. The reason it is so difficult for men and women to live religious lives is because they do not exercise the mind unto godliness. It is trained to run in an opposite direction. Unless the mind is constantly exercised in obtaining spiritual knowledge and in seeking to understand the mystery of godliness, it is incapable of appreciating eternal things

because it has no experience in that direction. This is the reason why nearly all consider it uphill business to serve the Lord.

[190] When the heart is divided, dwelling principally upon things of the world, and but little upon the things of God, there can be no special increase of spiritual strength. Worldly enterprises claim the larger share of the mind, calling into exercise its powers; therefore in this direction there is strength and power to claim more and more of the interest and affections, while less and less is reserved to devote to God. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is not a special exercise of the mind. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. Secret prayer is very important; in solitude the soul is laid bare to the inspecting eye of God, and every motive is scrutinized. Secret prayer! How precious! The soul communing with God! Secret prayer is to be heard only by the prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to receive the burden of such petitions. In secret prayer the soul is free from surrounding influences, free from excitement. Calmly, yet fervently, will it reach out after God. Secret prayer is frequently perverted, and its sweet designs lost, by loud vocal prayer. Instead of the calm, quiet trust and faith in God, the soul drawn out in low, humble tones, the voice is raised to a loud pitch, and excitement is encouraged, and secret prayer loses its softening, sacred influence. There is a storm of feeling, a storm of words, making it impossible to discern the still, small voice that speaks to the soul while engaged in its secret, true, heartfelt devotion. Secret prayer, properly carried out, is productive of great good. But prayer which is made public to the entire family and neighborhood is not secret prayer, even though thought to be, and divine strength is not received from it. Sweet and abiding will be the influence emanating from Him who seeth in secret, whose ear is open to answer the prayer arising from the heart. By calm, simple faith the soul holds communion with God and gathers to itself divine rays of light to strengthen and sustain it to endure the conflicts of Satan. God is our tower of strength.

Jesus has left us word: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. What

time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." [191]

When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ's intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping. They became weary of waiting and watching; they became indifferent in regard to the coming of their Master. They longed not for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching. They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was time enough yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all anxiety and interest in the appearing of the Master. They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared.

If such had only known that the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary would close so soon, how differently would they have conducted themselves, how earnestly would they have watched! The Master, anticipating all this, gives them timely warning in the command to watch. He distinctly states the suddenness of His coming. He does not measure the time, lest we shall neglect a momentary preparation, and in our indolence look ahead to the time when we think He will come, and defer the preparation. "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not." Yet this foretold uncertainty, and suddenness at last, fails to rouse us from stupidity to earnest wakefulness, and to [192]

quicken our watchfulness for our expected Master. Those not found waiting and watching are finally surprised in their unfaithfulness. The Master comes, and instead of their being ready to open unto Him immediately, they are locked in worldly slumber, and are lost at last.

A company was presented before me in contrast to the one described. They were waiting and watching. Their eyes were directed heavenward, and the words of their Master were upon their lips: "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." The Lord intimates a delay before the morning finally dawns. But He would not have them give way to weariness, nor relax their earnest watchfulness, because the morning does not open upon them as soon as they expected. The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: "The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master's return. There remains but a little period of watching now." I saw some becoming weary; their eyes were directed downward, and they were engrossed with earthly things, and were unfaithful in watching. They were saying: "In the first watch we expected our Master, but were disappointed. We thought surely He would come in the second watch, but that passed, and He came not. We may be again disappointed. We need not be so particular. He may not come in the following watch. We are in the third watch, and now we think it best to lay up our treasure on the earth, that we may be secure against want." Many were sleeping, stupefied with the cares of this life and allured by the deceitfulness of riches from their waiting, watching position.

[193] Angels were represented to me as looking on with intense interest to mark the appearance of the weary yet faithful watchers, lest they be too sorely tried, and sink under the toil and hardships made doubly severe because their brethren had been diverted from their watch, and become drunk with worldly cares and beguiled by worldly prosperity. These heavenly angels grieved that those who were once watching should, by their indolence and unfaithfulness, increase the trial and

burdens of those who were earnestly and perseveringly endeavoring to maintain their waiting, watching position.

I saw that it was impossible to have the affections and interests engrossed in worldly cares, to be increasing earthly possessions, and yet be in a waiting, watching position, as our Saviour has commanded. Said the angel: "They can secure but one world. In order to acquire the heavenly treasure, they must sacrifice the earthly. They cannot have both worlds." I saw how necessary a continuance of faithfulness in watching was in order to escape the delusive snares of Satan. He leads those who should be waiting and watching, to take an advance step toward the world; they have no intention of going further, but that one step removed them that much further from Jesus, and made it easier to take the next; and thus step after step is taken toward the world, until all the difference between them and the world is a profession, a name only. They have lost their peculiar, holy character, and there is nothing except their profession to distinguish them from the lovers of the world around them.

I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing watchfulness, for now the moments are fewer than before the passing of the first watch. Now the period of waiting is necessarily shorter than at first. If we watched with unabated vigilance then, how much more need of double watchfulness in the second watch. The passing of the second watch has brought us to the third, and now it is inexcusable to abate our watchfulness. The third watch calls for threefold earnestness. To become impatient now would be to lose all our earnest, persevering watching heretofore. The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay. But the coming of the morning to the faithful, and of the night to the unfaithful, is right upon us. By waiting and watching, God's people are to manifest their peculiar character, their separation from the world. By our watching position we are to show that we are truly strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. The difference between those who love the world and those who love Christ is so plain as to be unmistakable. While worldlings are all earnestness and ambition to secure earthly treasure, God's

[194]

people are not conformed to the world, but show by their earnest, watching, waiting position that they are transformed; that their home is not in this world, but that they are seeking a better country, even a heavenly.

I hope, my dear brethren and sisters, that you will not pass your eye over these words without thoroughly considering their import. As the men of Galilee stood looking steadfastly toward heaven, to catch, if possible, a glimpse of their ascending Saviour, two men in white apparel, heavenly angels commissioned to comfort them for the loss of the presence of their Saviour, stood by them and inquired: “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.”

[195]

God designs that His people shall fix their eyes heavenward, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. While the attention of worldlings is turned to various enterprises, ours should be to the heavens; our faith should reach further and further into the glorious mysteries of the heavenly treasure, drawing the precious, divine rays of light from the heavenly sanctuary to shine in our hearts, as they shine upon the face of Jesus. The scoffers mock the waiting, watching ones, and inquire: “Where is the promise of His coming? You have been disappointed. Engage now with us, and you will prosper in worldly things. Get gain, get money, and be honored of the world.” The waiting ones look upward and answer: “We are watching.” And by turning from earthly pleasure and worldly fame, and from the deceitfulness of riches, they show themselves to be in that position. By watching they become strong; they overcome sloth and selfishness and love of ease. Affliction’s fire kindles upon them, and the waiting time seems long. They sometimes grieve, and faith falters; but they rally again, overcome their fears and doubts, and while their eyes are directed heavenward, say to their adversaries: “I am watching, I am waiting the return of my Lord. I will glory in tribulation, in affliction, in necessities.”

The desire of our Lord is that we should be watching, so that when He cometh and knocketh we may open to Him immediately. A blessing is pronounced upon those servants whom He finds watching. “He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.” Who among us in these last days

will be thus specially honored by the Master of assemblies? Are we prepared without delay to open to Him immediately and welcome Him in? Watch, watch, watch. Nearly all have ceased their watching and waiting; we are not ready to open to Him immediately. The love of the world has so occupied our thoughts that our eyes are not turned upward, but downward to the earth. We are hurrying about, engaging with zeal and earnestness in different enterprises, but God is forgotten, and the heavenly treasure is not valued. We are not in a waiting, watching position. The love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches eclipse our faith, and we do not long for, and love, the appearing of our Saviour. We try too hard to take care of self ourselves. We are uneasy and greatly lack a firm trust in God. Many worry and work, contrive and plan, fearing they may suffer need. They cannot afford time to pray or to attend religious meetings and, in their care for themselves, leave no chance for God to care for them. And the Lord does not do much for them, for they give Him no opportunity. They do too much for themselves, and believe and trust in God too little.

[196]

The love of the world has a terrible hold upon the people whom the Lord has commanded to watch and pray always, lest coming suddenly He find them sleeping. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

I have been shown that God's people who profess to believe present truth are not in a waiting, watching position. They are increasing in riches and are laying up their treasures upon the earth. They are becoming rich in worldly things, but not rich toward God. They do not believe in the shortness of time; they do not believe that the end of all things is at hand, that Christ is at the door. They may profess much faith; but they deceive their own souls, for they will act out all the faith that they really possess. Their works show the character of their faith and testify to those around them that the coming of Christ is not to be in this generation. According to their faith will be their works. Their preparations are being made to remain in this world. They are adding house to house, and land to

[197]

land, and are citizens of this world.

The condition of poor Lazarus feeding upon the crumbs from the rich man's table is preferable to that of these professors. If they possessed genuine faith, instead of increasing their treasures upon the earth they would be selling off, freeing themselves from the cumbersome things of earth and transferring their treasure before them to heaven. Then their interest and hearts will be there, for the heart of man will be where his greatest treasure is. Most of those who profess to believe the truth testify that that which they value the most is in this world. For this they have care, wearing anxiety, and labor. To preserve and add to their treasure is the study of their lives. They have transferred so little to heaven, have taken so little stock in the heavenly treasure, that their minds are not specially attracted to that better country. They have taken large stock in the enterprises of this earth, and these investments, like the magnet, draw down their minds from the heavenly and imperishable to the earthly and corruptible. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Selfishness girds many about as with iron bands. It is "my farm," "my goods," "my trade," "my merchandise." Even the claims of common humanity are disregarded by them. Men and women professing to be waiting and loving the appearing of their Lord are shut up to self. The noble, the godlike, they have parted with. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, have so fastened upon them that they are blinded. They are corrupted by the world and discern it not. They talk of love to God, but their fruits show not the love they express. They rob Him in tithes and offerings, and the withering curse of God is upon them. The truth has been illuminating their pathway on every side. God has wrought wonderfully in the salvation of souls in their own households, but where are their offerings, presented to Him in grateful thanks for all His tokens of mercy to them? Many of them are as unthankful as the brute creation. The sacrifice for man was infinite, beyond the comprehension of the strongest intellect, yet men who claim to be partakers of these heavenly benefits, which were brought to them at so great a cost, are too thoroughly selfish to make any real sacrifice for God. Their minds are upon the world, the world, the world. In the forty-ninth psalm we read: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

[198]

none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever).” If all would bear in mind, and could in a small degree appreciate, the immense sacrifice made by Christ, they would feel rebuked for their fearfulness and their supreme selfishness. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.” Because of selfishness and love of the world, God is forgotten, and many have barrenness of soul, and cry: “My leanness, my leanness.” The Lord has lent means to His people to prove them, to test the depth of their professed love for Him. Some would let go of Him and give up their heavenly treasure rather than to decrease their earthly possessions and make a covenant with Him by sacrifice. He calls for them to sacrifice; but the love of the world closes their ears, and they will not hear.

I looked to see who of those who professed to be looking for Christ’s coming possessed a willingness to sacrifice offerings to God of their abundance. I could see a few humble poor ones who, like the poor widow, were stinting themselves and casting in their mite. Every such offering is accounted of God as precious treasure. But those who are acquiring means, and adding to their possessions, are far behind. They do comparatively nothing to what they might. They are withholding, and robbing God, for they are fearful they shall come to want. They dare not trust God. This is one of the reasons that, as a people, we are so sickly and so many are falling into their graves. The covetous are among us. Lovers of the world, also those who have stinted the laborer in his hire, are among us. Men who had none of this world, who were poor and dependent on their labor, have been dealt with closely and unjustly. The lover of the world, with a hard face and harder heart, has grudgingly paid over the small sum earned by hard toil. Just so they are dealing with their Master, whose servants they profess to be. Just in this grudging manner do they put into the treasury of God. The man in the parable had not where to bestow his goods, and the Lord cut short his unprofitable life. So will He deal with many. How difficult, in this corrupt age, to keep from growing worldly and selfish. How easy to become

[199]

ungrateful to the Giver of all our mercies. Great watchfulness is needed, and much prayer, to keep the soul with all diligence. "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."

**Number Seventeen—Testimony for the
Church**

[200]

Chapter 29—The Sufferings of Christ

In order to fully realize the value of salvation, it is necessary to understand what it cost. In consequence of limited ideas of the sufferings of Christ, many place a low estimate upon the great work of the atonement. The glorious plan of man's salvation was brought about through the infinite love of God the Father. In this divine plan is seen the most marvelous manifestation of the love of God to the fallen race. Such love as is manifested in the gift of God's beloved Son amazed the holy angels. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This Saviour was the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person. He possessed divine majesty, perfection, and excellence. He was equal with God. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

[201] Christ consented to die in the sinner's stead, that man, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God. His death did not make the law of none effect; it did not slay the law, lessen its holy claims, nor detract from its sacred dignity. The death of Christ proclaimed the justice of His Father's law in punishing the transgressor, in that He consented to suffer the penalty of the law Himself in order to save fallen man from its curse. The death of God's beloved Son on the cross shows the immutability of the law of God. His death magnifies the law and makes it honorable, and gives evidence to man of its changeless character. From His own divine lips are heard the words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." The death of Christ justified the claims of the law.

In Christ were united the human and the divine. His mission was to reconcile God and man, to unite the finite with the infinite. This was the only way in which fallen men could be exalted through the merits of the blood of Christ to be partakers of the divine nature. Taking human nature fitted Christ to understand man's trials and sorrows, and all the temptations wherewith he is beset. Angels who were unacquainted with sin could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials. Christ condescended to take man's nature and was tempted in all points like as we, that He might know how to succor all who should be tempted.

As the human was upon Him, He felt His need of strength from His Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved to hold communion with His Father in the solitude of the mountain. In this exercise His holy, human soul was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world. Christ found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. Here He could unburden His heart of the sorrows that were crushing Him. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. [202]

Through the day He labored earnestly to do good to others, to save men from destruction. He healed the sick, comforted the mourning, and brought cheerfulness and hope to the despairing. He brought the dead to life. After His work was finished for the day, He went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and His form was bowed in some retired grove in supplication to His Father. At times the bright beams of the moon shone upon His bowed form. And then again the clouds and darkness shut away all light. The dew and frost of night rested upon His head and beard while in the attitude of a suppliant. He frequently continued His

petitions through the entire night. He is our example. If we could remember this, and imitate Him, we would be much stronger in God.

[203] If the Saviour of men, with His divine strength, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of prayer—fervent, constant prayer! When Christ was the most fiercely beset by temptation, He ate nothing. He committed Himself to God and, through earnest prayer and perfect submission to the will of His Father, came off conqueror. Those who profess the truth for these last days, above every other class of professed Christians, should imitate the great Exemplar in prayer.

“It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.” Our tables are frequently spread with luxuries neither healthful nor necessary, because we love these things more than we love self-denial, freedom from disease, and soundness of mind. Jesus sought earnestly for strength from His Father. This the divine Son of God considered of more value, even for Himself, than to sit at the most luxurious table. He has given us evidence that prayer is essential in order to receive strength to contend with the powers of darkness, and to do the work allotted us. Our own strength is weakness, but that which God gives is mighty and will make everyone who obtains it more than conqueror.

As the Son of God bowed in the attitude of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the agony of His spirit forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. The sins of the world were upon Him. He was suffering in man’s stead as a transgressor of His Father’s law. Here was the scene of temptation. The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness. In His soul anguish He lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father’s frown. He had taken the cup of suffering from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and in its place give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man was now falling upon Christ. It was here that the mysterious cup trembled in His hand.

[204] Jesus had often resorted to Gethsemane with His disciples for meditation and prayer. They were all well acquainted with this sacred retreat. Even Judas knew where to lead the murderous throng, that he might betray Jesus into their hands. Never before had the Saviour

visited the spot with a heart so full of sorrow. It was not bodily suffering from which the Son of God shrank, and which wrung from His lips, in the presence of His disciples, these mournful words: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” “Tarry ye here,” said He, “and watch with Me.”

Leaving His disciples within hearing of His voice, He went a little distance from them and fell on His face and prayed. His soul was agonized, and He pleaded: “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” The sins of a lost world were upon Him and overwhelming Him. It was a sense of His Father’s frown, in consequence of sin, which rent His heart with such piercing agony and forced from His brow great drops of blood, which, rolling down His pale cheeks, fell to the ground, moistening the earth.

Rising from His prostrate position, He came to His disciples and found them sleeping. He said unto Peter: “What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” At the most important time—the time when Jesus had made a special request for them to watch with Him—the disciples were found sleeping. He knew that severe conflicts and terrible temptations were before them. He had taken them with Him that they might be a strength to Him, and that the events they should witness that night, and the lessons of instruction they should receive, might be indelibly printed upon their memories. This was necessary that their faith might not fail, but be strengthened for the test just before them.

But instead of watching with Christ, they were burdened with sorrow, and fell asleep. Even the ardent Peter, who, only a few hours before, had declared that he would suffer and, if need be, die for his Lord, was asleep. At the most critical moment, when the Son of God was in need of their sympathy and heartfelt prayers, they were found asleep. They lost much by thus sleeping. Our Saviour designed to fortify them for the severe test of their faith to which they would soon be subjected. If they had spent that mournful period in watching with the dear Saviour, and in prayer to God, Peter would not have been left to his own feeble strength to deny his Lord in the time of trial.

The Son of God went away the second time, and prayed, saying: "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." And again He came to His disciples and found them sleeping. Their eyes were heavy. By these sleeping disciples is represented a sleeping church, when the day of God's visitation is nigh. It is a time of clouds and thick darkness, when to be found asleep is most perilous.

Jesus has left us this warning: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." The church of God is required to fulfill her night watch, however perilous, whether long or short. Sorrow is no excuse for her to be less watchful. Tribulation should not lead to carelessness, but to double vigilance. Christ has directed the church by His own example to the Source of their strength in times of need, distress, and peril. The attitude of watching is to designate the church as God's people indeed. By this sign the waiting ones are distinguished from the world and show that they are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth.

[206] Again the Saviour turned sadly from His sleeping disciples, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then He came to them and said: "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." How cruel for the disciples to permit sleep to close their eyes, and slumber to chain their senses, while their divine Lord was enduring such inexpressible mental anguish! If they had remained watching they would not have lost their faith as they beheld the Son of God dying upon the cross. This important night watch should have been signalized by noble mental struggles and prayers, which would have brought them strength to witness the unspeakable agony of the Son of God. It would have prepared them, as they should behold His sufferings upon the cross, to understand something of the nature of the overpowering anguish which He endured in the Garden of Gethsemane. And they would have been better able to recall the words He had spoken to them in reference to His sufferings, death, and resurrection; and, amid the gloom of that terrible, trying hour, some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness and sustained their faith.

Christ had told them before that these things would take place, but they did not understand Him. The scene of His sufferings was to be a fiery ordeal to His disciples, hence the necessity of watchfulness and prayer. Their faith needed to be sustained by an unseen strength as they should experience the triumph of the powers of darkness. We can have but faint conceptions of the inexpressible anguish of God's dear Son in Gethsemane, as He realized His separation from His Father in consequence of bearing man's sin. He became sin for the fallen race. The sense of the withdrawal of His Father's love pressed from His anguished soul these mournful words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Then with entire submission to His Father's will, He adds: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

The divine Son of God was fainting, dying. The Father sent a messenger from His presence to strengthen the divine Sufferer and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. Could mortals have viewed the amazement and the sorrow of the angelic host as they watched in silent grief the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from the beloved Son of His bosom, they would better understand how offensive sin is in His sight. The sword of justice was now to awake against His dear Son. He was betrayed by a kiss into the hands of His enemies, and hurried to the judgment hall of an earthly court, there to be derided and condemned to death by sinful mortals. There the glorious Son of God was "wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." He bore insult, mockery, and shameful abuse, until "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men."

[207]

Who can comprehend the love here displayed! The angelic host beheld with wonder and with grief Him who had been the Majesty of heaven, and who had worn the crown of glory, now wearing the crown of thorns, a bleeding victim to the rage of an infuriated mob, fired to insane madness by the wrath of Satan. Behold the patient Sufferer! Upon His head is the thorny crown. His lifeblood flows from every lacerated vein. All this in consequence of sin! Nothing could have induced Christ to leave His honor and majesty in heaven, and come to a sinful world, to be neglected, despised, and rejected by those He came to save, and finally to suffer upon the cross, but eternal, redeeming love, which will ever remain a mystery.

Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! Behold the oppressor and the oppressed! A vast multitude enclose the Saviour of the world. Mockings and jeerings are mingled with the coarse oaths of blasphemy. His lowly birth and humble life are commented upon by unfeeling wretches. His claim to be the Son of God is ridiculed by the chief priests and elders, and vulgar jests and insulting derision are passed from lip to lip. Satan was having full control of the minds of his servants. In order to do this effectually, he commences with the chief priests and elders, and imbues them with religious frenzy. They are actuated by the same satanic spirit which moves the most vile and hardened wretches. There is a corrupt harmony in the feelings of all, from the hypocritical priests and elders down to the most debased. Christ, the precious Son of God, was led forth, and the cross was laid upon His shoulders. At every step was left blood which flowed from His wounds. Thronged by an immense crowd of bitter enemies and unfeeling spectators, He is led away to the crucifixion. “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.”

His sorrowing disciples follow Him at a distance, behind the murderous throng. He is nailed to the cross, and hangs suspended between the heavens and the earth. Their hearts are bursting with anguish as their beloved Teacher is suffering as a criminal. Close to the cross are the blind, bigoted, faithless priests and elders, taunting, mocking, and jeering: “Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God.”

Not one word did Jesus answer to all this. While the nails were being driven through His hands, and the sweat drops of agony were forced from His pores, from the pale, quivering lips of the innocent Sufferer a prayer of pardoning love was breathed for His murderers: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” All heaven was gazing with profound interest upon the scene. The glorious

Redeemer of a lost world was suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law. He was about to ransom His people with His own blood. He was paying the just claims of God's holy law. This was the means through which an end was to be finally made of sin and Satan, and his host to be vanquished.

Oh, was there ever suffering and sorrow like that endured by the dying Saviour! It was the sense of His Father's displeasure which made His cup so bitter. It was not bodily suffering which so quickly ended the life of Christ upon the cross. It was the crushing weight of the sins of the world, and a sense of His Father's wrath. The Father's glory and sustaining presence had left Him, and despair pressed its crushing weight of darkness upon Him and forced from His pale and quivering lips the anguished cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Jesus had united with the Father in making the world. Amid the agonizing sufferings of the Son of God, blind and deluded men alone remain unfeeling. The chief priests and elders revile God's dear Son while in His expiring agonies. Yet inanimate nature groans in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author. The earth trembles. The sun refuses to behold the scene. The heavens gather blackness. Angels have witnessed the scene of suffering until they can look no longer, and hide their faces from the horrid sight. Christ is dying! He is in despair! His Father's approving smile is removed, and angels are not permitted to lighten the gloom of the terrible hour. They can only behold in amazement their loved Commander, the Majesty of heaven, suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law.

Even doubts assailed the dying Son of God. He could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the tomb a conqueror and His Father's acceptance of His sacrifice. The sin of the world, with all its terribleness, was felt to the utmost by the Son of God. The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty, which is death, were all that He could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of His Father that He could not be reconciled to His Son. The fierce temptation that His own Father had forever left Him caused that piercing cry from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

[210]

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair, like the pall of death, will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs, if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the law of God. If they refuse the heavenly benefit and choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will be forever separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they had despised. They will have lost a life of happiness and sacrificed eternal glory for the pleasures of sin for a season.

Faith and hope trembled in the expiring agonies of Christ because God had removed the assurance He had heretofore given His beloved Son of His approbation and acceptance. The Redeemer of the world then relied upon the evidences which had hitherto strengthened Him, that His Father accepted His labors and was pleased with His work. In His dying agony, as He yields up His precious life, He has by faith alone to trust in Him whom it has ever been His joy to obey. [211] He is not cheered with clear, bright rays of hope on the right hand nor on the left. All is enshrouded in oppressive gloom. Amid the awful darkness which is felt by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drains the mysterious cup even to its dregs. Denied even bright hope and confidence in the triumph which will be His in the future, He cries with a loud voice: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He is acquainted with the character of His Father, with His justice, His mercy, and His great love, and in submission He drops into His hands. Amid the convulsions of nature are heard by the amazed spectators the dying words of the Man of Calvary.

Nature sympathized with the suffering of its Author. The heaving earth, the rent rocks, proclaimed that it was the Son of God who died. There was a mighty earthquake. The veil of the temple was rent in twain. Terror seized the executioners and spectators as they beheld the sun veiled in darkness, and felt the earth shake beneath them, and saw and heard the rending of the rocks. The mocking and jeering of the chief priests and elders were hushed as Christ commended His spirit into the hands of His Father. The astonished

throng began to withdraw and grope their way in the darkness to the city. They smote upon their breasts as they went and in terror, speaking scarcely above a whisper, said among themselves: "It is an innocent person that has been murdered. What if, indeed, He is, as He asserted, the Son of God?"

Jesus did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and exclaimed with His departing breath: "It is finished." Satan was then defeated. He knew that his kingdom was lost. Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered: "It is finished." The great plan of redemption, which was dependent on the death of Christ, had been thus far carried out. And there was joy in heaven that the sons of Adam could, through a life of obedience, be finally exalted to the throne of God. Oh, what love! What amazing love! [212] that brought the Son of God to earth to be made sin for us, that we might be reconciled to God, and elevated to a life with Him in His mansions in glory. Oh, what is man, that such a price should be paid for his redemption!

When men and women can more fully comprehend the magnitude of the great sacrifice which was made by the Majesty of heaven in dying in man's stead, then will the plan of salvation be magnified, and reflections of Calvary will awaken tender, sacred, and lively emotions in the Christian's heart. Praises to God and the Lamb will be in their hearts and upon their lips. Pride and self-esteem cannot flourish in the hearts that keep fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary. This world will appear of but little value to those who appreciate the great price of man's redemption, the precious blood of God's dear Son. All the riches of the world are not of sufficient value to redeem one perishing soul. Who can measure the love Christ felt for a lost world as He hung upon the cross, suffering for the sins of guilty men? This love was immeasurable, infinite.

Christ has shown that His love was stronger than death. He was accomplishing man's salvation; and although He had the most fearful conflict with the powers of darkness, yet, amid it all, His love grew stronger and stronger. He endured the hiding of His Father's countenance, until He was led to exclaim in the bitterness of His soul: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" His arm brought salvation. The price was paid to purchase the redemption of

man, when, in the last soul struggle, the blessed words were uttered which seemed to resound through creation: "It is finished."

[213] Many who profess to be Christians become excited over worldly enterprises, and their interest is awakened for new and exciting amusements, while they are coldhearted, and appear as if frozen, in the cause of God. Here is a theme, poor formalist, which is of sufficient importance to excite you. Eternal interests are here involved. Upon this theme it is sin to be calm and unimpassioned. The scenes of Calvary call for the deepest emotion. Upon this subject you will be excusable if you manifest enthusiasm. That Christ, so excellent, so innocent, should suffer such a painful death, bearing the weight of the sins of the world, our thoughts and imaginations can never fully comprehend. The length, the breadth, the height, the depth, of such amazing love we cannot fathom. The contemplation of the matchless depths of a Saviour's love should fill the mind, touch and melt the soul, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. The language of the apostle is: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." We also may look toward Calvary and exclaim: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Considering at what an immense cost our salvation has been purchased, what will be the fate of those who neglect so great salvation? What will be the punishment of those who profess to be followers of Christ, yet fail to bow in humble obedience to the claims of their Redeemer, and who do not take the cross as humble disciples of Christ and follow Him from the manger to Calvary? "He that gathereth not with Me," says Christ, "scattereth abroad."

[214] Some have limited views of the atonement. They think that Christ suffered only a small portion of the penalty of the law of God; they suppose that, while the wrath of God was felt by His dear Son, he had, through all His painful sufferings, the evidence of His Father's love and acceptance; that the portals of the tomb before Him were illuminated with bright hope, and that He had the abiding evidence of His future glory. Here is a great mistake. Christ's keenest anguish was a sense of His Father's displeasure. His mental agony because of this was of such intensity that man can

have but faint conception of it.

With many the story of the condescension, humiliation, and sacrifice of our divine Lord awakens no deeper interest, and stirs the soul and affects the life no more, than does the history of the death of the martyrs of Jesus. Many have suffered death by slow tortures; others have suffered death by crucifixion. In what does the death of God's dear Son differ from these? It is true He died upon the cross a most cruel death; yet others, for His dear sake, have suffered equally, so far as bodily torture is concerned. Why, then, was the suffering of Christ more dreadful than that of other persons who have yielded their lives for His sake? If the sufferings of Christ consisted in physical pain alone, then His death was no more painful than that of some of the martyrs.

But bodily pain was but a small part of the agony of God's dear Son. The sins of the world were upon Him, also the sense of His Father's wrath as He suffered the penalty of the law transgressed. It was these that crushed His divine soul. It was the hiding of His Father's face—a sense that His own dear Father had forsaken Him—which brought despair. The separation that sin makes between God and man was fully realized and keenly felt by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. He was oppressed by the powers of darkness. He had not one ray of light to brighten the future. And He was struggling with the power of Satan, who was declaring that he had Christ in his power, that he was superior in strength to the Son of God, that the Father had disowned His Son, and that He was no longer in the favor of God any more than himself. If He was indeed still in favor with God, why need He die? God could save Him from death.

Christ yielded not in the least degree to the torturing foe, even in His bitterest anguish. Legions of evil angels were all about the Son of God, yet the holy angels were bidden not to break their ranks and engage in conflict with the taunting, reviling foe. Heavenly angels were not permitted to minister unto the anguished spirit of the Son of God. It was in this terrible hour of darkness, the face of His Father hidden, legions of evil angels enshrouding Him, the sins of the world upon Him, that the words were wrenched from His lips: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

[215]

The death of the martyrs can bear no comparison with the agony endured by the Son of God. We should take broader and deeper

views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. When the atonement is viewed correctly, the salvation of souls will be felt to be of infinite value. In comparison with the enterprise of everlasting life, every other sinks into insignificance. But how have the counsels of this loving Saviour been despised! The heart has been devoted to the world, and selfish interests have closed the door against the Son of God. Hollow hypocrisy and pride, selfishness and gain, envy, malice, and passion, have so filled the hearts of many that Christ can have no room.

He was eternally rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He was clothed with light and glory, and was surrounded with hosts of heavenly angels waiting to execute His commands. Yet He put on our nature and came to sojourn among sinful mortals. Here is love that no language can express. It passes knowledge. Great is the mystery of godliness. Our souls should be enlivened, elevated, and enraptured with the theme of the love of the Father and the Son to man. The followers of Christ should here learn to reflect in some degree that mysterious love preparatory to joining all the redeemed in ascribing "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, ... unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Chapter 30—Warnings to the Church

[216]

Dear Brethren In -----,

You are not standing in the light, as God would have you. I was pointed back to the ingathering of souls at ----- last spring, and was shown that your minds were not prepared for that work. You did not expect or believe that such a work would then be accomplished among you. But the work was carried on, notwithstanding your unbelief, and without the co-operation of many among you.

When you had such evidences that God was waiting to be gracious to His people, that mercy's voice was inviting sinners and backsliders to the cross of Christ, why did you not unite with those who had the burden of the work upon them? Why did you not come up to the help of the Lord? Some of you seemed benumbed, stupefied, and amazed, and were unprepared to participate fully in the work. Many assented to it, but their hearts were not in it. This was a great evidence of the lukewarm condition of the church.

Your worldliness does not incline you to throw wide open the door of your hard hearts at the knock of Jesus, who is seeking an entrance there. The Lord of glory, who has redeemed you by His own blood, waited at your doors for admittance; but you did not throw them open wide and welcome Him in. Some opened the door slightly and permitted a little light from His presence to enter, but did not welcome the heavenly Visitor. There was not room for Jesus. The place which should have been reserved for Him was occupied with other things. Jesus entreated you: "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." There was a work for you to do to open the door. For a time you felt inclined to hear and open the door; but even this inclination departed, and you failed to secure the communion with the heavenly Guest which it was your privilege to have. Some, however, opened the door and heartily welcomed their Saviour.

[217]

Jesus will not force open the door. You must open it yourselves and show that you desire His presence by giving Him a sincere

welcome. If all had made thorough work in clearing away the world's rubbish and preparing a place for Jesus, He would have entered and abode with you, and would have done a great work through you for the salvation of others. But notwithstanding you were unprepared for the work, it commenced among you in mighty power. Backsliders were reclaimed, sinners were converted, and the sound went out into the region round about. The community was stirred. Had the church come up to the help of the Lord, and had the way been fully opened for further labor, a work would have been accomplished in ----- and ----- and the region round about, such as you have never witnessed. But the minds of the brethren were not aroused, and they were in a great degree indifferent to the matter. Some who had ever been seeking their own interest could not think of having their minds drawn away from themselves on this occasion, even though the salvation of souls might be at stake.

The Lord had laid upon us the burden. We were willing to give you all there was of us for a time, if you would come up with us to the help of the Lord. But in this there was a decided failure. Great ingratitude was shown for the manifestations of the power of God among you. Had you received the tokens of God's mercy and loving-kindness as you should, with thankful hearts, and united your interest to work with the Spirit of God, you would not be in your present condition. But since that precious work was done among you, you have been going down and withering spiritually.

[218] The parable of the lost sheep you do not yet understand. You have not learned the lesson the divine Teacher designed you should. You have been dull scholars. Read the parable in [Luke 15](#): "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Here were the cases of several who had backslidden, who had been in darkness, and who had strayed from the fold. But especially was the case of Brother A prominent. All the efforts were not made which should have been made in wisdom to prevent his straying from the fold; and after he had strayed, diligent efforts were not put

forth to bring him back. There was more gossiping over his case than sincere sorrow for him. All these things kept him from the fold and caused his heart to be separated farther and farther from his brethren, making his rescue still more difficult. How different was this course from that pursued by the shepherd in the parable, when in pursuit of the lost sheep. The whole ninety and nine were left in the wilderness to care for themselves, exposed to dangers; yet the lone sheep, separated from the flock, was in greater danger, and to secure the one, the ninety and nine were left.

Some of the church had no special anxiety to have Brother A return. They cared not enough to unbend from their dignity and pride and make special efforts to help him to the light. They stood back on their dignity and said: "We will not go after him; let him come to us." Viewing the feelings of his brethren toward him as he did, it was impossible for him to do this. Had they regarded the lesson taught by Christ, they would have been willing to yield their dignity and pride, and go after the wandering ones. They would have wept over them, prayed for them, implored them to be faithful to God and the truth, and to abide with the church. But the feeling of many was: "If he wants to go, let him go."

[219]

When the Lord sent His servants to do for these wanderers the work which you ought to have done, and even when you had evidence that the Lord was giving a message of mercy to these poor straying ones, you were unprepared to give up your ideas. You did not feel like leaving the ninety and nine, and searching after the lost sheep till it was found, and you did not do it. And when the sheep was found, and brought back to the fold with rejoicing, did you rejoice? We tried to arouse you. We tried to call you together, as the shepherd called his neighbors and friends, to have you rejoice with us; but you seemed unwilling. You felt that the sheep had done a great wrong in leaving the fold, and instead of rejoicing that he had returned, you were anxious to make him feel that he should be very sorry for leaving, and should come back just according to your ideas. And since his return, you have had a feeling of jealousy in regard to him. You have kept watching to see if all was right. Some have not been exactly satisfied; they have felt an unwillingness to have things just as they are.

[220]

You are unacquainted with yourselves. Some possess selfishness, which leads to the narrowing up of their influence and efforts. There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. Had the church been prepared to appreciate the work the Lord was doing among them, they would since that ingathering have been growing stronger and stronger. But instead of all throwing their whole soul into the work, and feeling a special, sincere interest to do all in their power to follow up the work after we left it, they acted very much as if the work did not specially concern them, and as though they were only spectators, ready to distrust and find fault wherever there was opportunity.

I was shown the case of Brother B. He feels unhappy. He is dissatisfied with his brethren. His mind has been exercised for some time that it was his duty to carry the message. He has the ability, and, as far as his knowledge of the truth is concerned, he is capable; but he lacks culture. He has not learned to control himself. It requires great wisdom to deal with minds, and he is not qualified for this work. He understands the theory, but has not educated himself in forbearance, patience, gentleness, kindness, and true courteousness. If anything arises which does not meet his mind, he does not stop to consider whether it is wisdom to take notice of it, or to let it pass until it shall be fully considered. He braces himself at once for battle. He is harsh, severe, denunciatory, and if things do not meet his mind, he raises disturbance at once.

He possesses in his organization the elements of war rather than of sweet peace and harmony. He has not wisdom to give to all their portion of meat in due season. "And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Brother B has but little knowledge of making this difference. He is rough in his manners, and indiscreet in his dealing with souls. This disqualifies him for making a wise, careful shepherd. A shepherd must have noble generosity, courage, fortitude, love, and tenderness combined.

Brother B will be in danger of tearing down more than he can build up. He has not brought all his powers in subjection to the will of God. He has not been transformed by the renewing of his mind. He is self-sufficient, and does not rely wholly upon the grace of God;

his works are not wrought in God. To be a shepherd is to occupy a very important, responsible position; to feed the flock of God is an exalted and sacred work. Brother B, the Lord does not regard you fit to be an overseer of His flock. Had you been learning the lesson of self-government in your religious experience, and had you felt the necessity of elevating your mind and purifying your heart by the sanctification of the Spirit, and of bringing all your powers into subjection to the will of God, seeking humility and meekness, you might now be in a position to do good and to exert an influence which would be elevating and saving.

[221]

Brother and Sister B, you have a work to do for yourselves which no one can do for you. You are inclined to murmur and complain. You have something to do to subdue your natural feelings. Live for God yourselves, knowing that you have not to answer for the wrongs of others. I saw, Brother B, that you would certainly be overcome by Satan, and make utter shipwreck of faith, unless you stop your faultfinding, and seek pure and undefiled religion before God. You need to be elevated in your thoughts and conversation; you need a thorough conversion.

Life or death is before you. You should solemnly consider that you are dealing with the great God, and should ever remember that He is not a child, to be trifled with. You cannot engage in His service at will and let it alone at pleasure. Your inmost soul needs to be converted. All who, like you, my brother, have failed to grow in the grace of God, and to perfect holiness in His name, will, in these days of peril and trial, meet with great loss. Their foundation will prove to be sliding sand instead of the Rock Christ Jesus.

You move by impulse. You feel unreconciled to your brethren because you are not sent out to preach the truth. You are not fit for this trust. More than one efficient preacher would be required to follow in your wake to bind up the wounds and bruises which your harsh dealing would make. God is not pleased with you, and I fear that you will fail of everlasting life.

[222]

You have no time to lose. Make mighty efforts to rescue yourself from Satan's snare. You need to learn of Jesus, who is meek and lowly of heart, and then you will obtain rest. Oh, what a work you have to do to perfect holiness in the fear of God, and be prepared for the society of the pure and holy angels. You need to humble your

heart before God, and seek meekness and righteousness, that you may be hid in the day of the Lord's fierce anger.

Brother B, the Lord let His blessing rest upon you last spring; but you did not see the relation which watchfulness and prayer sustain to a progress in the divine life. You have neglected these duties, and the result is that darkness has enshrouded you. You have been in a state of uncertainty and distrust, and have frequently chosen the society of those who are in darkness, those whom Satan uses to scatter from Christ. You could live among the most corrupt, and remain unstained, unsullied, if God in His providence thus directed you. But it is dangerous for those who wish to honor God to find their pleasure and entertainment with companions who fear Him not. Satan ever surrounds such with great darkness; and if those who profess Christ go unbidden into this darkness, they tempt the devil to tempt them. If, in order to do good and glorify His name, the Lord requires us to go among infernal spirits, where is the blackest darkness, He will encircle us with His angels and keep us unsullied. But if we seek the company of sinners, and are pleased with their coarse jests, and entertained and amused with their stories, sports, and ribaldry, the pure and holy angels remove their protection and leave us to the darkness we have chosen.

[223] Brother B, I wish to alarm you; I wish to arouse you to action. I wish to entreat of you to seek God while He invites you to come to Him that you may have life. Watch, pray, work," are the Christian's watchwords. Satan is vigilant in his efforts; his perseverance is untiring, his zeal earnest and unabated. He does not wait for his prey to come to him; he seeks for it. To wrench souls from the hand of Christ is his determined purpose; yet professed Christians are asleep in their blindness, insane in their pursuits. God is not in their thoughts. A vigilant foe is upon their track; yet they are in no danger while they make God their trust. But unless they do this, their strength will be weakness, and they will be overcome by Satan.

Brother B, it is dangerous for you to yield to doubts. You must not permit yourself to go any further in the direction in which you have been going. You are in constant danger. Satan is on your track, suggesting doubts and causing unbelief. Had you stood clear in the counsel of God you could have had an influence for good over those who love your society now.

Poor Brother C felt the influence of the Spirit of God, but was deficient in experience. He did not fully turn from his old habits. He failed to make God his strength continually, and his feet slipped. There is no concord between Christ and Belial. You might have helped him, had you been connected with Heaven as you should have been. But your course of inactivity, your manner of conversation, your influence, have strengthened him in his backsliding and quieted the voice of conscience within him. Your course has not been a reproof to him in his downward track. You could do good, were you living for God. Your strength is utter weakness, your wisdom foolishness; but you do not realize it. You have been too well satisfied with a theory, a correct form of doctrine, but have not felt the necessity of the power of God; you have neglected the spiritual part of religion. Your whole being should cry out for the Spirit of God—the life and power of religion in the soul, which would lead to the crucifixion of self and a firm trust in your Redeemer.

You are in terrible darkness, and unless you arise in the name of God, and break asunder the fetters of Satan, and assert your freedom, you will make shipwreck of the faith. So great is the unwillingness of the Lord to leave you, and such is His love toward you, that notwithstanding your life has not been in accordance with His will, and your works and ways have been offensive to Him, the Majesty of heaven condescends to beg the privilege of making you a visit and leaving you His blessing: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” The mansions in glory are His, and the joy of that heavenly abode; yet He humbles Himself to seek an entrance at the door of your heart, that He may bless you with His light and make you to rejoice in His glory. His work is to seek and to save that which is lost and ready to perish. He wishes to redeem as many as He can from sin and death, that He may elevate them to His throne and give them everlasting life.

[224]

Brother B, be entreated to arise and cast aside your doubts. What makes you inclined to doubt? It is your life of departure from God, your life of unconsecration, your jesting and joking. Your lack of sobriety is endangering your eternal interests. Christ is inviting you to turn from these follies to Him. You are not growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. You are not an honor to the cause. You are not becoming elevated, but are sinking lower and lower in

the scale. You are not forming a character for heaven and everlasting life.

You are pleasing yourself, passing away time in frivolity which should be spent with your family, teaching your children the ways and works of God. The hours that you spend in company that does you only harm should be devoted to prayer and the study of God's word. You should feel that a responsibility rests upon you, as head of your family, to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. What account will you render to God for misspent time? [225] What influence are you having over those who have not the fear of God before them? "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." May God anoint your eyes that you may see your peril. I feel deeply for you. My heart yearns over you. I long to see you coming up to the high standard that it is your privilege to attain. You can do good. Your influence, if exerted on the right side, will tell. Brother B, your footsteps are in the downward path. "Turn ye, turn ye," "for why will ye die?"

If you much longer pursue the course you are now following, you will become infidel in regard to the truth and in regard to the word of God. Watch and pray always. Dedicate yourself unreservedly to the Lord, and it will not then be difficult to serve Him. You have a divided heart. This is the reason that darkness, instead of light, encircles you. The last message of mercy is now going forth. It is a token of the long-suffering and compassion of God. Come, is the invitation now given. Come, for all things are now ready. This is mercy's last call. Next will come the vengeance of an offended God.

Brother B, encourage simplicity, love, forbearance, and sweet union with your brethren. But do not, oh, do not sell everlasting life so cheaply. If you go from the truth you will never know real happiness; you will be miserable indeed. Heaven is worth making any and every sacrifice for. Break the bands of Satan. Jesus now invites you; will you listen to His voice? You must take a higher stand than you have hitherto done. Make it your first business to gain the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness of Christ. Live for God and heaven, and the eternal reward will be yours at the end of the race.

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Chapter 31—Contemplating Marriage

[226] I was pointed back to last May, when the Lord visited -----, and was shown the case of Brother D. He was not prepared to take part in that work. His mind and heart were elsewhere. He was contemplating marriage and could not listen to the invitation of Jesus: "Come; for all things are now ready." His contemplated marriage engrossed his attention. He had no time or inclination to open the door of his heart to the gracious Visitor. Had he done this, Christ would have given him good counsel, which, if heeded, would have been of priceless value to him. He would have presented before him in its true light his danger of yielding to the dictates of a wayward inclination and setting aside the glory of God and the decisions of sober reason. He would have charged him to beware how he trod in the footsteps of those who had fallen and been ruined. But this brother did not consider that God had claims upon him; that he should make no move without consulting Him who had bought him. We are instructed that whatever we do, we should do all to His glory.

Did you, Brother D, as a disciple, a learner, of Christ, go to Him in humble, sincere prayer and commit your ways to him? You failed to do this. You did not investigate all your motives and move with carefulness lest you should bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ, your Redeemer. You did not consider whether this move would have an effect to increase your spiritual sensibility, quicken your zeal, and strengthen your steadfastness in the truth and your efforts to deny self. You were ignorant of your own heart. The work of God was seen in the church, but you had no longings for the divine Spirit. The things of heaven were insipid to you. You were infatuated by your new hopes of uniting your interests with those of another. You did not consider that a marriage alliance would vitally affect your interest for life, short though that life must be.

You should have felt that with your own evil heart to subdue you could not be brought in connection with an influence which would

make it more difficult for you to overcome self, make your path upward to heaven more rugged. You have now made your religious progress tenfold more difficult than when you stood alone. It is true you were lonely, for you had lost a precious jewel. But if you had counseled with your brethren, and committed your ways to the Lord, He would have opened the way for you to have connected yourself with one who could have been a help to you instead of a hindrance.

[227]

If you will now humbly turn to the Lord with all your heart, He will pity and help you. But you are just where you are shorn of your strength, and are prepared to compromise your faith and your allegiance to God to please your new wife. God pity you, for ruin is before you unless you arouse like a true soldier of Christ and engage anew in the warfare for everlasting life. Your only safety is in keeping with your brethren, and obtaining all the strength you can from them to remain in the truth. You are about to sacrifice the truth for the sake of peace and happiness here. You are selling your soul at a cheap market. It is now your duty to do all you can to make your wife happy, and yet not to sacrifice the principles of truth. You should exercise forbearance, patience, and true courtesy. By thus doing, you can show the power of true grace and the influence of the truth.

I was shown that the love of money is a snare to you. Money, independent of the opportunity it furnishes for doing good, blessing the needy, and advancing the cause of God, is really of but little value. The little you possess is a snare to you, and unless you use it as a wise and faithful steward in the service of your Master, it will yield you little else but misery. You are close and penurious. You need to cultivate a noble, liberal spirit and separate your affections from the world or you will be overcome. The deceitfulness of riches will so corrupt your soul that the good will be overcome by evil. Selfishness and love of gain will triumph.

If you, my dear brother, are saved, it will indeed be a miracle of mercy. The love of the world is increasing upon you. Carefully consider the words of Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." My brother, you have obeyed

[228]

neither the first nor the second of these commandments. You would not hesitate to reach out and advantage yourself, although you knew it would greatly disadvantage your neighbor. You look to your own selfish interest, and say: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

You are not laying up treasure in heaven and becoming rich toward God. Self and selfish interests are eating out true godliness from your soul. You are bowing to the god of this world. Your heart is alienated from God. An inspired writer says: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The steps of a Christian may at times appear feeble and faltering, yet in his conscious weakness he leans upon the Mighty One for support. He is sustained, and makes sure progress onward and upward toward perfection. He gains new victories daily, and comes nearer and nearer to the standard of perfect holiness. His eye is not downward to the earth, but upward, ever keeping in view the heavenly Pattern.

Brother D, the glitter and tinsel of the corruptible things of earth have eclipsed the charms of heaven, and made eternal life of but little value to you. As a servant of Christ, I entreat you to awake that you may see yourself as you are. The profits you will obtain in the course you are now pursuing will be eternal loss. You will find at last that you have made a terrible mistake which can never be remedied.

[229] You can now face rightabout, heed the call of mercy, and live. Rejoice that your probation has not ended, that you may now, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life. Rejoice that she who has been your faithful companion for years shall rise again, that mortality will be swallowed up of life. Look forward to the morning of the resurrection, when she who shared your joys and sorrows for more than a score of years will come forth from her prison house. Will you have her look for you, her companion, in vain? Will you be missing then, as her voice is raised in triumph and victory: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Oh, that day will bring honor to the saints! No shame, no reproach, no suffering then; but peace, joy, and immortal praise upon every redeemed tongue! Oh, that God would speak to your heart and impress you with the value of eternal life. And may you be led, my brother, to ever possess a spirit of noble

generosity, that you may discharge the duties of your stewardship with faithfulness, having an eye single to the glory of God, that the Master may say to you: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

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Chapter 32—Danger of Riches

I was shown that some are deceived in regard to themselves. They look to those who have much property, and feel that these are the only ones who have a love of the world, and who are in any special danger of covetousness. But this is not the case. Those who have means are constantly in danger, and are accountable for all the talents of means which the Master has entrusted to their care. But [230] those who have little of this world are frequently self-caring, and do not do that which is in their power to do, and which God requires them to do. They frequently have opportunities to do good, but they have so long cared for self, and studied self-interest, that they think there is no other way for them to do.

I was shown that Brother and Sister E are in danger of having their thoughts centered too much upon themselves; especially is Sister E at fault here. She has almost supreme love for herself. You, my sister, are poorly prepared to stand amid the perils of the day of God. You do not imitate the true Pattern, Jesus. There was not one selfish act in His whole life. You have a work to do for yourself which no one can do for you. Divest yourself of selfishness, and learn the mind and will of God. Study to show yourself approved unto God. You are impulsive, and are naturally irritable and peevish. You work far beyond your strength. There is no virtue in this, for God does not require it. A selfish disposition is at the bottom of this. Your motives are not praiseworthy. You shun responsibility and caretaking, and have felt that you should be favored. It is to be regretted that from your childhood you have been petted and favored, and your will left unsubdued. Now, at a more advanced age, you have the work to do which should have been done in your childhood. Your husband has yielded to your wishes and indulged your whims, to your injury.

Selfishness, which manifests itself in a variety of ways according to circumstances and the peculiar organization of individuals, must die. If you had children, and your mind were compelled to be called

away from yourself to care for them, to instruct them, and be an example to them, it would be an advantage to you. You have called forth in your home the attention and forbearance which are required to be exercised toward children. This attention you require and will have. But you have not thought it any part of your duty to care for, or seek to advantage, others. You are willful and very set to carry out your own plans. When everything is smooth in your pathway, you manifest the fruits we expect to see borne by a Christian; but when your path is crossed, the result is the opposite. Like a spoiled child which deserves chastisement, you have a spell of perverse willfulness. When two compose a family, as in your case, and there are no children to call into exercise patience, forbearance, and true love, there is need of constant watchfulness lest selfishness obtain the supremacy, lest you yourselves become the center, and you require attention, care, and interest, which you feel under no obligation to bestow upon others. The care of children in a family makes it necessary that a large portion of the time be spent at home, giving opportunity for the culture of mind and heart in connection with the ordinary cares of domestic life.

[231]

You neglect to keep your heart, and neglect to do good with the means which God has given you. Your influence could benefit did you feel that anything was required of you toward those who need help, who need encouraging and strengthening. But you have so long studied your pleasure that you are disqualified to benefit those around you. You need to discipline yourself in order that your affections and thoughts may be brought into subjection. Take time for self-examination, that you may bring all your powers in subjection to the mind and will of God. You are shut up to self. It is the privilege of every true Christian to exert an influence for good over everyone with whom he associates.

You, my sister, will be rewarded according as your works have been. Closely investigate your motives, and candidly decide whether you are rich in good works. I was pointed back to last spring, when the Lord was doing a good work in ----- and vicinity. Angels of mercy were hovering over His people, and hearts which knew not God and the truth were deeply stirred. The Lord would have carried forward the work He so graciously commenced, had the brethren been in working order. You had so long consulted your own

[232]

wishes, and caused everything to bend to your convenience, that the possibility that you might be inconvenienced led you to close the door which you might have opened to advance the cause.

You acted your part, and some others felt to draw back, fearing the expense and calculating that they would lose time in attending meetings if the effort should be made. Christian zeal was lacking. A world was before us lying in wickedness, exposed to the wrath of God, and poor souls were held by the prince of darkness; and yet those who ought to be awake and engaged in the noblest of all enterprises, the salvation of perishing souls, had not interest enough to call into action every means they could employ to hedge up the path to destruction and to turn the footsteps of the faltering ones into the path of life. Eternal life should engage the deepest interest of every Christian. To be a co-worker with Christ and the heavenly angels in the great plan of salvation! What work can bear any comparison with this! From every soul saved there comes to God a revenue of glory to be reflected upon the one saved and also upon the one instrumental in his salvation.

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Chapter 33—Christian Zeal

There is a noisy zeal, without aim or purpose, which is not according to knowledge, which is blind in its operations and destructive in its results. This is not Christian zeal. Christian zeal is controlled by principle and is not spasmodic. It is earnest, deep, and strong, engaging the whole soul and arousing to exercise the moral sensibilities. The salvation of souls and the interests of the kingdom of God are matters of the highest importance. What object is there that calls for greater earnestness than the salvation of souls and the glory of God? There are considerations here which cannot be lightly regarded. They are as weighty as eternity. Eternal destinies are at stake. Men and women are deciding for weal or woe. Christian zeal will not exhaust itself in talk, but will feel and act with vigor and efficiency. Yet Christian zeal will not act for the sake of being seen. Humility will characterize every effort and be seen in every work. Christian zeal will lead to earnest prayer and humiliation, and to faithfulness in home duties. In the family circle will be seen the gentleness and love, benevolence and compassion, which are ever the fruits of Christian zeal. [233]

I was shown that you must make an advance move. Your treasure in heaven, Sister E, is not large. You are not rich toward God. May the Lord open your eyes to see and your heart to feel, and cause you to manifest Christian zeal. Oh, how few feel the worth of souls! How few are willing to sacrifice to bring souls to the knowledge of Christ! There is much talking, much professed love for perishing souls; but talk is cheap stuff. It is earnest Christian zeal that is wanted—a zeal that will be manifested by doing something. All must now work for themselves, and when they have Jesus in their hearts they will confess Him to others. No more could a soul who possesses Christ be hindered from confessing Him than could the waters of Niagara be stopped from flowing over the falls.

I was shown that Brother F is buried in the rubbish of the world. He cannot afford time to serve God, not even to earnestly study and

pray to know what the Lord would have him do. His talent is buried in the earth. The cares of this life have swallowed up his interest in eternal things. The kingdom of God and the righteousness of Christ are secondary. He loves business; but I saw that unless he changes his course, the hand of God will be against him. He may gather, but God will scatter. He could do good. But many have the idea that if their life is a working, business life, they can do nothing for the salvation of souls, nothing to advance the cause of their Redeemer. [234] They say they cannot do things by the halves, and therefore turn from religious duties and religious exercises, and bury themselves up in the world. They make their business primary, and forget God, and He is displeased with them. If any are engaged in business where they cannot advance in the divine life and perfect holiness in the fear of God, they should change to a business in which they can have Jesus with them every hour.

Brother F, you do not honor your profession. Your zeal is a worldly zeal, your interest a worldly interest. You are dying spiritually. You understand not your perilous condition. The love of the world is swallowing up your religion. You must awake; you must seek God and repent of your backslidings. In contrition take words and return to the Lord. Your religious duties have become merely a form. You do not enjoy religion; for this enjoyment is dependent upon willing obedience. The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land. You do not possess a bright evidence that you will dwell with God in His kingdom. You occasionally engage in the outward performance of religious duties, but your heart is not in the exercise. You occasionally drop a word of warning to sinners, or a word in favor of the truth; but it is a reluctant service, as though rendered to a taskmaster, instead of the cheerful service of filial affection. If your heart is aglow with Christian zeal, the most arduous duties will be pleasant and easy.

Why the Christian life is so difficult to many is that they have a divided heart. They are double-minded, which makes them unstable in all their ways. Were they richly imbued with Christian zeal, which is ever the result of consecration to God, instead of the mournful cry, "My leanness, my leanness," the language of the soul would be: "Hear what the Lord has done for me." Even if you are saved, which is very doubtful, in the course you are pursuing, how limited will

be the good you have accomplished. Not a soul will be saved by your instrumentality. Will the Master say to you: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant”? What have you been doing faithfully? Hard work in the business and cares of this life. Will this bring from the lips of Christ the gracious words: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant”?

[235]

My brother, Jesus loves you, and He invites you to face rightabout, and take your eyes from the earth, and fix them upon the mark for the prize of your high calling, which is in Christ Jesus. Cease lightness and trifling. Let a solemn weight of the time in which we live be borne by you till the war is over. Go to work; if consecrated to God, your influence will tell.

Most of the family of Brother G are in the downward road. H lives an aimless life. She is full of folly, vanity, and pride. Her influence does not tend to ennoble, does not lead to goodness and holiness. She does not like the restraint which religion imposes; therefore she will not yield her heart to its sacred sway. She loves self, loves pleasure, and is seeking for her own enjoyment. Sad, sad indeed will be the result, unless she now turns square about and seeks for genuine godliness. She might exert a softening, ennobling, and elevating influence over her brothers. God loves these children, but they are not Christians. If they would try to live humble Christian lives, they could become children of the light and workers for God; they could be missionaries in their own family and among their associates.

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Chapter 34—Responsibilities of the Young

[236] If the youth could only see how much good it is in their power to accomplish, if they would make God their strength and wisdom, they would no longer pursue a course of careless indifference toward Him; they would no longer be swayed by the influence of those who are unconsecrated. Instead of feeling that an individual responsibility rests upon them to put forth efforts to do others good, and lead others to righteousness, they give themselves up to seek their own amusement. They are useless members of society, and live as aimless lives as do the butterflies. The young may have a knowledge of the truth, and believe it, but not live it. Such possess a dead faith. Their hearts are not reached so as to affect their conduct and character in the sight of God, and they are no nearer doing His will than are unbelievers. Their hearts do not conform to the will of God; they are at enmity with Him. Those who are devoted to amusements, and who love the society of pleasure seekers, have an aversion to religious exercises. Will the Master say to these youth who profess His name, Well done, good and faithful servants, unless they are good and faithful?

The young are in great danger. Great evil results from their light reading. Much time is lost which should be spent in useful employment. Some would even deprive themselves of sleep to finish some ridiculous love story. The world is flooded with novels of every description. Some are not of as dangerous a character as others. Some are immoral, low, and vulgar; others are clothed with more refinement; but all are pernicious in their influence. Oh, that the young would reflect upon the influence which exciting stories have upon the mind! Can you, after such reading, open the word of God and read the words of life with interest? Do you not find the book of God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix your mind upon the important, solemn truths which concern your eternal interest. You sin against your parents in devoting to

such a poor purpose the time which belongs to them, and you sin against God in thus using the time which should be spent in devotion to Him.

It is the duty of the youth to encourage sobriety. Lightness, jesting, and joking will result in barrenness of soul and the loss of the favor of God. Many of you think you do not exert a bad influence upon others, and thus feel in a measure satisfied; but do you exert an influence for good? Do you seek in your conversation and acts to lead others to the Saviour, or, if they profess Christ, to lead them to a closer walk with Him? [237]

The young should cultivate a spirit of devotion and piety. They cannot glorify God unless they constantly aim to attain unto the fullness of the stature of Christ—perfection in Christ Jesus. Let the Christian graces be and abound in you. Give to your Saviour your best and holiest affections. Render entire obedience to His will. He will accept nothing short of this. Be not moved from your steadfastness by the jeers and scoffs of those whose minds are given to vanity. Follow your Saviour through evil as well as good report; count it all joy, and a sacred honor, to bear the cross of Christ. Jesus loves you. He died for you. Unless you seek to serve Him with your undivided affections, you will fail to perfect holiness in His fear, and you will be compelled to hear at last the fearful word, *Depart*.

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Chapter 35—Servants of Mammon

The case of Brother I is fearful. This world is his god; he worships money. He has not heeded the warning given him years ago and overcome his love of the world while in the exercise of all his faculties. The dollars which he has since accumulated have been like so many cords to entangle his soul and bind him to the world. As he has gained in property he has become more greedy for gain. All the powers of his being are devoted to the one object, securing money. This has been the burden of his thoughts, the anxiety of his life. He has turned all the powers of his being in this one direction until, to all intents and purposes, he is a worshiper of mammon. Upon this subject he is insane. His example before his family is leading them to think that property is to be valued before heaven and [238] immortality. He has for years been educating his mind to acquire property. He is sacrificing his eternal interest for treasures upon the earth. He believes the truth, he loves the principles of truth, and loves to see others prospering in the truth; but he has made himself so thoroughly a slave to mammon that he feels bound to serve this master as long as he shall live. But the longer he lives the more devoted will he become to his love of gain, unless he tears away from this terrible god, money. It will be like tearing out his vitals, but it must be done if he values heaven.

He needs the censure of none, but the pity of all. His life has been a terrible mistake. He has suffered imaginary pecuniary want, while surrounded with plenty. Satan has taken possession of his mind and, exciting his organ of acquisitiveness, has made him insane upon this subject. The higher, nobler powers of his being have been brought very much into subjection to this close, selfish propensity. His only hope is in breaking the bands of Satan and overcoming this evil in his character. He has tried to do this by doing something after his conscience has been wrought upon, but this is not sufficient. This merely making a mighty effort and parting with a little of his mammon, and feeling all the time that he is parting with his soul, is

not the fruit of true religion. He must train his mind to good works. He must brace against his propensity to acquire. He must weave good works into all his life. He must cultivate a love for doing good, and get above the little, penurious spirit which he has fostered.

In trading with the merchants at -----, Brother and Sister I do not take a course which is pleasing to God. They will dicker to get things as cheap as they possibly can, and linger over a difference of a few pennies, and talk in regard to it as though money was their *all*—their god. If they could only be brought back, unobserved, to hear the remarks that are made after they leave, they would get a clearer idea of the influence of penuriousness. Our faith is brought into disrepute, and God is blasphemed by some on account of this close, penny dealing. Angels turn away in disgust. Everything in heaven is noble and elevated. All seek the interest and happiness of others. No one devotes himself to looking out and caring for self. It is the chief joy of all holy beings to witness the joy and happiness of those around them.

[239]

When these angels come to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and witness the exhibition of selfishness, of covetousness, of overreaching, and benefiting self at others' disadvantage, they turn away in grief. When they see those who claim to be heirs to an immortal inheritance so penurious in dealing with those who do not profess any higher ambition than to be laying up treasures on earth, they turn away in shame; for holy truth is reproached.

In no way could the Lord be better glorified and the truth more highly honored than for unbelievers to see that the truth has wrought a great and good work upon the lives of naturally covetous and penurious men. If it could be seen that the faith of such had an influence to mold their characters, to change them from close, selfish, overreaching, money-loving men to men who love to do good, who seek opportunities to use their means to bless those who need to be blessed, who visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and who keep themselves unspotted from the world, it would be an evidence that their religion was genuine. Such would let their light so shine that others seeing their good works would be led to glorify their Father which is in heaven. This fruit would be unto holiness, and they would be living representatives of Christ upon the earth. Sinners would be convicted that there is in the truth a power

to which they are strangers. Those who profess to be waiting and watching for the appearing of their Lord should not disgrace their profession by bantering in deal and standing for the last penny. Such fruit does not grow upon the Christian tree.

[240] Brother I, the Lord is not willing that you should perish, but would rather that you should take hold of His strength and make peace with Him by a conformity of your will to His divine will. If a faithful picture of your course in money getting could be presented before you, you would be terrified. You would be disgusted with your closeness, your penuriousness, your love of money. You would make it the effort of your life to obtain the transforming grace of God, which would make you a new man. The means which came to you from relatives was a curse to you. It only increased your money-loving propensity, and was an additional weight to sink you to perdition.

“The love of money is the root of all evil.” When men employ their powers of mind and body in obtaining riches, and are content with the pleasure of laying up wealth which they can never use, and which will prove an injury to their children, they abuse the powers which God has given them. They show that their characters have been made sordid by the absorbing pursuit of gain. Instead of realizing happiness, they are miserable. They have shut up their souls to the wants of the needy, and have given evidence that they had no compassion for the suffering.

[241] My brother, your heart is not callous to the wants and necessities of others. You have generous impulses, and you love to accommodate. Frequently you will readily do a kind act for a brother or a neighbor; but you make money your god, and are in danger of valuing heaven less than you value your money. In money getting there is always danger unless the grace of God is the ruling principle of the soul. When Christians are controlled by the principles of heaven, they will dispense with one hand, while the other gains. This is the only rational and healthy position a Christian can occupy while having and still making money. We would ask Brother I: What are you going to do with your money? You are God’s steward. You possess talents of means and can do much good with them. You can deposit in the bank of heaven by being rich in good works. Bless others with your life. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon

earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Remember that the treasures laid up in heaven are not lost. They are secured to yourselves by a judicious use of the means of which Heaven has made you stewards. “Charge them that are rich in this world,” says the apostle, “that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

There is danger, Brother I, of your life’s being lost, and the gifts which God has bestowed upon you being surrendered to the devil, and you led captive by him at his will. Can you bear the thought? Can you for this short life choose to serve self, and love your money, and then part with it all, and have no title to heaven, no right to the life which is eternal? You have a mighty struggle before you to separate your affections from this earth’s treasure. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Watch, pray, work, are the Christian’s watchwords. Arouse yourself, I implore you. Seek for those things which are enduring. The things of this earth must soon pass away. Are you ready to exchange worlds? Are you forming a character for everlasting life? If lost at last, you will know what proved your ruin—the love of money. You will cry in bitter anguish: [242] “Oh, the deceitfulness of riches! I have lost my soul. I sold it for money. My soul and body I bartered for gain. I sacrificed heaven, fearing that I should have to sacrifice my money to obtain it.” From the Master will be heard: Take ye the unprofitable servant, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. We hope this will not be your fate. We hope you will remove your treasure to heaven, and transfer your affections, and fasten them upon God and the immortal treasure.

I have seen that the entire family were in danger of partaking, in a degree, of the father’s spirit. Sister I, you have already partaken of this spirit. God help you to see it and make an entire change.

Cultivate a love for doing good; seek to be rich in good works. In many things you can do more than you do. You have an individual responsibility before God. You have a duty to do, from which you cannot be excused. Maintain a close walk with God; pray without ceasing. You will have close work if you save your soul. Seek to have a counteracting influence in your family. Take your stand nobly for God. Your organization is unlike your husband's, and you will be condemned of God unless you act for yourself. Make diligent work in saving your own soul, and in exerting an influence to save your family. Let your example show that your treasure is in heaven, that you have invested all in a better home and a better life, which are eternal. Train your mind to value heavenly things, to be elevated, to love God, and to manifest a willing obedience to His will.

[243] You may be tested; you may be proved to see how strong your affection is for the things of this world. You may be made to understand a page of your heart with which you are now unacquainted. God knows your trials as you view the state of your husband and children, who so greatly lack saving faith. Much more depends upon you than you realize. You should put the armor on. Spend not your precious strength in exhaustive labor which another can do. Encourage your daughter to engage in useful employment and to aid you in bearing the burdens of life. She needs discipline. Her mind is vain. She needs to render all to God; then she can be useful and please her Redeemer.

My sister, work less, and pray and meditate more. Eternal interests should be primary with you. God forbid that your children should be molded into money lovers. True refinement and gentleness of manners can never be found in a home where selfishness reigns. The truly refined always have brains and hearts, always have consideration for others. True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adornment and display of the body. True refinement and nobility of soul will be seen in efforts to bless and elevate others. The weight of eternal things rests very lightly upon your children. May God arouse them before it shall be too late, and they exclaim in anguish: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Brother J, your case was presented before me. You occupy a responsible position. You are entrusted with talents of money and of influence. To every man is given a work—something to *do*, not

merely to engage his brain, bone, and muscle in common labor; it means more than this. You are acquainted with this work from a worldly point of view, and have some experience in it in a religious capacity. But for a few years past you have been losing time, and now you will have to work fast to redeem the past. To possess talents is not enough; you must so use them as to advantage not merely yourself but Him who bestowed them. All that you have is a loan from your Lord. He will require it again at your hand with interest.

Christ has a right to your services. You have become His servant by grace. You are not to serve your own interest, but the interest of Him who has employed you. As a professed Christian you are under obligations to God. It is not your own property that is entrusted to you for investment. Had it been so, you might have consulted your own pleasure in regard to its use. The capital is the Lord's, and you are responsible for its use or abuse. There are ways in which this capital can be so invested—put out to the exchangers—that it shall be earning the Lord something. If it is allowed to be buried in the earth, neither the Lord nor you will be benefited, and you will lose all that was entrusted to you. May God help you, my brother, to realize your true position as God's hired servant. By His own suffering and death He has paid the wages to secure your willing service and ready obedience.

[244]

During the trials of the past few years, you have suffered in mind, and have felt it a relief to turn your attention more fully to the things of the world, to the work of acquiring property. God, in His great love and mercy to you, has again gathered you into His fold. New duties and responsibilities are now laid upon you. You have a strong love for this world. You have been laying up treasures upon the earth. Jesus now invites you to transfer your treasure to heaven; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. In all your deal with your brethren and with unbelievers, guard yourself. Be true to your profession, and maintain true nobleness of soul, which shall be a credit to the truth which you profess.

You occupy a position where others are looking to you. You possess more than ordinary intellect. You are a man of quick perceptions, and you feel deeply. Some of your brethren have not moved in wisdom. They have watched you, and have felt over your case, and have wished to see you more liberal with your means. They have

[245] made themselves unhappy over your case. All this is needless in them. These very ones lack in many things, and if they are faithful in the humble service the Master requires of them they will have all that they can do. They cannot afford to waste their time in anxiously fearing lest their neighbor, who has a larger work entrusted to him, shall fail to do his work well. While they are so interested in the case of another, their own work is neglected, and they are really slothful servants. They were anxious to do their neighbor's work instead of that committed to themselves to do.

They think that if they only had the five talents to handle, they could do much better than the one to whom these talents were entrusted. But the Master knew better than they. None need mourn that they cannot glorify God by talents He never gave them and for which they are not responsible. They need not say: "If I were in another's position in life I would do a great amount of good with my capital." God requires no more of them than to improve upon what they have, as stewards of His grace.

The one talent, the humblest service, if wholly consecrated, and exercised to promote the glory of God, will be as acceptable as the improvement of the weightiest talent. The varied trusts are proportioned to our varied capabilities. To every man is given according to his ability. None should slight his work, considering it so small that he need not be particular to do it well. If he does this he trifles with his moral responsibilities and despises the day of small things. Heaven apportions to all their work, and it should be their ambition to do this work well, according to their capabilities. God requires that all, the weakest as well as the strongest, fulfill their appointed work. The interest expected will be in proportion to the amount entrusted.

[246] Each should diligently and interestedly attend to his own work, leaving others to their own Master, to stand or fall. There are too many busybodies in -----, too many who are interested in watching their brethren, and for this reason are constantly weak. They will bear testimony in meeting, and because they have not Jesus in their hearts to confess, they will try to impress upon their brethren their duty. These poor souls do not know their own duty, and yet they take the responsibility of enlightening others in regard to their duty. If such would attend to their own work, and obtain the grace of God

in their hearts, there would be a power in the church which is now lacking.

Brother J, you can do good. You possess good judgment, and God is leading you out of darkness into the light. Use your talents to the glory of God. Put them out to the exchangers, that when the Master comes He may receive His own with usury. Break your tendrils from the valueless things of earth, and elevate them to entwine about God. The salvation of souls is of greater consequence than the whole world. One soul saved, to live throughout the ages of eternity, to praise God and the Lamb, is of more value than millions in money. Wealth sinks into insignificance when compared with the worth of souls for whom Christ died. You are a cautious man and will not move rashly. Sacrifice for the truth, and become rich toward God. May the Lord help you to move as fast as you should and place the right estimate upon eternal things.

Your children need a deeper work of grace in their hearts. They need to encourage sobriety and solidity of character. If consecrated to God, they can do good and exert an influence which will be saving upon their companions.

Let not the poor feel that there is nothing that they can do, because they have not the wealth of their brethren. They can sacrifice in many ways. They can deny self. They can live devoted lives, and in their words and acts they can honor their Redeemer. The sisters especially can exert a strong influence if they will cease their gossiping and devote their time to watchfulness and prayer. They can honor God. They can let their light so shine that others, by seeing their good works, will be led to glorify our Father which is in heaven. [247]

As an illustration of the failure on your part to come up to the work of God, as was your privilege, I was referred to these words: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." [Judges 5:23](#). What had Meroz done? Nothing. And this was their sin. They came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Chapter 36—Sentimentalism and Matchmaking

Dear Sister K,

In the vision given me last June I was shown that you possess a firmness of character, a determination of purpose, savoring somewhat of stubbornness. You are unwilling to be led, yet you feel anxious to know and do the will of God. You have been deceived in yourself; you have not understood your own heart. You have thought that your will was in subjection to the will of God, but in this you have not judged aright. You have met with trials and have permitted your mind to dwell upon disappointed hopes. For some years back your life has taken a peculiar turn. There has seemed to be a spirit of unrest with you. You have not been happy, although there has been nothing in your surroundings which need to have cast so dark a shadow. You have not disciplined your mind to dwell upon cheerful subjects. You are capable of exerting a strong influence in favor of truth if you will only train your mind to run in the right channel. All your words and acts should be such as to honor your Redeemer, exalt His love, and magnify His charms.

[248] You have fallen into the sad error which is so prevalent in this degenerate age, especially with women. You are too fond of the other sex. You love their society; your attention to them is flattering, and you encourage, or permit, a familiarity which does not always accord with the exhortation of the apostle, to “abstain from all appearance of evil.”

You do not really understand yourself. You are walking in darkness. You have had something to do with matchmaking. This is most uncertain business; for you do not know the heart and may make very bad work, thereby aiding the great rebel in his work of matchmaking. He is busily engaged in influencing those who are wholly unsuited to each other to unite their interests. He exults in this work, for by it he can produce more misery and hopeless woe to the human family than by exercising his skill in any other direction.

You have written many letters, which has greatly taxed you. These letters have dwelt somewhat upon the subjects of our faith and hope; but mixed with this have been close inquiries and guesses in regard to whether this one or that one was about to marry, and suggestions relative to marriage. You seem to know considerable about anticipated marriages, and write and talk upon these things. This only causes dearth to your soul. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." You have done great injustice to yourself in permitting your mind and conversation to dwell upon love and marriage. You have not been happy, because you have been seeking after happiness. This is not profitable business. When you seek earnestly to do your duty, and arouse yourself to minister unto others, then you will find rest of spirit. Your mind dwells upon yourself. It needs to be drawn away from yourself by seeking to lighten the cares of others; and in making them happy, you will find happiness and cheerfulness of spirit.

You have a diseased imagination. You have thought yourself diseased, but this has been more imaginary than real. You have been untrue to yourself. You have conversed with young men, and permitted a freedom in your presence which should only be permitted in a brother. I was shown that your influence at ----- was not what it might have been. You permitted your mind to take a low level. You could chat, and laugh, and talk cheap talk unworthy of a Christian. Your deportment was not as it should have been. You appeared like a person without a backbone. You were half reclining upon others, which is a wrong position for a lady to occupy in the presence of others. If you had only thought so, you could have walked as well, and sat as erect, as many others. The condition of your mind leads to indolence and to a dread of exercise, when this exercise would prove one of the greatest means of your recovery. You will never recover unless you lay aside this listless, dreamy condition of mind and arouse yourself to *do*, to work while the day lasts. Do, as well as imagine and plan. Turn your mind away from romantic projects. You mingle with your religion a romantic, lovesick sentimentalism, which does not elevate, but only lowers. It is not yourself alone who is affected; others are injured by your example and influence.

You are naturally devotional. If you would train your mind to dwell upon elevated themes which have nothing to do with yourself,

[250]

but are of a heavenly nature, you could yet be of use. But much of your life has been wasted in dreaming of doing some great work in the future, while the present duty, small though it may appear to you, has been neglected. You have been unfaithful. The Lord will not commit to your trust any larger work until the work now before you has been seen and performed with a ready, cheerful will. Unless the heart is put into the work, it will drag heavily, whatever that work may be. The Lord tests our ability by first giving us small duties to perform. If we turn from these with dissatisfaction and murmuring, no more will be entrusted to us until we cheerfully take hold of these small duties and do them well; then greater responsibilities will be committed to us.

You have been entrusted with talents not to be squandered, but to be put out to the exchangers, that at the Master's coming He may receive His own with usury. God has not distributed these talents indiscriminately. He has dispensed these sacred trusts according to the known capacity of His servants. "To every man his work." He gives impartially, and expects a corresponding return. If all do their duty according to the measure of their responsibility, the amount entrusted to them, be it large or small, will be doubled. Their fidelity is tested and proved, and their faithfulness is positive evidence of their wise stewardship, and of their worthiness to be entrusted with the true riches, even the gift of everlasting life.

At the conference in New York, October, 1868, I was shown many who are now doing nothing, who might be accomplishing good. There was presented before me a class who are conscious that they possess generous impulses, devotional feelings, and a love of doing good; yet at the same time they are doing nothing. They possess a self-complacent feeling, flattering themselves that if they had an opportunity, or were circumstanced more favorably, they could and would do a great and good work; but they are waiting the opportunity. They despise the narrow mind of the poor niggard who grudges the small pittance to the needy. They see that he lives for self, that he will not be called from himself to do good to others, to bless them with the talents of influence and of means which have been committed to him to use, not to abuse, nor to permit to rust, or lie buried in the earth. Those who give themselves up to their stinginess and selfishness are accountable for their niggardly acts and

are responsible for the talents they abuse. But more responsible are those who have generous impulses and are naturally quick to discern spiritual things, if they remain inactive, waiting an opportunity they suppose has not come, yet contrasting their readiness to do with the unwillingness of the niggard, and reflecting that their condition is more favorable than that of their mean-souled neighbors. Such deceive themselves. The mere possession of qualities which are not used only increases their responsibility; and if they keep their Master's talents unimproved, or hoarded, their condition is no better than that of their neighbors for whom their souls feel such contempt. To them it will be said: Ye knew your Master's will, yet did it not.

[251]

Had you trained your mind to dwell upon elevated subjects, meditating upon heavenly themes, you could have done much good. You could have had an influence upon the minds of others, to turn their selfish thoughts and world-loving dispositions into the channel of spirituality. Were your affections and thoughts brought into subjection to the will of Christ, you would be capable of doing good. Your imagination is diseased because you have permitted it to run in a forbidden channel, to become dreamy. Daydreaming and romantic castle-building have unfitted you for usefulness. You have lived in an imaginary world; you have been an imaginary martyr and an imaginary Christian.

There is much of this low sentimentalism mingled with the religious experience of the young in this age of the world. My sister, God requires you to be transformed. Elevate your affections, I implore you. Devote your mental and physical powers to the service of your Redeemer, who has bought you. Sanctify your thoughts and feelings that all your works may be wrought in God.

You have been in a sad deception. God would have you investigate closely every thought and purpose of your heart. Deal truly with your own soul. Had your affections been centered upon God as He requires, you would not have passed through the trials you have. There is a restlessness of spirit with you which will not be relieved until your thoughts are changed; until daydreaming and castle-building cease, and you do the work of the present.

[252]

In your letter writing, leave matchmaking and guessing about the marriages of your friends. The marriage relation is holy, but in this degenerate age it covers vileness of every description. It is abused,

and has become a crime which now constitutes one of the signs of the last days, even as marriages, managed as they were previous to the Flood, were then a crime. Satan is constantly busy to hurry inexperienced youth into a marriage alliance. But the less we glory in the marriages which are now taking place, the better. When the sacred nature and the claims of marriage are understood, it will even now be approved of Heaven, and the result will be happiness to both parties, and God will be glorified. May the Lord enable you to do the work before you to do.

I am about to write upon this wrong, deceptive work which is carried on under the cover of religion. The lust of the flesh has control of men and women. The mind has been depraved through a perversion of the thoughts and feelings, and yet the deceptive power of Satan has so blinded their eyes that poor, deceived souls flatter themselves that they are spiritually minded, especially consecrated, when their religious experience is composed of lovesick sentimentalism more than of purity, true goodness, and humility of soul; the mind is not drawn out of self, is not exercised and elevated by blessing others, by doing good works. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." True religion ennobles the mind, refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and makes its possessor partaker of the purity and influences of heaven; it brings angels near, and separates more and more from the spirit and influence of the world.

Battle Creek, Michigan.

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Chapter 37—Severity in Family Government

Brother L,

Last June I was shown that there is a work before you to correct your ways. You do not see yourself. Your life has been a mistake. You do not pursue a wise and merciful course in your family. You are exacting. If you continue to pursue the course that you have been pursuing toward your wife and children, her days will be shortened, and your children will fear, but not love, you. You feel that your course is in Christian wisdom, but in this you deceive yourself.

You have peculiar views in regard to managing your family. You exercise an independent, arbitrary power which permits no liberty of will around you. You think yourself sufficient to be head in your family, and feel that your head is sufficient to move every member, as a machine is moved in the hands of the workmen. You dictate and assume authority. This displeases Heaven and grieves the pitying angels. You have conducted yourself in your family as though you alone were capable of self-government. It has offended you that your wife should venture to oppose your opinion or question your decisions.

After much long-suffering on her part, and patient waiting upon your whims, she has rebelled against unjust authority, and has become nervous and distracted, and shown contempt for your course. You have made the most of these manifestations on her part, and have charged her with sin and being led by the spirit of the devil, when you were the one at fault. You drove her almost to desperation, and afterward taunted her with it. How easy it would have been for you to have made her life cheerful and pleasant. But it has been the opposite of this. [254]

You have been rather indolent. You have not been ambitious to exercise the strength the Lord has given you. This is your capital. A judicious use of this strength, and persevering, industrious habits, would have enabled you to obtain the comforts of life. You have erred, and thought it was pride which led your wife to desire to

have things more comfortable around her. She has been stinted and dealt closely with by you. She needs a more generous diet, a more plentiful supply of food upon her table; and in her house she needs things as comfortable and convenient as you can make them, things to make her work as easy as possible. But you have viewed matters from a wrong standpoint. You have thought that almost anything which could be eaten was good enough, if you could live upon it and retain strength. You have pleaded the necessity of spare diet to your feeble wife. But she cannot make good blood or flesh upon the diet to which you could confine yourself, and flourish. Some persons cannot subsist upon the same food upon which others can do well, even though it be prepared in the same manner.

You are in danger of becoming an extremist. Your system could convert a very coarse, poor diet into good blood. Your blood-making organs are in good condition. But your wife requires a more select diet. Let her eat the same food which your system could convert into good blood, and her system could not appropriate it. She lacks vitality, and needs a generous, strengthening diet. She should have a good supply of fruit, and not be confined to the same things from day to day. She has a slender hold of life. She is diseased, and the wants of her system are far different from those of a healthy person.

[255] Brother L, you possess considerable dignity, but have you earned that dignity? Oh, no! You have assumed it. You have loved your ease. You and hard work have not agreed. Had you not been slothful in business, you could have had many of the comforts of life which you cannot now command. You have wronged your wife and your children by your indolent habits. Hours which should have been occupied in earnest labor have been passed away by you in talking and reading, and taking your ease.

You are just as accountable for your capital of strength as the wealthy man is for his riches. Both of you are stewards. To each is committed a work. You are not to abuse your strength, but to use it to acquire that with which you may liberally supply the wants of your family, and have wherewith to render to God by aiding in the cause of present truth. You have been aware of the existence of pride, and show, and vanity in -----, and have felt determined that your example should not countenance this pride and extravagance. In your effort to do this, your sin has been as great on the other side.

You have been greatly at fault in your religious experience. You have stood to one side as a looker-on, as a spectator, watching the deficiencies and faults of others, and building yourself up because you see wrongs in them. You have been careful, and upright in deal, and as you have seen slackness in this respect in others who make a high profession, you have contrasted their wrong with your principles in reference to deal, and have said in your heart, "I am better than they," while at the same time you were standing off from the church, watching and finding fault, yet doing nothing, not coming up to the help of the Lord, to remedy the evil. You had a standard by which you measured others. If they failed to meet your idea, your sympathy was not with them, and you had a self-complacent feeling in regard to yourself.

You have been exacting in your religious experience. Should God deal with you as you would have dealt with those you supposed in error in the church, and as you have dealt with your own family, your condition would be bad indeed. But a merciful God, who is of tender pity, whose loving-kindness changeth not, has been forgiving, and has not cast you aside nor cut you off for your transgressions, your numerous errors and backsliding. Oh, no! He has loved you still. [256]

Have you really considered that "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"? You have seen pride, and vanity, and a world-loving spirit in some who profess to be Christians in --- --. This is a great evil; and because this spirit is indulged, angels are grieved. Those who thus follow the example of the unconsecrated are exerting an influence to scatter from Christ, and are gathering in their garments the blood of souls. If they continue the same course they will lose their own souls, and will know one day what it is to feel the terrible weight of other souls who have been led astray by their unconsecration, while professing to be governed by religious principles.

You have just reason to be grieved with the pride and lack of simplicity in those who profess better things. But you have watched others, and talked of their errors and wrongs, and neglected your own soul. You are not accountable for any of the sins of your brethren, unless your example has caused them to stumble, caused their feet to be diverted from the narrow path. You have a great and solemn

work before you to control and subdue yourself, to become meek and lowly of heart, to educate yourself to be tenderhearted, pitiful in your family, and to possess that nobleness of spirit and true generosity of soul which despises everything niggardly.

[257] You have thought that there was too much work put upon the meetinghouse, and have remarked upon the unnecessary expense. It is needless in you to have these special conscientious scruples. There is nothing in that house which is prepared with too much care, neatness, or order. The work is none too nice. The arrangement is not extravagant. Do those who are ready to complain of this house of worship consider for whom it was built? that it was made especially to be the house of God; to be dedicated to Him; to be a place where the people assemble to meet God? Many act as though the Creator of the heavens and the earth, He who has made everything that is lovely and beautiful in our world, would be pleased to see a house erected for Him without order or beauty. Some build large, convenient houses for themselves, but cannot afford to spend much upon a house which they are to dedicate to God. Every dollar of the means in their hands is the Lord's. He has lent it to them for a little while, to use to His glory; yet they hand out this means for the advancement of the cause of God as though every dollar thus expended were a total loss.

God would not have His people expend means extravagantly for show or ornament, but He would have them observe neatness, order, taste, and plain beauty in preparing a house for Him in which He is to meet with His people. Those who build a house for God should manifest as much greater interest, care, and taste in its arrangement as the object for which it is prepared is higher and more holy than that for which common dwelling houses are prepared.

[258] The Lord reads the intents and purposes of men. Those who have exalted views of His character will feel it their highest pleasure to have everything which has any connection with Him of the very best work and displaying the very best taste. But those who can grudgingly build a poorer house to dedicate to God than they would accept to live in themselves show their lack of reverence for God and for sacred things. Their work shows that their own temporal concerns are of more value in their eyes than matters of a spiritual nature. Eternal things are made secondary. It is not considered

essential to have good and convenient things to use in the service of God, but they are considered highly essential in the concerns of this life. Men will reveal the true moral tone of the principles of their hearts.

Many of our people have become narrowed in their views. Order, neatness, taste, and convenience are termed pride and love of the world. A mistake is made here. Vain pride, which is exhibited in gaudy trappings and needless ornaments, is not pleasing to God. But He who created for man a beautiful world, and planted a lovely garden in Eden with every variety of trees for fruit and beauty, and who decorated the earth with most lovely flowers of every description and hue, has given tangible proofs that He is pleased with the beautiful. Yet He will accept the most humble offering from the poorest, weakest child, if he has no better to present. It is the sincerity of the soul that the Lord accepts. The man who has God enshrined in his heart, exalted above all, will be led to a thorough submission of his will to God, and will make an entire surrender of himself to His rule and reign.

Shortsighted mortals do not comprehend the ways and works of God. Their eyes are not directed upward to Him as they should be. They do not have exalted views of eternal things. They only look at these things with a clouded vision. They take no special delight in contemplating the love of God, the glory and splendor of heaven, the exalted character of the holy angels, the majesty and inexpressible loveliness of Jesus, our Redeemer. They have so long kept earthly things before their vision that eternal scenes are vague and indistinct to them. They have limited views of God, heaven, and eternity.

Sacred things are brought down upon a level with common; therefore in their dealing with God they manifest the same close, penurious spirit as in dealing with their fellow men. Their offerings to the Lord are lame, sick, or deficient. They carry on the same robbery with Him that they have with their fellow men. Their minds do not reach up to an exalted moral standard, but remain on a low level; they are constantly breathing the impure miasma of the lowlands of earth.

Brother L, you rule with a rod of iron in your family. You are severe in the government of your children. You will not gain their love by this course of management. You are not tender, loving,

affectionate, and courteous to your wife; but are harsh, and bear down upon her, blaming and censuring her. A well-regulated, orderly family is a pleasing sight to God and ministering angels. You must learn how to make a home orderly, comfortable, and pleasant. Then adorn that home with becoming dignity, and the spirit will be received by the children; and order, regularity, and obedience will be more readily secured by both of you.

Brother L, have you considered what a child is, and whither it is going? Your children are the younger members of the Lord's family—brothers and sisters entrusted to your care by your heavenly Father for you to train and educate for heaven. When you are handling them so roughly as you have frequently done, do you consider that God will call you to account for this dealing? You should not use your children thus roughly. A child is not a horse or a dog to be ordered about according to your imperious will, or to be controlled under all circumstances by a stick or whip, or by blows with the hand. Some children are so vicious in their tempers that the infliction of pain is necessary, but very many cases are made much worse by this manner of discipline.

[260] You should control yourself. Never correct your children while impatient or fretful, or while under the influence of passion. Punish them in love, manifesting the unwillingness you feel to cause them pain. Never raise your hand to give them a blow unless you can with a clear conscience bow before God and ask His blessing upon the correction you are about to give. Encourage love in the hearts of your children. Present before them high and correct motives for self-restraint. Do not give them the impression that they must submit to control because it is your arbitrary will; because they are weak, and you are strong; because you are the father, they the children. If you wish to ruin your family, continue to govern by brute force, and you will surely succeed.

Your wife is tenderhearted and easily agitated. She feels your harshness of discipline, and it leads her to the opposite extreme. She seeks to counteract your severity, and you charge this as a great lack in her of doing her duty and controlling her children. You think her indulgent, overfond, and tender. You cannot help her in this respect until you correct yourself and manifest that parental tenderness which you should in your family. It is your wrong management

which leads your wife to be lax in her discipline. You must have your nature softened. You need to be refined by the influences of the Spirit of God. You need a thorough conversion; then you can work from the right standpoint. You need to let love into your soul and permit it to occupy the place of self-dignity; self must die.

Your wife needs tenderness and love. The Lord loves her. She is much nearer the kingdom of heaven than you. But she is dying by inches, and you are the one who is slowly taking her life. You can make her life happy if you will. You can encourage her to lean upon your large affections, to confide in you and love you. You are weaning her heart from you. She shrinks from opening to you all the emotions of her soul, for you have treated her feelings with contempt; you have ridiculed her fears and pompously advanced your opinion as though there were no appeal from that. Her respect for you will surely die if you continue the course you have commenced; and when respect is gone, love does not long abide.

[261]

I implore you to turn rightabout and humble yourself to confess that you have wronged your wife. She is not perfect. She has faults, but she sincerely desires to serve God and to patiently endure your course toward her and your children. You are quick to detect your wife's errors, and when you can pick a flaw you will. She is weak; yet with her weaker strength she glorifies God better than you do with your stronger powers.

Battle Creek,

January 17, 1869.

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Chapter 38—A Birthday Letter

My Dear Son,

I write this for your nineteenth birthday. It has been a pleasure to have you with us a few weeks in the past. You are about to leave us, yet our prayers shall follow you.

Another year of your life closes today. How can you look back upon it? Have you made advancement in the divine life? Have you increased in spirituality? Have you crucified self, with the affections and lusts? Have you an increased interest in the study of God's word? Have you gained decided victories over your own failings and waywardness? Oh, what has been the record of your life for the year which has now passed into eternity, never to be recalled?

[262] As you enter upon a new year, let it be with an earnest resolve to have your course onward and upward. Let your life be more elevated and exalted than it has hitherto been. Make it your aim not to seek your own interest and pleasure, but to advance the cause of your Redeemer. Remain not in a position where you ever need help yourself, and where others have to guard you to keep you in the narrow way. You may be strong to exert a sanctifying influence upon others. You may be where your soul's interest will be awakened to do good to others, to comfort the sorrowful, strengthen the weak, and to bear your testimony for Christ whenever opportunity offers. Aim to honor God in everything, always and everywhere. Carry your religion into everything. Be thorough in whatever you undertake.

You have not experienced the saving power of God as it is your privilege, because you have not made it the great aim of your life to glorify Christ. Let every purpose you form, every work in which you engage, and every pleasure you enjoy, be to the glory of God. Let this be the language of your heart: I am thine, O God, to live for Thee, to work for Thee, and to suffer for Thee.

Many profess to be on the Lord's side, but they are not; the weight of all their actions is on Satan's side. By what means shall we determine whose side we are on? Who has the heart? With whom

are our thoughts? Upon whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are on the Lord's side, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. We have no friendship with the world; we have consecrated all that we have and are to Him. We long to bear His image, breathe His Spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.

You should pursue so decided a course that none need to be mistaken in you. You cannot exert an influence upon the world without decision. Your resolutions may be good and sincere, but they will prove a failure unless you make God your strength and move forward with a firm determination of purpose. You should throw your whole heart into the cause and work of God. You should be in earnest to obtain an experience in the Christian life. You should exemplify Christ in your life.

You cannot serve God and mammon. You are either wholly on the Lord's side or on the side of the enemy. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad." Some persons make their religious life a failure because they are always wavering and do not have determination. They are frequently convicted and come almost up to the point of surrendering all for God; but, failing to meet the point, they fall back again. While in this state the conscience is hardening and becoming less and less susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of God. His Spirit has warned, has convicted, and has been disregarded, until it is nearly grieved away. God will not be trifled with. He shows duty clearly, and if there is a neglect to follow the light, it becomes darkness.

[263]

God bids you become a worker with Him in His vineyard. Commence just where you are. Come to the cross and there renounce self, the world, and every idol. Take Jesus into your heart fully. You are in a hard place to preserve consecration and to exert an influence which shall lead others from sin and pleasure and folly to the narrow way, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in.

Make an entire surrender to God; yield up everything unreservedly, and thus seek for that peace which passes understanding. You cannot draw nourishment from Christ unless you are in Him. If not in Him, you are a branch that is withered. You do not feel your want of purity and true holiness. You should feel an earnest desire for the Holy Spirit and should pray earnestly to obtain it. You cannot

expect the blessing of God without seeking for it. If you used the means within your reach you would experience a growth in grace and would rise to a higher life.

[264] It is not natural for you to love spiritual things; but you can acquire that love by exercising your mind, the strength of your being, in that direction. The power of doing is what you need. True education is the power of using our faculties so as to achieve beneficial results. Why is it that religion occupies so little of our attention, while the world has the strength of brain, bone, and muscle? It is because the whole force of our being is bent in that direction. We have trained ourselves to engage with earnestness and power in worldly business, until it is easy for the mind to take that turn. This is why Christians find a religious life so hard and a worldly life so easy. The faculties have been trained to exert their force in that direction. In religious life there has been an assent to the truths of God's word, but not a practical illustration of them in the life.

To cultivate religious thoughts and devotional feelings is not made a part of education. These should influence and control the entire being. The *habit* of doing right is wanting. There is spasmodic action under favorable influences, but to think naturally and readily upon divine things is not the ruling principle of the mind.

There is no need of being spiritual dwarfs if the mind is continually exercised in spiritual things. But merely praying for this, and about this, will not meet the necessities of the case. You must habituate the mind to concentration upon spiritual things. Exercise will bring strength. Many professed Christians are in a fair way to lose both worlds. To be half a Christian and half a worldly man makes you about one-hundredth part a Christian and all the rest worldly.

[265] Spiritual living is what God requires, yet thousands are crying out: "I don't know what is the matter; I have no spiritual strength, I do not enjoy the Spirit of God." Yet the same ones will become active and talkative, and even eloquent, when talking upon worldly matters. Listen to such ones in meeting. About a dozen words are spoken in hardly an audible voice. They are men and women of the world. They have cultivated worldly propensities until their faculties have become strong in that direction. Yet they are as weak as babes in regard to spiritual things, when they should be strong and

intelligent. They do not love to dwell upon the mystery of godliness. They know not the language of heaven and are not educating their minds so as to be prepared to sing the songs of heaven or to delight in the spiritual exercises which will there engage the attention of all.

Professed Christians, worldly Christians, are unacquainted with heavenly things. They will never be brought to the gates of the New Jerusalem to engage in exercises which have not hitherto specially interested them. They have not trained their minds to delight in devotion and in meditation upon things of God and heaven. How, then, can they engage in the services of heaven? how delight in the spiritual, the pure, the holy in heaven, when it was not a special delight to them upon earth? The very atmosphere there will be purity itself. But they are unacquainted with it all. When in the world, pursuing their worldly vocations, they knew just where to take hold and just what to do. The lower order of faculties being in so constant exercise, grew, while the higher, nobler powers of the mind, not being strengthened by use, are incapable of awaking at once to spiritual exercises. Spiritual things are not discerned, because they are viewed with world-loving eyes, which cannot estimate the value and glory of the divine above the temporal.

The mind must be educated and disciplined to love purity. A love for spiritual things should be encouraged; yea, must be encouraged, if you would grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Desires for goodness and true holiness are right so far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Good purposes are right, but will prove of no avail unless resolutely carried out. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians; but they made no earnest effort, therefore they will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. The will must be exercised in the right direction. I *will* be a wholehearted Christian. I *will* know the length and breadth, the height and depth, of perfect love. Listen to the words of Jesus: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Ample provisions are made by Christ to satisfy the soul that hungers and thirsts for righteousness.

[266]

The pure element of love will expand the soul for higher attainments, for increased knowledge of divine things, so that it will not be satisfied short of the fullness. Most professed Christians have no sense of the spiritual strength they might obtain were they as ambi-

tious, zealous, and persevering to gain a knowledge of divine things as they are to obtain the paltry, perishable things of this life. The masses professing to be Christians have been satisfied to be spiritual dwarfs. They have no disposition to make it their object to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; hence godliness is a hidden mystery to them, they cannot understand it. They know not Christ by experimental knowledge.

[267] Let those men and women who are satisfied with their dwarfed, crippled condition in divine things be suddenly transported to heaven and for an instant witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever abides there,—every soul filled with love; every countenance beaming with joy; enchanting music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb; and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the saints from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the Lamb; and let them realize that there is higher and greater joy yet to experience, for the more they receive of the enjoyment of God, the more is their capacity increased to rise higher in eternal enjoyment, and thus continue to receive new and greater supplies from the ceaseless sources of glory and bliss inexpressible,—could such persons, I ask, mingle with the heavenly throng, participate in their songs, and endure the pure, exalted, transporting glory that emanates from God and the Lamb? Oh, no! their probation was lengthened for years that they might learn the language of heaven, that they might become “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” But they had a selfish business of their own to engage the powers of their minds and the energies of their beings. They could not afford to serve God unreservedly and make this a business. Worldly enterprises must come first and take the best of their powers, and a transient thought is devoted to God. Are such to be transformed after the final decision: “He that is holy, let him be holy still,” “he which is filthy, let him be filthy still”? Such a time is coming.

Those who have trained the mind to delight in spiritual exercises are the ones who can be translated and not be overwhelmed with the purity and transcendent glory of heaven. You may have a good knowledge of the arts, you may have an acquaintance with the sciences, you may excel in music and in penmanship, your manners may please your associates, but what have these things to do with

a preparation for heaven? What have they to do to prepare you to stand before the tribunal of God?

Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Nothing but holiness will prepare you for heaven. It is sincere, experimental piety alone that can give you a pure, elevated character and enable you to enter into the presence of God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable. The heavenly character must be acquired on earth, or it can never be acquired at all. Then begin at once. Flatter not yourself that a time will come when you can make an earnest effort easier than now. Every day increases your distance from God. Prepare for eternity with such zeal as you have not yet manifested. Educate your mind to love the Bible, to love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation, and, above all, the hour when the soul communes with God. Become heavenly-minded if you would unite with the heavenly choir in the mansions above.

[268]

A new year of your life now commences. A new page is turned in the book of the recording angel. What will be the record upon its pages? Shall it be blotted with neglect of God, with unfulfilled duties? God forbid. Let a record be stamped there which you will not be ashamed to have revealed to the gaze of men and angels.

Greenville, Michigan,

July 27, 1868.

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Chapter 39—Deceitfulness of Riches

Dear Sister M,

When the Lord showed me your case, I was pointed back many years in the past, when you became a believer in the near coming of Christ. You looked for, and loved, His appearing.

Your husband was naturally an affectionate, noble-minded man; but he relied upon his own strength, which was weakness. He did not feel the need of making God his strength. Intoxicating drink benumbed his brain and finally paralyzed the higher powers of his mind. His godlike manhood was sacrificed to gratify his thirst for strong drink.

[269] You suffered opposition and abuse, yet God was your source of strength. While you trusted in Him, He sustained you. In all your trials you were not permitted to be overwhelmed. How often have the heavenly angels strengthened you when desponding, by presenting vividly to your mind passages of Scripture expressing the never-failing love of God, and giving evidence that His loving-kindness changeth not! Your soul trusted in God. It was your meat and drink to do the will of your heavenly Father. At times you had a firm trust in the promises of God, and then, again, your faith would be tried to the utmost. God's dealings seemed mysterious, yet most of the time you had the evidence that He looked upon your affliction and would not cause your burdens to be greater than you could bear.

The Master saw that you needed a fitness for His heavenly kingdom. He did not leave you in the furnace for the fire of affliction to consume. As a refiner and purifier of silver, He kept His eye upon you, watching the process of purification until He should discern His image reflected in you. Although you have often felt affliction's flame kindling upon you, and at times have thought it would consume you, yet the loving-kindness of God has been just as great toward you at these times as when you were free in spirit and triumphing in Him. The furnace was to purify and refine, but not to consume and destroy.

I saw you struggling with poverty, seeking to support yourself and your children. Many times you knew not what to do; the future looked dark and uncertain. In your distress you cried unto the Lord, and He comforted and helped you, and hopeful rays of light shone around you. How precious was God to you at such times! how sweet His comforting love! You felt that you had a precious treasure laid up in heaven. As you viewed the reward of the afflicted children of God, what a consolation to feel that you could claim Him as your Father!

Your case was, in reality, worse than if you had been widowed. Your heart was agonized by the wicked course pursued by your husband. But his persecutions, his threats and violence, did not lead you to trust in your own wisdom, and forget God. Far from this; you sensibly felt your weakness and that you were incapable of carrying your burdens, and in your conscious weakness you were relieved by bringing your heavy burdens to Jesus, the great Burden Bearer. How you cherished every ray of light from His presence! and how strong you often felt in His strength! When a storm of persecution and cruelty unexpectedly burst upon you, the Lord did not suffer you to be overwhelmed; but in those times of trial you realized strength, calmness, and peace, which were a marvel to you. [270]

When railing accusations and taunts more cruel than spears and arrows have fallen upon you, the influence of the Spirit of God upon your heart has led you to speak calmly, dispassionately. It was not in nature to do this. It was the fruit of the Spirit of God. It was the grace of God which strengthened your faith amid all the heartsicknesses of hope deferred. Grace fortified you for the warfare and hardships, and brought you through conqueror. Grace taught you to pray, to love and trust, notwithstanding your unfavorable surroundings. As you repeatedly realized that your prayers were answered in a special manner, you did not feel that it was because of any merit in yourself, but because of your great need. Your necessity was God's opportunity. Your life in those days of trial was to trust in God. And the manifestations of His special deliverance when in most trying places were like the oasis in the desert to the faint and weary traveler.

The Lord did not leave you to perish. He frequently raised up friends to aid you when you least expected it. Angels of God

[271]

ministered unto you, as step by step they led you up the rugged pathway. You were pressed by poverty, but this was the least of the difficulties with which you had to contend. When N exercised his power to abuse and harm you, you felt that the cup you had to drink was bitter indeed; and when he degraded himself to pursue a course of iniquity, and you were outraged and insulted in your own house, he made a gulf between himself and you which could never be passed. Then in your sore distress and perplexity the Lord raised you up friends. He did not leave you alone; but His strength was imparted, and you could say: "The Lord is my helper."

Through all your trials, which have never been fully revealed to others, you have had a never-failing Friend, who has said: "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." While upon the earth, He was ever touched with human woe. Although He is now ascended to His Father, and is adored by angels who quickly obey His commands, His heart, which loved, pitied, and sympathized, knows no change. It remains a heart of unchangeable tenderness still. That same Jesus was acquainted with all your trials, and did not leave you alone to struggle with temptations, battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Through His angels He whispered to you: "'Fear not, for I am with thee.' 'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.' I know your sorrows; I have endured them. I am acquainted with your struggles; I have experienced them. I know your temptations; I have encountered them. I have seen your tears; I also have wept. Your earthly hopes are crushed; but let the eye of faith be uplifted and penetrate the veil, and there anchor your hopes. The everlasting assurance shall be yours that you have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

O my dear sister, if you could only see, as I have seen, the ways and works of God manifested all through your perplexities and trials in the former part of your experience, when pressed by the hand of poverty, you could never forget Him, but your love would increase, and your zeal to promote His glory be untiring.

[272]

In consequence of your afflictions and peculiar trials, your health failed. The friends of the cause of God were but few, and many of them were poor; and you could see but little to hope for on the right hand or on the left. You looked upon your children and your

destitute, helpless condition, and your heart well-nigh fainted. At this time, through the influence of Adventists who had united with the Shakers, and in whom you had confidence because they had been your friends in time of need, you were induced to go among that sect for a time. But the angels of God did not leave you. They ministered unto you and were as a wall of fire round about you. Especially did the holy angels protect you from the deceptive influences which prevail among that people. The Shakers believed that you would unite your interest with theirs; and they thought that if they could induce you to become one of them, you would be a great help to their cause; for you would make an ardent member of their society. They would have given you a high position among them. Some of the Shakers had received spiritual manifestations, telling them that you were designed of God to be a prominent member of their society; but that you were one who should not be urged; that kindness would have a powerful influence where force or pressure would cause a failure of their hopes.

Magnetism was exercised among them in a powerful manner. Through this power they flattered themselves that you would be brought to view things in the same light in which they viewed them. You were not aware of all the arts and deception used to bring about their purpose. The Lord preserved you. There seemed to be a circle of light round about you, proceeding from the ministering angels, so that the darkness which prevailed about you did not cloud the circle of light. The Lord opened the way for you to leave that deceived community, and you left unharmed, the principles of your faith as pure as when you went among them.

Your diseased arm was a great affliction. You had turned to the right and to the left for help. You had consented to have a woman try her boasted skill upon you. This woman was a special agent of Satan. Through her experiments, you nearly lost your life. The poison introduced into your system was sufficient to kill a person of the most robust constitution. Here again God interposed, or your life would have been sacrificed. [273]

Every means you had resorted to for the recovery of health had failed. Not only your arm, but your entire system, was diseased. Your lungs were affected, and you were fast going down to death. At this time you felt that God alone could deliver. You could do one

thing more; you could follow the direction of the apostle in the fifth chapter of James. You there made a covenant with God, that if He would spare your life to minister still to the wants of your children, you would be for the Lord, and Him only would you serve; you would dedicate your life to His glory; you would use your strength to advance His cause and to do good in the earth. Angels recorded the promise there made to God.

We came to you in your great affliction and claimed the promise of God in your behalf. We dared not look to appearances; for in so doing we should be like Peter, whom the Lord bade come to Him on the water. He should have kept his eye lifted upward to Jesus; but he looked down at the troubled waves, and his faith failed. We calmly and firmly grasped the promises of God alone, irrespective of appearances, and by faith claimed the blessing. I was especially shown that God wrought in a wonderful manner, and you were preserved by a miracle of mercy, to be a living monument of His healing power, to testify of His wondrous works to the children of men.

[274] At the time you felt such a decided change, your captivity was turned, and joy and gladness in the place of doubt and distress filled your heart. The praise of God was in your heart and upon your lips. "Oh, what hath the Lord wrought!" was the sentiment of your soul. The Lord heard the prayers of His servants, and raised you up to still live and endure trials, to watch and wait for His appearing, and to glorify His name. Poverty and care pressed heavily upon you. As dark clouds at times enshrouded you, you could not forbear inquiring: "O God, hast Thou forsaken me?" But you were not forsaken, although you could see no way open before you. The Lord would have you trust in His love and mercy amid clouds and darkness, as well as in the sunshine. At times the clouds would part, and beams of light would shine through to strengthen your desponding heart and increase your wavering confidence, and you would again fix your trembling faith upon the sure promises of your heavenly Father. You would involuntarily cry out: "O God, I will believe; I will trust in Thee. Thou hast hitherto been my helper, and Thou wilt not leave me now."

As victory was gained by you, and light again shone upon you, you could not find language to express your sincere gratitude to your

gracious heavenly Father; and you thought you never again would doubt His love nor distrust His care. You did not seek for ease. You did not consider hard labor a burden if the way would only open that you might care for your children and shield them from the iniquity prevailing in this age of the world. It was the burden of your heart that you might see them turning to the Lord. You pleaded before God for your children with strong cries and tears. Their conversion you *so much* desired. Sometimes your heart would despond and faint, and you would fear that your prayers would not be answered; then again you would consecrate your children to God afresh, and your yearning heart would lay them anew upon the altar.

When they went into the army, your prayers followed them. They were wonderfully preserved from harm. They called it good luck; but a mother's prayers from an anxious, burdened soul, as she felt the peril of her children and the danger of their being cut off in their youth without hope in God, had much to do with their preservation. How many prayers were lodged in heaven that these sons might be preserved to obey God, to devote their lives to His glory! In your anxiety for your children you pleaded with God to return them to you again, and you would seek more earnestly to lead them in the path of holiness. You thought you would labor more faithfully than you had ever done.

[275]

The Lord suffered you to be schooled in adversity and affliction, that you might obtain an experience which would be valuable to yourself and others. In the days of your poverty and trial you loved the Lord, and you loved religious privileges. The nearness of Christ's coming was your consolation. It was a living hope to you that you would soon find rest from labor, and the end of all your trials; when you would find that you had not labored nor suffered too much; for the apostle Paul declares: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

To meet with the people of God seemed to you almost like visiting heaven. Obstacles did not deter you. You could suffer weariness and hunger for temporal food, but you could not be deprived of spiritual food. You earnestly sought for the grace of God, and you did not seek in vain. Communion with the people of God was the richest blessing you could enjoy.

[276] In your Christian experience your soul abhorred vanity, pride, and extravagant show. When you have witnessed the expenditure of means among professed Christians to make a display and to foster pride, your heart and lips have said: “Oh, if I only had the means handled by those who are unfaithful in their stewardship, I would feel it one of the greatest privileges to help the needy and to aid in the advancement of the cause of God!”

You often realized the presence of God while you sought in your humble way to enlighten others in regard to the truth for these last days. You had experienced the truth for yourself. That which you had seen, and heard, and experienced, and testified unto, you knew was no fiction. You delighted to present before others, in private conversation, the wonderful way in which God had led His people. You recounted His dealings with such an assurance as to strike conviction to the hearts of those who listened to you. You talked as though you had a knowledge of the things whereof you affirmed. When speaking to others in regard to the present truth, you longed for greater opportunities and a more extended influence, that you might bring to the notice of many in darkness the light which had lightened your pathway. At times you looked at your poverty, your limited influence, and your best endeavors, frequently misinterpreted by the professed friends of the cause of truth, and you were nearly discouraged.

[277] Sometimes in your unsettled state you erred in judgment, and there were those who should have possessed that charity which thinketh no evil, who watched, and surmised evil, and made the most of the errors they thought they saw in you. But the love and tender pity of Jesus were not withdrawn; they were your support amid the trials and persecutions of your life. The kingdom of heaven and the righteousness of Christ were primary with you. Your life was marred with imperfections, because it is human to err; but from what the Lord has been pleased to show me of your discouraging surroundings in the days of your poverty and trial, I know of no one who would have pursued a course more free from mistakes than you did, were they situated as you were, in poverty and embarrassing trials. It is easy for those who are spared the severe trials to which others are subjected, to look on and question, and surmise evil and find fault. Some are more ready to censure others for pursuing a

certain course than to take the responsibility of saying what should be done, or of pointing out a more correct way.

You became confused. You knew not where to trust. There were but few Sabbathkeepers in ----- and vicinity who exerted a saving influence. Some who professed the faith were no honor to the cause of present truth. They did not gather with Christ, but scattered abroad. They could talk loud and long; yet their hearts were not in the work. They were not sanctified by the truth they professed. These, not having root in themselves, gave up the faith. Had they done this at an earlier period, it would have been better for the cause of truth. In consequence of these things, Satan took advantage of you and prepared the way for your backsliding.

My attention was called to your desire to possess means. The sentiment of your heart was: "Oh, if I only had means, I would not squander it! I would set an example to those who are close and penurious. I would show them the great blessing there is to be received in doing good." Your soul abhorred covetousness. As you have seen those who possessed abundance of this world's goods shut their hearts to the cry of the needy you have said: "God will visit them; He will reward them according to their works." As you have seen the wealthy walking in their pride, their hearts girt about with selfishness, as with iron bands, you have felt that they were poorer than yourself, although you were in want and suffering. When you have seen these purse-proud men bearing themselves loftily because money has power, you have felt pity for them, and in no case would you have been induced to change places with them. Yet you desired [278] means that you might so use it as to be a rebuke to the covetous.

The Lord said to His angel who had hitherto ministered unto you: "I have proved her in poverty and affliction, and she has not separated herself from Me, nor rebelled against Me. I will now prove her with prosperity. I will reveal to her a page of the human heart with which she is unacquainted. I will show her that money is the most dangerous foe she has ever met. I will reveal to her the deceitfulness of riches; that they are a snare, even to those who feel that they are secure from selfishness, and proof against exaltation, extravagance, pride, and love of the praise of men."

I was then shown that a way was opened for you to improve your condition in life and at length to obtain the means which you had

thought you would use with wisdom and to the glory of God. How anxiously did your ministering angel watch the new trial to see how you would stand the test. As means came into your hands, I saw you gradually and almost imperceptibly separating from God. The means entrusted to you were expended for your own convenience, to surround yourself with the good things of this life. I saw the angels looking upon you with yearning sadness, their faces half averted, loath to leave you. Yet their presence was not perceived by you, and your course was pursued without reference to your angel guard.

The business and cares of your new position claimed your time and attention, and your duty to God was not considered. Jesus had purchased you by His own blood. You were not your own. Your time, your strength, and the means you handled all belonged to your Redeemer. He had been your constant Friend, your strength and support when every other friend had proved a broken reed. You have repaid the love and bounty of God with ingratitude and forgetfulness.

[279]

Your only safety was in implicit trust in Christ, your Saviour. There was no safety for you away from the cross. How weak human strength seemed in this instance! Oh, how evident that there is no real strength but that which God imparts to those who trust in Him! One petition offered up to God in faith has more power than a wealth of human intellect.

In your prosperity you did not carry out the resolves you had made in adversity. The deceitfulness of riches turned you from your purposes. Cares increased upon you. Your influence became extended. As the afflicted realized relief from suffering, they glorified you, and you learned to love praise from the lips of poor mortals. You were in a popular city, and thought it necessary for the success of your business, as well as to retain your influence, for your surroundings to be somewhat in accordance with your business. But you carried things too far. You were swayed too much by the opinions and judgment of others. You expended means needlessly, only to gratify the lust of the eye and the pride of life. You forgot that you were handling your Lord's money. When means were expended by you which would only encourage vanity, you did not consider that the recording angel was making a record which you would blush to meet again. Said the angel, pointing to you: "You glorified yourself,

but did not magnify God.” You even gloried in the fact that it was in your power to purchase these things.

A large sum has been expended in needless things which could only answer for show and encourage vanity and pride that will cause you remorse and shame. If you had borne in mind the claims Heaven has upon you and had made a right disposition of the means entrusted to your care, by helping the needy and advancing the cause of present truth, you would have been laying up treasure in heaven and would have been rich toward God. Consider how much means you have invested where no one has been really benefited, no one fed or clothed, and no one helped to see the error of his ways that he might turn to Christ and live. [280]

You have made large investments in uncertain enterprises. Satan blinded your eyes so that you could not see that these enterprises would yield you no returns. The enterprise of securing eternal life did not awaken your interest. Here you could have expended means, and run no risks, met no disappointments, and in the end would have received immense profits. Here you could have invested in the never-failing bank of heaven. Here you could have bestowed your treasures where no thief approacheth nor rust corrupteth. This enterprise is eternal and is as much nobler than any earthly enterprise as the heavens are higher than the earth.

Your children were not disciples of Christ. They were in friendship with the world, and their natural hearts desired to be like worldlings. The lust of the eye and the pride of life controlled them and have influenced you to a certain extent. You have sought more earnestly to please and gratify your children than to please and glorify God. You have forgotten the claims of God upon you, and the wants of His cause. Selfishness has led you to expend money in ornaments for the gratification of yourself and your children. You did not think that this money was not yours; that it was only lent you to test and prove you, to see if you would shun the evils you had marked in others. God made you His steward, and when He cometh and reckoneth with His servants, what account can you give of your stewardship?

Your faith and simple trust in God began to wane as soon as means flowed in upon you. You did not depart from God all at once. Your backsliding was gradual. You ceased the morning and

[281] evening devotions because it was not always convenient. Your son's wife caused you trials of a peculiar, aggravating character, which had considerable to do in discouraging you from continuing family devotions. Your house became a prayerless house. Your business was made primary, and the Lord and His truth were made secondary. Look back to the days of your earlier experience; would these trials then have driven you from family prayer?

Here, in the neglect of vocal prayer, you lost an influence in your house which you could have retained. It was your duty to acknowledge God in your family, irrespective of consequences. Your petitions should have been offered to God morning and evening. You should have been as priest of the household, confessing your sins and the sins of your children. Had you been faithful, God, who had been your guide, would not have left you to your own wisdom.

Means were expended needlessly for show. Over this sin in others you had felt deeply grieved. And while thus using means, you were robbing God. Then the Lord said: "I will scatter. I will permit her for a time to walk in the way of her own choosing. I will blind judgment, and remove wisdom. I will show her that her strength is weakness, and her wisdom foolishness. I will humble her, and open her eyes to see how far she has departed from Me. If she will not then turn unto Me with her whole heart, and in all her ways acknowledge Me, My hand shall scatter, and the pride of the mother and of the children shall be brought down, and poverty shall again be their lot. My name shall be exalted. The loftiness of man shall be brought down, and the pride of man shall be laid low."

[282] The above view was given December 25, 1865, in the city of Rochester, New York. Last June I was shown that the Lord was dealing with you in love, that He now invited you to turn to Him that you might live. I was shown that for years you have felt that you were in a backslidden state. If you had been consecrated to God you might have done a good and great work in letting your light shine to others. To everyone there is given a work to do for the Master. To each of His servants are committed special gifts, or talents. "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability." Every servant has some trust for which he is responsible; and the varied trusts are proportioned to our varied capabilities. In dispensing His gifts, God has not dealt

with partiality. He has distributed the talents according to the known powers of His servants, and He expects corresponding returns.

In your earlier experience the Lord imparted to you talents of influence, but did not give you talents of means, and therefore did not expect you in your poverty to bestow that which you had not to give. Like the widow, you did give what you could, although, had you considered your own circumstances, you would have felt excused from doing even as much as you did. In your sickness, God did not require from you that active energy of which disease had deprived you. Though you were restricted in your influence and in your means, yet God accepted your efforts to do good and to advance His cause according to what you had, not according to what you had not. The Lord does not despise the humblest offering bestowed with readiness and sincerity.

You possess an ardent temperament. Earnestness in a good cause is praiseworthy. In your former trials and perplexity, you were obtaining an experience which was to be of advantage to others. You were zealous in the service of God. You loved to present the evidences of our position to those who did not believe present truth. You could speak with assurance, for these things were a reality to you. The truth was a part of your being; and those who listened to your earnest appeals had not a doubt of your honesty, but were convinced that these things were so. [283]

In the providence of God your influence has been extended; in addition to this, God has seen fit to prove you by giving you talents of means. You are thereby laid under double responsibility. When your condition in life began to improve, you said: "As soon as I can get me a home, I will then donate to the cause of God." But when you had a home you saw so many improvements to make to have everything about you convenient and pleasant that you forgot the Lord and His claims upon you, and were less inclined to help the cause of God than in the days of your poverty and affliction.

You were seeking friendship with the world, and separating further and further from God. You forgot the exhortation of Christ: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

There are three watchwords in the Christian life, which must be heeded if we would not have Satan steal a march upon us; namely, Watch, pray, work. Prayer and watching thereunto are necessary for advancement in the divine life. Never was there a time in your history more important than the present. Your only safety is to live like a watchman. Watch and pray always. Oh, what a preventive against yielding to temptation and falling into the snares of the world! How earnestly should you have been at work the past few years, when your influence was extensive.

[284] Dear sister, the praise of men and the flattery current in the world have had greater influence upon you than you have been aware of. You have not been improving your talents—putting them out to the exchangers. You are naturally affectionate and generous. These traits of character have been exercised to a degree, but not as much as God requires. Merely possessing these excellent gifts is not enough; God requires them to be kept in constant exercise; for through them He blesses those who need to be helped, and carries forward His work for the salvation of man.

The Lord will not depend upon niggardly souls to take care of the worthy poor nor to sustain His cause. Such are too narrow-minded; they would grudge the smallest pittance to the needy in their distress. They would also want the cause narrowed down to meet their limited ideas. To save means would be the prominent idea with them. Their money would be more valuable to them than precious souls for whom Christ died. The lives of such, so far as God and heaven are concerned, are worse than a blank. God will not trust His important work with them.

“Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” What had Meroz done? Nothing. This was their sin. The curse of God came upon them for what they had not done. The man with a selfish, narrow mind is responsible for his niggardliness, but those who have kindly affections, generous impulses, and a love for souls are laid under weighty responsibilities; for if they allow these talents to remain unemployed and to waste they are classed with unfaithful servants. The mere possession of these gifts is not enough. Those who have

them should realize that their obligations and responsibilities are increased.

The Master will require each of His stewards to give an account of his stewardship, to show what he has gained with the talents entrusted to him. Those to whom rewards are given will impute no merit to themselves for their diligent trading; they will give all the glory to God. They speak of that which was delivered to them, as “Thy pound,” not their own. When they speak of their gain, they are careful to state whence it came. The capital was advanced by the Master. They have traded upon it successfully, and return the principal and interest to the Giver. He rewards their efforts as if the merit belonged to them, when they owe all to the grace and mercy of the bountiful Giver. His words of unqualified approval fall upon their ears: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

[285]

To you, my sister, are committed talents of influence and talents of money; and your responsibility is great. You should move cautiously and in the fear of God. Your wisdom is weakness, but the wisdom from above is strong. The Lord designs to enlighten your darkness and again give you a glimpse of the heavenly treasure, that you may have some sense of the comparative value of both worlds, and then leave you to choose between this world and the eternal inheritance. I saw that there was yet opportunity to return to the fold. Jesus has redeemed you by His own blood, and He requires you to employ your talents in His service. You have not become hardened to the influence of the Holy Spirit. When the truth of God is presented, it meets a response in your heart.

I saw that you should study every move. You should do nothing rashly. Let God be your counselor. He loves your children, and it is right that you should love them; but it is not right to give them the place in your affections that the Lord claims. They have kind impulses and generous purposes. They possess noble traits of character. If they would only see their need of a Saviour, and bow at the foot of the cross, they might exert an influence for good. They are now lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. They now stand in the enemy's ranks, under the black banner of Satan. Jesus invites

[286]

them to come to Him, to leave the ranks of the enemy, and to stand under the bloodstained banner of the cross of Christ.

This will look to them like a work they cannot perform, for it will require too much self-denial. They have no experimental knowledge of the way. Those who have engaged in their country's warfare, and been subjected to the hardships, toils, and perils of a soldier's life, should be the last to hesitate and manifest cowardice in this great warfare for everlasting life. In this case they will be fighting for a crown of life and an immortal inheritance. Their wages will be sure, and when the war is over their gain will be everlasting life, happiness unalloyed, and an eternal weight of glory.

Satan will oppose every effort they may make. He will present the world before them in its most attractive light, as he did to the Saviour of the world when he tempted Him forty days in the wilderness. Christ overcame all the temptations of Satan, and so may your children. They are serving a hard master. The wages of sin is death. They cannot afford to sin. They will find it expensive business. They will meet with eternal loss in the end. They will lose the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love Him, and will lose that life which measures with the life of God. And this is not all. They must suffer the wrath of an offended God for having withheld from Him their service and given all their efforts to His worst enemy. Your children have not yet had the clear light, and condemnation only follows the rejection of light.

[287] If professed Christians were all sincere and earnest in their efforts to promote the glory of God, what a stir would be made in the enemy's ranks. Satan is earnest and sincere in his work. He does not want souls saved. He does not want his power upon them broken. Satan does not merely pretend. He is in earnest. He beholds Christ inviting souls to come to Him that they may have life, and he is earnest and zealous in his efforts to prevent them from accepting the invitation. He will leave no means untried to prevent them from leaving his ranks and standing in the ranks of Christ. Why cannot the professed followers of Jesus do as much for Him as His enemies do against Him? Why not do all they can? Satan does all he can to keep souls from Christ. He was once an honored angel in heaven, and although he has lost his holiness, he has not lost his power. He exerts his power with terrible effect. He does not wait for his prey to come

to him. He hunts for it. He goes to and fro in the earth like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He does not always wear the ferocious look of the lion, but when he can work to better effect he transforms himself into an angel of light. He can readily exchange the roar of the lion for the most persuasive arguments or for the softest whisper. He has legions of angels to aid him in his work. He often conceals his snares, and allures by pleasing deception. He charms and deludes many by flattering their vanity. Through his agents he presents the pleasures of the world in an attractive light, and strews the path to hell with tempting flowers, and thus souls are charmed and ruined. After every advance step in the downward road, Satan has some special temptation to lead them still further on the wrong track.

If your children were controlled by religious principles, they would be fortified against the vice and corruption surrounding them in this degenerate age. God will be to them a tower of strength, if they will put their trust in Him. "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." The Lord will be the guide of their youth if they will believe and trust in Him.

My dear sister, the Lord has been very merciful to you and your family. You are laid under obligation to your heavenly Father to praise and glorify His holy name upon the earth. In order to continue in His love, you should labor constantly for humbleness of mind and that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. Your strength in God will increase while you consecrate all to Him; so that you can say with confidence: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

[288]

Chapter 40—Self-Deceived Youth

Brother O,

I have been shown in vision the dangers of youth. Your case was presented before me. I saw that you had not adorned your profession. You might have done good, and your example might have been a blessing to the youth with whom you have associated; but, alas! your inmost soul has not been converted to God. If you had taken the course a consistent Christian should, your relatives and friends would have been influenced by your godly course to follow in your footsteps. My brother, your heart is not right with God; your thoughts are not elevated; you permit your mind to run in a wrong channel. Your morals have not taken a pure, elevated tone. Your habits have been such as to injure your physical health and have been death to spirituality. You cannot prosper in religious things until you are converted.

[289]

When you realize the transforming influence of the power of God upon your heart, it will be seen in your life. You have lacked a religious experience, but it is not too late for you now to seek God with earnest, heartfelt cries: “What shall I do to be saved?” You can never be a true Christian until you are thoroughly converted. You have been a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. You have been seeking after pleasure, but have you found real enjoyment in this course? You have sought to make yourself agreeable to young, inexperienced girls. You have had your mind so much upon them that you could not direct it upward to God and heaven. “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” This exhortation is applicable to you. You need to learn the ways, the will and works of God. You need pure and undefiled religion; you need to cultivate devotional feelings. Cease to do evil, and learn to do well. The blessing of God cannot rest upon you until you become more like Christ.

I am pained as I see the lack of godliness with the young. Satan takes the mind and turns it in a channel which is corrupt. A self-

deception is upon many of the young. They think they are Christians, but they have never been converted. Until this work shall be wrought in them, they will not understand the mystery of godliness. There is no peace to the wicked. God requires truth and sincerity of heart. He sees and pities you, and all the youth who are eagerly following childish toys and wasting short, precious time for things of no value. Christ has bought you at a dear price, and offers you grace and glory if you will receive it; but you turn from the precious promise of the gift of everlasting life, to the meager and unsatisfactory pleasures of earth.

Your labor in this direction will bring no profit, but great loss. The wages of sin is death. Life and heaven are before you, but you seem not to know their value. You have not meditated upon the precious things of heaven. If the inestimable love of Christ be turned from, if heaven and glory and everlasting life be considered of little value, what motive can we present to move? what inducement to charm? Will foolish sports and a round of exciting pleasures attract the mind, and separate from God, and deaden the heart to His fear?

[290]

Oh, I beg of you who have so little interest in holy things, to closely investigate your own heart. What plea will you make before God for your worldly, unconsecrated life? In that dread day you will have no plea to make. You will be speechless. Think, oh, think, in your pleasure-seeking hours, that all these things have an end. Did you have correct views of life, endless life with God, how quickly would you turn from a life of pleasure and sin. How quickly would you change your mind, your course, and your company, and turn the strength of your affection to God and heavenly things. How resolutely would you scorn to yield to temptations which have deceived and captivated you. How zealous would be your efforts for the blessed life; how earnest and persevering your prayers to God for His grace to abide upon you, for His power to sustain you and help you resist the devil. How diligent would you be to improve every religious privilege to learn the ways and will of God. How careful would you be in meditating upon the law of God, and in comparing your life with its claims. How fearful would you be lest you sin in word or deed, and how earnest to grow in grace and true holiness. Your conversation would not be on trifling things, but in heaven. Then glorious and eternal things would open before you,

[291] and you would not rest until you should increase more and more in spirituality. But earthly things claim your attention, and God is forgotten. I implore you to face rightabout, and to seek the Lord, that He may be found of you; call upon Him while He is near.

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Chapter 41—True Conversion

Dear Brother P,

While at ----- one year ago, we labored for your interest. I had been shown your dangers, and we were desirous of saving you; but we see you have not had strength to carry out the resolutions there made. I am troubled over the matter, and fear that I was not as faithful as I should have been in bringing before you all I knew of your case. Some things I withheld from you. While in Battle Creek in June, I was again shown that you were not making any advance, and that the reason you were not is that you have not made a clean track behind you. You do not enjoy religion. You have departed from God and righteousness. You have been seeking happiness in the wrong way, in forbidden pleasures; and you have not moral courage to confess and forsake your sins that you may find mercy.

You did not view sin as heinous in the sight of God, and put it away; you failed to make thorough work; and when the enemy came in with his temptations, you did not resist him. Had you seen how offensive sin was in the sight of God, you would not have so readily yielded to temptation. You were not so thoroughly converted as to abhor your life of sin and folly. Sin yet seemed pleasant to you, and you were loath to yield up its delusive pleasures. Your inmost soul was not converted, and you soon lost that which you had gained.

Personal vanity in your case, as well as in that of many others, has been a special hindrance to you. You have ever had a love of praise. This has been a snare to you. Your professed friends have shown a special pleasure in your society, and this has gratified you. Weak-minded, sympathetic women have praised you and appeared charmed with your society; and you have felt a fascinating power upon you in their company. You did not realize, while spending in pleasure seeking those hours which belonged to your family, that Satan was weaving his net about your feet.

Satan has temptations laid for every step of your life. You have not been as economical of means as you should have been. You

[292]

hate stinginess. This is all right; but you go to the opposite extreme, and your course has been marked with prodigality. Christ taught His disciples a lesson in feeding the five thousand. He wrought a great miracle and fed that vast multitude with five loaves and two small fishes. After all had been satisfied, He did not then regard the fragments indifferently, as if it were beneath His dignity to notice them. He who had power to work so notable a miracle, and to give food to so large a company, said to His disciples: "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." This is a lesson to us all, and one which we should not disregard.

You have a great work before you, and you cannot afford to waste another moment without taking hold of it. Brother P, I am alarmed for you; but I know that God loves you still, although your course has been wayward. If He did not have a special love for you He would not present your dangers before me as He has. You have engaged in jesting and sporting with men and women who have not the fear of God before them. Weak-headed and unprincipled women have retained you in their presence, and you were like a charmed bird. You seemed fascinated by these superficial persons. Angels of God were upon your track and have faithfully recorded every wrong act, every instance of departure from virtue's path.

[293] Yes, every act, however secret you may have thought you were in its committal, has been open to God, to Christ, and to the holy angels. A book is written of all the doings of the children of men. Not an item of this record can be concealed. There is only one provision made for the transgressor. Faithful repentance and confession of sin, and faith in the cleansing blood of Christ, will bring forgiveness, and pardon will be written against his name.

O my brother, had you made thorough work one year ago, the past precious year need not have been to you worse than a blank. You knew your Master's will, but did it not. You are in a perilous condition. Your sensibilities have been blunted to spiritual things; you have a violated conscience. Your influence is not to gather, but to scatter. You have no special interest in religious exercises. You are not a happy man. Your wife would unite her interest with the people of God if you would get out of her way. She needs your help. Will you take hold of this work together?

Last June I saw that your only hope of breaking the chain of your bondage was a removal from your associates. You had yielded to Satan's temptations until you were a weak man. You were a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God, and were fast traveling the downward path. I have been disappointed that you have continued in the same indifferent state in which you have been for years. You have known and experienced the love of God; and it has been your delight to do His will. You have delighted in the study of the word of God. You have been punctual at the prayer meetings. Your testimony has been from a heart which felt the quickening influences of the love of Christ. But you have lost your first love.

God now calls upon you to repent, to be zealous in the work. Your eternal happiness will be determined by the course you now pursue. Can you reject the invitations of mercy now offered? Can you choose your own way? Will you cherish pride and vanity, and lose your soul at last? The word of God plainly tells us that few will be saved, and that the greater number of those, even, who are called will prove themselves unworthy of everlasting life. They will have no part in heaven, but will have their portion with Satan, and experience the second death. [294]

Men and women may escape this doom if they will. It is true that Satan is the great originator of sin; yet this does not excuse any man for sinning; for he cannot force men to do evil. He tempts them to it, and makes sin look enticing and pleasant; but he has to leave it to their own wills whether they will do it or not. He does not force men to become intoxicated, neither does he force them to remain away from religious meetings; but he presents temptations in a manner to allure to evil, and man is a free moral agent to accept or refuse.

Conversion is a work that most do not appreciate. It is not a small matter to transform an earthly, sin-loving mind and bring it to understand the unspeakable love of Christ, the charms of His grace, and the excellency of God, so that the soul shall be imbued with divine love and captivated with the heavenly mysteries. When he understands these things, his former life appears disgusting and hateful. He hates sin, and, breaking his heart before God, he embraces Christ as the life and joy of the soul. He renounces his former pleasures. He has a new mind, new affections, new interest, new will; his sorrows, and desires, and love are all new. The lust of the

flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which have heretofore been preferred before Christ, are now turned from, and Christ is the charm of his life, the crown of his rejoicing. Heaven, which once possessed no charms, is now viewed in its riches and glory; and he contemplates it as his future home, where he shall see, love, and praise the One who hath redeemed him by His precious blood.

[295] The works of holiness, which appeared wearisome, are now his delight. The word of God, which was dull and uninteresting, is now chosen as his study, the man of his counsel. It is as a letter written to him from God, bearing the inscription of the Eternal. His thoughts, his words, and his deeds are brought to this rule and tested. He trembles at the commands and threatenings which it contains, while he firmly grasps its promises and strengthens his soul by appropriating them to himself. The society of the most godly is now chosen by him, and the wicked, whose company he once loved, he no longer delights in. He weeps over those sins in them at which he once laughed. Self-love and vanity are renounced, and he lives unto God, and is rich in good works. This is the sanctification which God requires. Nothing short of this will He accept.

I beg of you, my brother, to search your heart diligently and inquire: "What road am I traveling, and where will it end?" You have reason to rejoice that your life has not been cut off while you have no certain hope of eternal life. God forbid that you should longer neglect this work, and so perish in your sins. Do not flatter your soul with false hopes. You see no way to get hold again but one so humble that you cannot consent to accept it. Christ presents to you, even to you, my erring brother, a message of mercy: "Come; for all things are now ready." God is ready to accept you and to pardon all your transgressions, if you will but come. Though you have been a prodigal, and have separated from God and stayed away from Him so long, He will meet you even now. Yes; the Majesty of heaven invites you to come to Him, that you may have life. Christ is ready to cleanse you from sin when you lay hold upon Him. What profit have you found in serving sin? what profit in serving the flesh and the devil? Is it not poor wages you receive? Oh! turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?

[296] You have had many convictions, many pangs of conscience. You have had so many purposes and made so many promises, and yet you

linger and will not come to Christ that you may have life. Oh, that your heart may be impressed with a sense of this time, that you may now turn and live! Cannot you hear the voice of the True Shepherd in this message? How can you disobey? Trifle not with God, lest He leave you to your own crooked ways. It is life or death with you. Which will you choose? It is a fearful thing to contend with God and resist His pleadings. You may have the love of God burning upon the altar of your heart as you once felt it. You may commune with God as you have done in times past. If you will make a clean track behind you you may again experience the riches of His grace, and your countenance again express His love.

It is not required of you to confess to those who know not your sin and errors. It is not your duty to publish a confession which will lead unbelievers to triumph; but to those to whom it is proper, who will take no advantage of your wrong, confess according to the word of God, and let them pray for you, and God will accept your work, and will heal you. For your soul's sake, be entreated to make thorough work for eternity. Lay aside your pride, your vanity, and make straight work. Come back again to the fold. The Shepherd is waiting to receive you. Repent, and do your first works, and again come into favor with God.

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Chapter 42—Duties of the Husband and the Wife

Brother R,

[297] Last June your case was presented before me in vision. But I have been so constantly pressed with labor that I could not possibly write out the things shown me in regard to individual cases. I wish to write what I have to write, before I hear any account of matters in regard to your case; for Satan might suggest doubts to your mind. This is his work.

I was pointed back to your past life and was shown that God had been very merciful to you in enlightening your eyes to see His truth, in rescuing you from your perilous condition of doubt and uncertainty, and in establishing your faith and settling your mind upon the eternal truths of His word. He established your feet upon the Rock. For a season you felt grateful and humble, but for some time you have been separating yourself from God. When you were little in your own eyes, then you were beloved of God.

Music has been a snare to you. You are troubled with self-esteem; it is natural for you to have exalted ideas of your own ability. Teaching music has been an injury to you. Many women have confided their family difficulties to you. This has also been an injury to you. It has exalted you and led you to still greater self-esteem.

In your own family you have occupied a dignified and rather haughty position. There are defects in your wife, of which you are aware. They have led to bad results. She is not naturally a house-keeper. Her education in this direction must be acquired. She has improved some, and should apply herself earnestly to make greater improvement. She lacks order, taste, and neatness in housekeeping and also in dress. It would be pleasing to God if she should train her mind upon these things wherein she lacks. She does not have good government in her family. She is too yielding, and fails to maintain her decisions. She is swayed by the desires and claims of her children, and yields her judgment to theirs. Instead of trying to improve in these respects, as it is her duty to do, she is glad

of an opportunity or an excuse to release herself from home cares and responsibilities, and permits others to perform the duties in her family that she should educate herself to love to do. She cannot perform her part as a wife and mother until she shall educate herself in this direction. She lacks confidence in herself. She is timid and retiring, and distrustful of herself. She has a very poor opinion of what she does, and this discourages her from doing more. She needs encouragement; she needs words of tenderness and affection. She has a good spirit. She is meek and quiet, and the Lord loves her; yet she should make thorough efforts to correct these evils which tend to make her family unhappy. Practice in these things will give her confidence in her own ability to perform her duties aright. [298]

You and your wife are opposite in your organizations. You love order and neatness, and have a nice taste, and quite good government. As a husband, you are rather stiff and stern. You fail to take a course to encourage confidence and familiarity in your wife. Her deficiencies have led you to regard her as inferior to yourself, and have also caused her to feel that you thus regard her. God esteems her more highly than yourself; for your ways are crooked before Him. For the sake of her husband and children, and for other reasons, she should seek to correct her deficiencies and to improve in those things wherein she now fails. She can do it if she will try hard enough.

God is displeased with disorder, slackness, and a lack of thoroughness, in anyone. These deficiencies are serious evils and tend to wean the affections of the husband from the wife when the husband loves order, well-disciplined children, and a well-regulated house. A wife and mother cannot make home agreeable and happy unless she possesses a love for order, preserves her dignity, and has good government; therefore all who fail on these points should begin at once to educate themselves in this direction and cultivate the very things wherein is their greatest lack. Discipline will do much for those who are lacking in these essential qualifications. Sister R gives up to these failings, and thinks that she cannot do otherwise than she does. After she has made a trial, and fails to see decided improvement in herself, she is discouraged. This must not be. The happiness of herself and her family depend upon her arousing herself, and working with earnestness and zeal to make a decided reformation in [299]

these things. She must put on confidence and decision; put on the woman. Her nature is to shrink from anything untried. No one can be more ready and willing than she to do, where she thinks she can succeed. If she fails in her new effort, she must try, try again. She can earn the respect of her husband and children.

I was shown that self-exaltation has caused Brother R to stumble. He has exercised a certain dignity, savoring of severity, in his family and toward his wife. This has shut her from him. She felt that she could not approach him, and has been in her married life, more like a child fearing a stern, dignified father, than like a wife. She has loved, respected, and idolized her husband notwithstanding his lack of encouraging her confidence. My brother, you should pursue a course that would encourage your timid, shrinking wife to lean upon your large affections, and this would give you a chance, in a delicate, affectionate manner, to correct the errors existing in her, as far as you are capable of so doing, and to inspire her with confidence in herself.

I was shown that you had not possessed that love for your wife that you should. Satan has taken advantage of her defects and your errors, to work for the destruction of your family. You have suffered shame of your wife to come into your heart, and your respect has grown less and less for her whom you vowed to love and cherish until death should part you.

[300]

Danger of Confiding Family Troubles

October 25, 1868, your case was again presented before me. I was shown that evil thoughts and unlawful desires have led to improper acts and to a violation of the commandments of God. You have dishonored yourself, your wife, and the cause of God. You could have exerted an influence for good in the cause of God. But the pursuance of a wrong course in matters that you thought were of little consequence has led to greater evils.

Brother R, you are now in danger of making total shipwreck of your faith. You have sinned greatly. But your sin in seeking to cover up, and blind the eyes of those who have suspected you of wrong, has been tenfold greater. All have not acted as prudently and with as much love and care as the Lord would have been pleased to have

them, in order to redeem you. But when you tried to put on an air of injured innocence, did you think that God could not see your wrong course? Did you think that He who made man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, could not discern the intents and purposes of the heart? You have thought that if you should confess your sin you would lose your honor—your life, as it were. You thought that your brethren would have no confidence in you. You have not viewed matters in the right light. It is a shame to sin, but always an honor to confess sin.

Angels of God have kept a faithful record of every act, however secret you may have thought you were in its committal. God discerns the purposes of man and all his works. Every man will be rewarded according as his works have been, whether good or evil. That which a man sows will he also reap. There will be no failure in the crop. The harvest is sure and plentiful. You have tried to blind your brethren in regard to your course. How could you do so, when you knew that you were guilty in the sight of God? If you value your soul's salvation, make thorough work for eternity.

[301]

You will have to make a clean track behind you by thorough confession. You need a thorough conversion—a transformation of self by the renewing of your mind. Your self-esteem must be overcome. You must learn to esteem others better than yourself. Your exalted opinion of your own acquirements must be given up, and you must obtain a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

You have possessed a spirit which has led you from the path of rectitude, and now you are troubled. Doubts, and fears, and despair seize you. There is but one way out, and that is by the way of confession. Your only hope is in falling on the Rock and being broken to pieces; if you do not, it will surely fall upon you and grind you to powder. You can now right your wrongs; you can now redeem the past. By a life of goodness and true humility you can yet walk with acceptance before God in your family. May the Lord help you, in view of the judgment, to work as for your life. Dear brother, I feel deeply interested for you. You have been walking in darkness for some time. You have not arrived at your present state of darkness all at once. You have been leaving the light gradually. You first became

exalted, and then, as you felt sufficient in your own strength, the Lord removed His strength from you.

[302] You have been interested in music. This has given incautious, unwise women opportunity, and they have confided their troubles to you. This has gratified your pride, but it has been a snare to you. It has opened a door for the suggestions of Satan. You have not done as you should. You had no right to hear in families that which has been spoken to you. These communications have corrupted your mind, increased your self-esteem, and led to evil thoughts. You have permitted yourself to be a confessor to some sentimental women who desired sympathy and wished to lean upon others. Had they possessed sound judgment and stood self-reliant, having an aim in life, loving to do others good, they would not have been in a condition where they needed to come to anyone for sympathy.

You know not the deceptions of the human heart. You know not the devices of Satan. Some who have drawn largely upon your sympathy have a sickly, diseased imagination, are lovesick, sentimental, ever eager to create a sensation and make a great ado. Some are dissatisfied with their married life. There is not enough romance in it. Novel reading has perverted all the good sense they ever had. They live in an imaginary world. Their imagination creates a husband for themselves such as exists only in romances found in novels. They talk of unrequited love. They are never contented or happy, because their imagination pictures to them a life that is unreal. When they face the reality, come down to the simplicity of real life, and take up life's burdens in their families, as is woman's lot, then they will find contentment and happiness.

You have cherished thoughts that were not right. These thoughts have borne fruit. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Your words are not always chaste, pure, and elevated. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." Guile is too often found in your mouth—low expressions that proceed from a heart cherishing corrupt thoughts and evil desires.

[303] For some time your feet have been turned from the path of rectitude and purity. You know that your course has been displeasing to God, that you are transgressing His holy law; you know that these things cannot be hid. God will not permit His people to be deceived in your case. Your great sin is in enlisting the sympathies

of those who do not understand your crooked course, and by thus doing dividing the judgment of the people who profess the truth. We pity you. My heart aches for you. I see nothing before you but perdition, nothing but utter shipwreck of faith.

Will you cover your sins and brave the matter out? God says you shall not prosper. But he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy. Will you choose death? Will you shut the kingdom of heaven against yourself because you will not yield your wicked pride? Your only hope is in confessing your backslidings. God has let light shine upon your pathway. Will you choose your own course of corruption? Will you cast the truth behind you because it will not sustain you in a course of iniquity? Oh, be entreated to “rend your heart, and not your garments.” Make thorough work for eternity. God will be merciful to you. He will be entreated in your behalf. He will not despise a broken and contrite spirit. Will you turn? Will you live? Your soul is worth saving; it is precious. We wish to help you.

I saw that you are not happy. You are not at rest. You feel distressed, and yet you refuse to take the only course that will bring you relief and hope. He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy. Your condition is deplorable, and you are greatly injuring the cause of God. Your influence will destroy others besides yourself.

If you refuse to come to God and confess your backslidings that He may heal you, there is nothing to be hoped for you or your poor family in the future. Misery will follow upon the steps of sin. God’s hand will be against you, and He will leave you to be controlled by Satan, to be led captive by him at his will. You know not to what lengths you may go. You will be like a man at sea without an anchor. The truth of God is an anchor. You are breaking away from that anchor. Your eternal interests are being sacrificed to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. You are on the point of breaking the bonds which would save you from utter destruction. In seeking to save your life by concealing your wrongs, you are losing it. If you now humble yourself before God, confess your wrongs, and return to Him with full purpose of heart, yours can yet be a happy family. If you will not do this, but choose your own way, your happiness is at an end.

You have a great work to do. You have been too slack in your deportment. Your words have not been elevated, chaste, and pure.

You have been separating from the divine, and cultivating the baser passions. The intellectual and noble powers of your mind have been brought into subjection to the animal passions. You have not pursued a right course for some time. You have not abstained from every appearance of evil. It is not safe for you to pursue this course any longer.

You have not loved your wife as you should. She is a good woman. She has seen, in a small measure, your danger. But you have closed your ears to her cautions. You have thought her jealous, but this is not her nature. She loves you, and will bear with you, and forgive and love you, notwithstanding the deep wrong you have done her, if you will only press to the light and make clean work of the past. You must have a thorough conversion. Unless you do, all your past efforts to obey the truth will not save you nor cover up your past wrongs. Jesus requires of you a thorough reformation; then He will help, and bless, and love you, and blot out your sins with His own most precious blood. You can redeem the past. You can correct your ways and yet be an honor to the cause of God. You can do good when you take hold of the strength of God and in His name work—work for your own salvation and for the good of others.

Yours can yet be a happy family. Your wife needs your help. She is like a clinging vine; she wants to lean upon your strength. You can help her and lead her along. You should never censure her. Never reprove her if her efforts are not what you think they should be. Rather encourage her by words of tenderness and love. You can help your wife to preserve her dignity and self-respect. Never praise the work or acts of others before her to make her feel her deficiencies. You have been harsh and unfeeling in this respect. You have shown greater courtesy to your hired help than to her and have placed them ahead of her in the house.

God loves your wife. She has suffered, but He has noticed all, marked all, and will not hold you guiltless for the wounds you have caused. It is neither wealth nor intellect that gives happiness. It is moral worth. True goodness is accounted of Heaven as true greatness. The condition of the moral affections determines the worth of the man. A person may have property and intellect, and yet be valueless, because the glowing fire of goodness has never burned upon the altar of his heart, because his conscience has been

seared, blackened, and crisped with selfishness and sin. When the lust of the flesh controls the man, and the evil passions of the carnal nature are permitted to rule, skepticism in regard to the realities of the Christian religion is encouraged, and doubts are expressed as though it were a special virtue to doubt.

The life of Solomon might have been remarkable until its close if virtue had been preserved. But he surrendered this special grace to lustful passion. In his youth he looked to God for guidance and trusted in Him, and God chose for him and gave him wisdom that astonished the world. His power and wisdom were extolled throughout the land. But his love of women was his sin. This passion he did not control in his manhood, and it proved a snare to him. His wives led him into idolatry, and when he began to descend the declivity of life, the wisdom that God had given him was removed; he lost his firmness of character and became more like the giddy youth, wavering between right and wrong. Yielding his principles, he placed himself in the current of evil, and thus separated himself from God, the foundation and source of his strength. He had moved from principle. Wisdom had been more precious to him than the gold of Ophir. But, alas! lustful passions gained the victory. He was deceived and ruined by women. What a lesson for watchfulness! What a testimony to the need of strength from God to the very last!

[306]

In the battle with inward corruptions and outward temptations, even the wise and powerful Solomon was vanquished. It is not safe to permit the least departure from the strictest integrity. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." When a woman relates her family troubles, or complains of her husband, to another man, she violates her marriage vows; she dishonors her husband and breaks down the wall erected to preserve the sanctity of the marriage relation; she throws wide open the door and invites Satan to enter with his insidious temptations. This is just as Satan would have it. If a woman comes to a Christian brother with a tale of her woes, her disappointments and trials, he should ever advise her, if she must confide her troubles to someone, to select sisters for her confidants, and then there will be no appearance of evil whereby the cause of God may suffer reproach.

Remember Solomon. Among many nations there was no king like him, beloved of his God. But he fell. He was led from God and

[307] became corrupt through the indulgence of lustful passions. This is the prevailing sin of this age, and its progress is fearful. Professed Sabbathkeepers are not clean. There are those who profess to believe the truth who are corrupt at heart. God will prove them, and their folly and sin shall be made manifest. None but the pure and lowly can dwell in His presence. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” “Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”

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Chapter 43—Letter to an Orphan Boy

Dear Friend,

In the last vision given me, I saw that you had faults to correct. It is necessary for you to see these before you will make the required effort to correct them. You have much to learn before you can form a good, Christian character which God can approve. From your childhood you have been a wayward boy, disposed to have your own way and to follow your own mind. You have not loved to yield your wishes and will to those who have had the care of you. This is the experience you must obtain.

Your danger is increased by the spirit of independence and self-confidence—connected, as of course it must be, with inexperience—which young men of your age are apt to assume when they have not their own dear parents to watch over them and stir the tender chords of affection in the soul. You feel that it is time for you to think and act for yourself. “I am a young man, and no longer a child. I am capable of discriminating between right and wrong. I have rights, and I will stand for them. I am capable of forming my own plans of action. Who has authority to interfere with me?” These have been some of your thoughts, and you are encouraged in them by youth who are about your age. [308]

You feel that you may assert your liberty and act like a man. These feelings and thoughts lead to wrong action. You have not a submissive spirit. Wise is that young man and highly blest who feels it to be his duty, if he has parents, to look up to them, and if he has not, who regards his guardian, or those with whom he lives, as counselors, as comforters, and in some respects as his rulers, and who allows the restraints of his home to abide upon him. Independence of one kind is praiseworthy. To desire to bear your own weight, and not to eat the bread of dependence, is right. It is a noble, generous ambition that dictates the wish to be self-supporting. Industrious habits and frugality are necessary.

You have been placed in unfavorable circumstances for the development of a good Christian character; but you are now placed where you may build up a reputation, or blast it. The latter we do not believe you will do. But you are not secure from temptation. In one single hour you may take a course which will afterward cost you bitter tears of repentance. By yielding to temptation, you may estrange hearts from you, lose the respect and esteem you have been acquiring from those around you, and also stain your Christian character. You have the lesson of submission to learn. You consider it beneath you to do duties about the house—chores and little errands. [309] You have a positive dislike for these little requirements; but you should cultivate a love for these very things to which you are so averse. Until you do this, you will not be acceptable help anywhere. When engaged in these necessary small things, you are doing more real service than when engaged in large business and in laborious work.

I have a case now in mind of one who was presented before me in vision who neglected these little things and could not interest himself in small duties, seeking to lighten the work of those indoors; it was too small business. He now has a family, but he still possesses the same unwillingness to engage in these small yet important duties. The result is, great care rests upon his wife. She has to do many things, or they will be left undone; and the amount of care which comes upon her because of her husband's lack is breaking her constitution. He cannot now overcome this evil as easily as he could in his youth. He neglects the little duties and fails to keep everything up tidy and nice, therefore cannot make a successful farmer. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Naaman the Syrian consulted the prophet of God as to how he could be cured of a loathsome disease, the leprosy. He was bidden to go and bathe in Jordan seven times. Why did he not immediately follow the directions of Elisha, the prophet of God? Why did he refuse to do as the prophet commanded? He went to his servants, murmuring. In his mortification and disappointment he became passionate, and in a rage refused to follow the humble course marked out by the prophet of God. "I thought," said he, "he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the

Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.” His servant said: “My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some *great thing*, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash [merely], and be clean?” Yes, this great man considered it beneath his dignity to go to the humble river Jordan, and wash. The rivers he mentioned and desired were beautified by surrounding trees and groves, and idols were placed in these groves. Many flocked to these rivers to worship their idol gods; therefore it would have cost him no humility. But it was following the specified directions of the prophet which would humble his proud and lofty spirit. Willing obedience would bring the desired result. He washed, and was made whole. [310]

Your case is similar in some respects to Naaman’s. You do not consider that in order to perfect a Christian character you must condescend to be faithful in the littles. Although the things you are called to do may be of small account in your eyes, yet they are duties which you will have to do just as long as you live. A neglect of these things will make a great deficiency in your character. You, my dear boy, should educate yourself to faithfulness in small things. You cannot please God unless you do this. You cannot gain love and affection unless you do just as you are bidden, with willingness and pleasure. If you wish those with whom you live to love you, you must show love and respect for them.

It is your duty to do all in your power to lighten the cares of the sister with whom you live. You see her, pale and feeble, cooking for a large family. Every extra job she has to perform wears upon her and lessens her vitality. She has no young hands and feet to perform little errands. They received you into their family, as they told you and us at the time, expressly to do these things. Now if you neglect to do the very things they think will help them most, and choose to follow your will in an independent course of your own choosing, you must lose your place, and they must have one that will do the very things you consider too small for you to do. You are now doing larger and heavier work than your strength will admit. You love to do the work of a man. You have a set will of your own which must be given up. You must die to self, crucify self, gain the victory over [311]

self. You cannot be a true follower of Christ unless you take hold of this work resolutely.

I saw that you do not naturally possess reverence and respect for those older than yourself. You should be faithful in the little errands and duties you are required to perform, and not go murmuringly about them as though they were a drug. You cannot see how unpleasant and unlovely you make yourself. You cannot thus be happy yourself, nor make those around you happy. You should bear in mind that God requires of you, as His servant, to be faithful, patient, kind, affectionate, obedient, and respectful. You cannot attain to Christian perfection unless you possess perfect control of your own spirit. You allow feelings to arise in your heart which are sinful, which are a great injury to you, and which tend to encourage a hard, defiant spirit, unlike the spirit of Christ, whose life you are commanded to imitate.

[312] My dear boy, commence anew, determined by God's help to follow the things which are true, lovely, and of good report. Let the fear of God, united with love and affection for all around you, be seen in all your actions. Be faithful and thorough; rid yourself of everything like slackness. Have a place for everything, and put everything in its place. Be accommodating, kind, cheerful, and agreeable. Then you can win your way into the hearts of those with whom you associate. One thing ever bear in mind: No young man can be possessed of a right spirit who does not respect women and seek to lighten their cares. It is the worst sign that can be found in a young man to consider it beneath him to lighten the labor of women. Such a man is marked. No woman would commit the keeping of her life to such a man; for he will never make a tender, careful, considerate husband.

The boy is the type of the man. I entreat of you to face rightabout. Do everything that needs to be done in the shape of small duties, disagreeable though they may be. Then you will have the approval of those around you, and, what is to be more highly prized, you will have the approval of God. You cannot be a Christian unless you are a faithful servant in that which is least. If you pray, and strive to do your best to perform every duty, God will bless and help you. When Jesus comes to take His faithful ones to Himself, do you wish to have Him say to you: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"? Do

you desire to have all imperfections removed from your character, that you may be found without fault before the throne of God? If so, you have a work to do for yourself which no one else can do for you. You have an individual responsibility before God. You can walk in the light, and daily receive strength from God to overcome every imperfection, and finally be among the faithful, true, and holy in the kingdom of God. Yield not to temptation. Satan will annoy you and seek to control your mind, that he may lead you into sin. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you."

Remember that the eye of God is ever upon you. When you answer disrespectfully, God sees and hears you. The time is coming when all shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body. You will have a part to act in the judgment. Jesus will either receive or reject you. Flee to Him for strength and grace. He desires to help you, to be the guide of your youth, and to so strengthen you that you can bless others with your influence. God loves you and will save you if you come in His appointed way; but if you rebel and choose your own course, it will be to your eternal loss. Pray much, for prayer is one of the most essential duties. Without it you cannot maintain a Christian walk. It elevates, strengthens, and ennoble; it is the soul talking with God.

[313]

Do not think you can cease your efforts or vigilance for a moment; you cannot. Study God's word diligently, that you may not be ignorant of Satan's devices, and that you may learn the way of salvation more perfectly. Your will must be submerged in God's will. Seek not your own pleasure, but that of those around you; and in so doing you cannot but be happy. Come to Jesus with all your needs and wants, and in simple confidence crave His blessing. Trust in God, and seek to move from principle, strengthened and ennobled by high resolves and a determination of purpose found only in God.

You should not be easily provoked. Let not your heart become selfish, but let it expand with love. You have a work to do which you must not neglect. Endure hardship as a good soldier. Jesus is acquainted with every conflict, every trial, and every pang of anguish. He will help you; for He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet He sinned not. Go to Him, dear boy, with your burdens. Take no one into your confidence, and tell no one your difficulties, but us. Make

Jesus your Burden Bearer, and seek a more thorough experience in religious things. God help and bless you, is my sincere prayer.

[314] My tenderest sympathies are aroused for orphans. You indeed have no home. The grave has taken your father and your mother, and the home of your childhood others inhabit. You cannot have as distinct recollections of your godly father as of your mother. You remember that you sometimes grieved her. You had not learned submission; you have yet but partially learned the lesson. But the prayers of your parents, that you may be among those who love and fear God, have found a lodgment in heaven.

Oh, this is a cold and selfish world! Your relatives, who should have loved and befriended you for your parents' sake if not for your own, have shut themselves up in their selfishness, and have no special interest for you. But God will be nearer and dearer to you than any of your earthly relatives can be. He will be your friend and will never leave you. He is a father to the fatherless. His friendship will prove sweet peace to you and will help you to bear your great loss with fortitude. Seek to make God your father, and you will never want a friend. You will be exposed to trials; yet be steadfast, and strive to adorn your profession. You will need grace to stand, but God's pitying eye is upon you. Pray much and earnestly, believing that God will help you. Guard against irritability and petulance, and a spirit of tantalizing. Forbearance is a virtue which you need to encourage. Seek for piety of heart. Be a consistent Christian. Possess a love of purity and humble simplicity, and let these be interwoven with your life.

By educating yourself to fear God, and to love all around you, yours can be a useful, happy life, and your example can be such as to lead others to choose the humble path of holiness. Have moral courage at all times to do right and to honor your Redeemer. I implore you, dear boy, to seek true holiness.

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Chapter 44—The Unruly Member

Dear Sister S,

Some things have been shown me in reference to you. You have not a sense of your true state. You need a deep and thorough work of grace in your heart. You need to set your heart and your house in order. Your example in your family is not worthy of imitation. You come up to a low standard, but fail to reach the standard elevated by our divine Lord. You love to visit and talk, and you say many things unbecoming a Christian. Your statements are exaggerated and frequently come far from the truth. Your words and acts will judge you in the last day. By them you will be justified or by them condemned. Your education has not been of an ennobling character, therefore there is the greatest necessity of your now training and educating yourself to purity of thought and action. Train your thoughts so that it will be easy for them to dwell upon pure and holy things. Cultivate a love for spirituality and true godliness.

[315]

Your conversation is often of a low order. You are deceiving your own soul, and this delusion will prove fatal unless you arouse to see yourself as you are and turn unto God with true humbleness of mind. You are inclined to be deceptive. Your son has not an experimental knowledge of God or of the sacred claims of truth. He is flattered by his parents that he is a Christian, but he is a most miserable representative of Sabbathkeeping Christians. God forbid that we acknowledge such as being Christlike. You do not discipline your boy. He is self-willed and bigoted. He has but very little sense of true courtesy or even common politeness. He is rough and uncultivated, unloving and unlovable. You represent to others that he is a Christian, and by so doing you disgrace the cause of Christ. This boy is in a fair way of becoming an educated hypocrite. He has no control over himself, yet you flatter him that he is a Christian.

The work of reform must commence with you. You should become chaste in conversation, and a keeper at home, loving home duties, loving your husband and child. You should study to econo-

[316] mize your time so as not to overtax your strength. The light burden of home duties which you have to perform you can bear without overtaxation if you exercise perseverance and proper diligence. But you have a work to do to control the tongue. It is a little member and boasteth great things, but it needs the bridle of grace and the bit of self-control to keep it from running at random. Your conversation is of a low order, and you indulge in much cheap talk. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

May the Lord convict you of these things as you read these lines. I entreat of you to put on the meek dignity of a wife and mother. There is a responsibility resting upon the father. Your efforts should be united to control your son, who is fast traveling the road to perdition. You should earnestly seek for the inward adorning, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. With patience, grace, and sweet humility you can teach your poor, deceived boy the first principles of Christianity, and true politeness, or Christian courtesy. You are frequently hasty and boisterous. Oh, how important that you see the work to be done for you, before it shall be forever too late! Now Jesus invites you to come to Him, and to learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart. The promise He has given you is sure, that you will find rest in Him. You have a great work to do. Deceive not your own souls, but examine yourselves as in the light of eternity. It is impossible for you to be saved as you are.

[317] Sister S, your husband might be of some use in the church if your influence were what it ought to be. But your example and influence disqualify him to exert a sanctifying influence in the church. Home influences more than counteract his efforts for good. You are wholly unqualified to be the wife of an elder of the church. God calls upon you to reform. Your husband has a work to do to set his heart and house in order. When he is converted, then can he strengthen his brethren.

As a family, you need to be sanctified through the truth. Dear sister, will you see the work to be done for you and take hold of it without delay, that your influence may be saving? Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. "Let your speech be always

with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any *virtue*, and if there be any *praise*, think on these things.”

There are enough profitable subjects upon which to meditate and converse. The conversation of the Christian should be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour. Meditation upon heavenly things is profitable, and will ever be accompanied with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Our calling is holy, our profession exalted. God is purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He is sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver. When the dross and tin are removed, then His image will be perfectly reflected in us. Then the prayer of Christ for His disciples will be answered in us: “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.” When the truth has a sanctifying influence upon our hearts and lives, we can render to God acceptable service and can glorify Him upon the earth, being partakers of the divine nature and having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Oh, how many will be found unready when the Master shall come to reckon with His servants! Many have meager ideas of what constitutes a Christian. Self-righteousness will then be of no avail. Only those can stand the test who shall be found having on the righteousness of Christ, who are imbued with His spirit, and walk even as He walked, in purity of heart and life. The conversation must be holy, and then the words will be seasoned with grace.

[318]

May the Lord help you as a family to get right, to be elevated in life, and in all your acts to honor your profession.

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Chapter 45—Comfort in Affliction

Dear Sister T,

I have learned of your affliction, and hasten to pen a few lines. My dear sister, I have the very best of evidence that the Lord loves you. In the last view given me, I was shown your case among others. I saw that you had been affected in the past with the course of error which others had pursued; but while strictly conscientious, and ever anxious to know the right, you were extremely sensitive and viewed your case as worse than it was.

You have been afflicted with disease for quite a length of time. You are a nervous dyspeptic. The brain is closely connected with the stomach, and its power has so often been called to aid the weakened digestive organs that it is in its turn weakened, depressed, congested. While in this state, your mind is gloomy, naturally dwelling upon the dark side, imagining that the frown of God is upon you. You have thought that your life has been useless, that it has been filled with errors and wrong moves. Dear sister, your diseased state of health leads you to this despondency and discouragement. God has not left you; His love is yet toward you. I saw that you should trust in Him as a child trusts itself in the arms of its mother. God is merciful and kind, and full of tender pity and compassion. He has not turned His face from you.

[319] You are extremely sensitive. You feel deeply and have not possessed the power to throw off care, perplexity, and discouragement of mind. I saw that God would be to you a very present help if you would only trust yourself with Him; but you worry yourself out of the arms of your dear, loving Saviour. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” What a precious promise is this! We may claim much of our kind heavenly Father. Great blessings are in reserve for us. We may believe in God, we may trust Him, and by so doing glorify His name. Even if we are overcome of the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is

at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

I want to say, my sister, you need not cast away your confidence. Poor, trembling soul, rest in the promises of God. In so doing, the enemy's fetters will be broken, his suggestions will be powerless. Heed not the whisperings of the enemy. Go free, oppressed soul. Be of good courage. Say to your poor, desponding heart: "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." I know that God loves you. Put your trust in Him. Think not of those things which bring sadness and distress; turn from every disagreeable thought and think of precious Jesus. Dwell upon His power to save, His undying, matchless love for you, even you. I know that the Lord loves you. If you cannot rely upon your own faith, rely upon the faith of others. We believe and hope for you. God accepts our faith in your behalf.

You have tried to do right, and God is pitiful and compassionate to you. Be cheerful, and bid adieu to gloom and doubts. In indulging these doubts, you dishonor God. There is peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Believing brings peace, and trusting in God brings joy. Believe, believe! my soul says, believe. Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to His trust. He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him who hath loved you. May the Lord bless you and strengthen your trembling faith, is our prayer. We commit these few lines to you, trusting they may do you good.

[320]

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Chapter 46—A Self-Caring, Dictatorial Spirit

Dear Brother U,

I was shown in the last vision that you would need to watch yourself with jealous care, or your peculiar temperament would control you. You erred while engaged in praying for Sister V, and took upon yourself the same dictatorial, overbearing spirit which has been the curse of your life. You bore down on Brother W when, considering your failures in the past, you should have been unassuming and modest. It will be very difficult for you to overcome the habit of watching others, and noticing little things, and speaking out in a decided, censuring manner. All this you have nothing to do with. Just as sure as you are overcome in a small degree in this direction, the door is open for a greater failure. There is no safety for you but in constantly controlling yourself and possessing your soul in patience. You cannot accomplish any great work, but, if right, may do a little good in the cause of God. But your influence need not injure; if you are guarded and sanctified to God, you may be able to speak a peaceful word of comfort and to bear testimony to the great riches of God and the undying love of Jesus.

[321] Let your heart be softened and melted under the divine influence of the Spirit of God. You should not talk so much about yourself, for this will strengthen no one. You should not make yourself a center, and imagine that you must be constantly caring for yourself and leading others to care for you. Get your mind off from yourself into a more healthy channel. Talk of Jesus, and let self go; let it be submerged in Christ, and let this be the language of your heart: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Jesus will be to you a present help in every time of need. He will not leave you to battle with the powers of darkness alone. Oh, no; He has laid help upon One that is mighty to save to the uttermost.

Be not self-caring. Overcome your notions, your little peculiarities, and seek only to represent Jesus. When talking or praying in meeting, do not be too lengthy. You have failed here. You can

remedy this. Lengthy speaking and praying is injurious to yourself and is no benefit to those who hear. You will have close work to be an overcomer. Yet you can do it if you engage in the work calmly. Here you need to guard yourself. You are uneasy, hurried, nervous. This you may also overcome.

You have an earnest, anxious desire to do right and meet the approval of God. Continue your earnest, persevering efforts, and be not discouraged. Be patient. Never censure. Never let the enemy beguile you from your watch. Watch as well as pray. After you pray, watch thereunto. The effort is your own; no one can do this work for you. Take hold of the strength of God, and as fast as you see your errors in the past, redeem the time.

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Chapter 47—A Forgetful Hearer

Dear Brother Y,

[322] In the last view given I was shown that you do not understand yourself. You have a work to do for yourself which no one can do for you. Your experience in the truth is short, and you have not been thoroughly converted. You place a higher estimate upon yourself than you will bear. I was pointed back to your past life. Your mind has not been elevated, but has dwelt upon subjects not calculated to lead to purity of action. You have had habits which were corrupt, and which have tainted your morals. You have been too familiar with the other sex, and have not possessed modesty of deportment. You would be well suited were there greater familiarity encouraged between men and women, much after Dr. A's theory. Your influence at ----- was not good. You were not a proper person for that place; your light and trifling conversation disqualified you to exert a good influence. The character of your music was not such as to encourage elevated thoughts or feelings, but rather to degenerate.

For some weeks in the past your influence has been improving; but you lack firmness of principle. You are deficient in many things, and in some things you must know where you fail. The follies of your youth have left their impress upon you; you can never recover what you have lost through impure habits. These things have so benumbed your sensibilities that sacred things are not clearly discerned. You cannot, with your present experience, resist temptation. You cannot endure trials. You are not sanctified through the truth. You have taken hold of the truth, but it has not taken hold upon you to transform you by the renewing of your mind. You are a self-deceived man. Oh, do not, I entreat you, remain deceived in regard to your true condition! You have not felt deep conviction because of your sins, and in humility sought the Lord with anguish of heart that your transgressions might be blotted out. You could not see that your ways were so sinful before God. Therefore the work of reformation has not been wrought in your soul.

You have clothed yourself with a self-righteous garment to cover up the deformity of sin; but this is not the remedy. You know not what true conversion is. The old man is not dead in you. You have a form of godliness, but not the cleansing power of God. You can and do talk and write smoothly, and as far as your words go, they may possibly be correct; but the true language of the heart is not spoken. You are enough acquainted with yourself to know this. Your case is perilous; yet God pities you, and will save you if you fall all broken at His feet, feeling your impurity and vileness, your rottenness of soul, without the transforming power of God. [323]

My brother, I do not wish to discourage you, but to lead you to investigate your motives and acts as in the light of eternity. Break away from Satan's snare. Do not, I beg of you, lead any person to think of you in a more elevated light than you can bear, for when this deception shall be removed, and your true self appear as you are, there will be a reaction. You do have convictions of the Spirit of God and feel the force of truth when you listen to it; but these sacred, softening impressions wear away, and you are a forgetful hearer. You are not established, strengthened, and settled in the truth. You have thought it best for your interest to adopt the truth, but you have not yet experienced its sanctifying influence. Now we would entreat of you, be not deceived, God is not mocked. It is not too late for you to become a Christian; but do not move by impulse. Weigh every move well, and deceive not your own soul.

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Chapter 48—Remedy for Sentimentalism

Dear Sister B,

[324] In the vision given me June 12 I was shown your case. You are in a sad state, not so much because of actual disease, although you are not well, but because of imaginary inability to labor. Several years ago I was shown that you suffered your mind to dwell too much upon the boys. You have frequently made them the theme of conversation, and your mind has run in a channel not profitable to your spiritual advancement. You have fallen into a train of thinking which has led to evil results. You have injured and abused your own body, and brought upon yourself an imbecile state of mind. You have indulged in a lovesick train of thought and feeling until you are almost ruined, soul and body. Your indisposition to exercise is very bad for you. Useful employment in bearing home burdens, and engaging in useful labor, would overcome this sickly, sentimental state of feeling sooner than any other means.

You have been sympathized with too much. To relieve you from all responsibility has been a very great mistake. Nearly all your thoughts are now upon yourself. You are fretful, and your mind dwells upon sad things, and pictures your condition as very bad, and you are even settling it in your mind that you can never get well unless you are married. In your present state of mind you are not fit to marry. There is no one who would wish you in your present helpless, useless condition. If one should fancy he loved you, he would be worthless; for no sensible man could think for a moment of placing his affections upon so useless an object.

The sad, gloomy state of your mind, which leads you to weep and feel that life is not desirable, is the result of allowing your thoughts to run in an impure channel, upon forbidden subjects, while you indulge habits that are steadily and surely undermining your constitution and preparing you for premature decay. It would have been far better for you had you never gone to -----. Your stay there injured you. You dwelt upon your infirmities, and mingled in

society which was corrupting in its influence. Miss C was a corrupt, evil-minded woman. Her association with you increased the evil which was already upon you. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” At the present time your condition is not acceptable in the sight of God; yet you imagine that you have no desire to live. But should you be taken at your expressed wish, and your life cease, your case would be hopeless indeed. You are neither prepared for this world nor the next.

[325]

You imagine that you cannot walk, or ride, or even exercise, and you settle into a cold, dead apathy. You are a grief and anxiety to your indulgent parents, and no comfort to yourself. You can rally, you can work, you can shake off this terrible indifference. Your mother needs your aid; your father needs the comfort you can give him; your brothers need a kindly care from their elder sister; your sisters need your instruction. But here you sit upon the stool of indolence, dreaming of unrequited love. For your own soul’s sake, have done with this folly. Read your Bible as you have never read it before. Engage in home duties, and lighten the cares of your overburdened, overworked parents. You may not be able to do a great amount at first, but every day increase the task you set yourself. This is the surest remedy for a diseased mind and an abused body.

If you possess earnestness and steadiness of purpose, your mind will come back, in a degree, to dwelling upon more healthful, pure subjects. Self-indulgence has degenerated by degrees into such a wantonness of will as knows not how to please itself. Instead of regulating your actions by reason and principle, you suffer yourself to be guided by every slight and momentary impulse. This makes you appear variable and inconstant. It is vain for others to seek to please you, for you could not please yourself, even if all your wishes were indulged. You are a capricious child and have become sick of yourself through very selfishness.

This wretched state is the result of unwise sympathy and flattery. You have had a very good mind, but it has become unbalanced by being directed in a wrong channel. You now amount to little else than a blank in society. This need not be. You can do for yourself that which no one else can do for you. You have duties to perform, but you have so long yielded to a helpless condition that you imagine

[326]

you cannot do them. The will is at fault; you have the power, but not the will.

You are pining for love. Jesus calls for your affections; if you will devote them to Him, He will rid you of all this sickly, sentimental, impure love, found in the pages of a novel. In Jesus you may love with fervor, with earnestness. This love may increase in depth and expand without limit, and not endanger health of body or strength of mind. You need love to God and to your neighbor. You must awake, you must shake off this deception which is upon you, and seek pure love.

Your only hope of this life and the better life is to seek earnestly for the true religion of Jesus. You have not a religious experience. You need to be converted. Your listless, indolent, selfish sadness will then give place to cheerfulness, which will be beneficial to body and mind. Love to God will ensure love to your neighbor, and you will engage in the duties of life with a deep, unselfish interest. Pure principles should underlie your actions. Inward peace will bring even your thoughts into a healthful channel. Devote yourself to God, or you will never gain the better life.

[327] You have duties to perform to your parents. You should not be discouraged if you become weary at first. It will not prove a lasting injury. Your parents frequently become exceedingly weary. It will not be half so injurious to you to become very weary in useful labor as for your mind to be dwelling upon yourself, fostering ailments and yielding to despondency. A faithful fulfillment of home duties, filling the position you can occupy to the best advantage, be it ever so simple and humble, is truly elevating. This divine influence is needed. In this there is peace and sacred joy. It possesses healing power. It will secretly and insensibly soothe the wounds of the soul, and even the sufferings of the body. Peace of mind, which comes from pure and holy motives and actions, will give free and vigorous spring to all the organs of the body.

Inward peace and a conscience void of offense toward God will quicken and invigorate the intellect like dew distilled upon the tender plants. The will is then rightly directed and controlled, and is more decided, and yet free from perverseness. The meditations are pleasing because they are sanctified. The serenity of mind which you may possess will bless all with whom you associate. This peace and

calmness will, in time, become natural, and will reflect its precious rays upon all around you, to be again reflected upon you. The more you taste this heavenly peace and quietude of mind, the more it will increase. It is an animated, living pleasure which does not throw all the moral energies into a stupor, but awakens them to increased activity. Perfect peace is an attribute of heaven which angels possess. May God help you to become a possessor of this peace.

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Chapter 49—Duty to Orphans

Dear Brother and Sister D,

Your late visit and conversation with us have suggested many thoughts, of which I cannot forbear placing a few upon paper. I was very sorry that E had not carried himself correctly at all times; yet, when you consider, you cannot expect perfection in youth at his age. Children have faults, and they need a great deal of patient instruction.

[328] That he should have feelings not always correct is no more than can be expected of a boy of his age. You must remember that he has no father or mother, no one to whom he can confide his feelings, his sorrows, and his temptations. Every person feels that he must have some sympathizer. This boy has been tossed about here and there, from pillar to post, and he may have many errors, many careless ways, with considerable independence, and he may lack reverence. But he is quite enterprising, and with right instruction and kind treatment, I have the fullest confidence that he would not disappoint our hopes, but would fully repay all the labor expended on him. Considering his disadvantages, I think he is a very good boy.

When we entreated you to take him we did it because we fully believed it was your duty and that in doing so you would be blessed. We did not expect that you would do this merely to be benefited by the help that you would receive from the boy, but to benefit him, to do a duty to the orphan—a duty which every true Christian should be seeking and anxiously watching to perform; a duty, a sacrificing duty, which we believed it would do you good to take up, if you did it cheerfully, with a view to being the instrument in the hands of God of saving a soul from the snares of Satan, of saving a son whose father devoted his precious life to pointing souls to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

From what was shown me, Sabbathkeeping Adventists have but a feeble sense of how large a place the world and selfishness hold in their hearts. If you have a desire to do good and glorify God, there

are many ways in which you can do it. But you have not felt that this was the result of true religion. This is the fruit which every good tree will produce. You have not felt that it was required of you to be interested in others, to make their cases your own, and to manifest an unselfish interest for the very ones who stand most in need of help. You have not reached out to help the most needy, the most helpless. Had you children of your own to call into exercise care, affection, and love, you would not be so much shut up to yourselves and to your own interests. If those who have no children, and whom God has made stewards of means, would expand their hearts to care for children who need love, care, and affection, and assistance with this world's goods, they would be far happier than they are today. So long as youth who have not a father's pitying care nor a mother's tender love are exposed to the corrupting influences of these last days, it is somebody's duty to supply the place of father and mother to some of them. Learn to give them love, affection, and sympathy. All who profess to have a Father in heaven, who they hope will care for them and finally take them to the home He has prepared for them, ought to feel a solemn obligation resting upon them to be friends to the friendless and fathers to the orphans, to aid the widows, and be of some practical use in this world by benefiting humanity. Many have not viewed these things in a right light. If they live merely for themselves, they will have no greater strength than this calls for. [329]

The youth who are growing up among us are not cared for as they should be. Some of the brethren must have duties which they are not willing and ready to see and perform. The fear of inconveniencing themselves is a sufficient excuse for many. The day of God will reveal unfulfilled duties—souls lost because the selfish would not take pains to interest themselves in their behalf.

I was shown that should professed Christians cultivate more affection and kind regard in caring for others, they would be repaid fourfold. God marks. He knows for what object we live, and whether our living is put to the very best account for poor, fallen humanity, or whether our eyes are eclipsed to everything but our own interest, and to everyone but our own poor selves. I entreat you, in behalf of Christ, in behalf of your own souls, and in behalf of the youth, not to think so lightly of this matter as many do. It is a grave, a serious thing, and affects your interest in the kingdom of Christ, [330]

inasmuch as the salvation of precious souls is involved. Why is it not a duty which God enjoins upon you who are able, to expend something for the benefit of the homeless, even though they may be ignorant and undisciplined? Shall you study to labor only in the direction where you will receive the most selfish pleasure and profit? It is not meet for you to neglect the divine favor that Heaven offers you if you will care for those who need your care, and thus let God knock in vain at your door. He stands there in the person of the poor, the homeless orphans, and the afflicted widows, who need love, sympathy, affection, and encouragement. If you do it not unto one of these, you would not do it unto Christ were He upon the earth.

Call to mind your former wretchedness, your spiritual blindness, and the darkness which enshrouded you before Christ, a tender, loving Saviour, came to your aid and reached you where you were. If you let these seasons pass without giving tangible proofs of your gratitude for this wonderful and amazing love which a compassionate Saviour exercised toward you, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, there is reason to fear that still greater darkness and misery will come upon you. Now is your sowing time. You will reap that which you sow. Avail yourselves while you may of every privilege of doing good. These privileges improved are as a passing shower, which will water and revive you. Lay hold of every opportunity within your reach of doing good. Idle hands will reap a small harvest. For what do older persons live but to care for the young and help the helpless? God has committed them to us who are older and have experience, and He will call us to account if our duties in this direction are neglected. What though our labor may not be appreciated! what though it prove a failure many times, and a success but once! This once will outweigh all the discouragements previously borne.

But few have a true sense of what is comprised in the word Christian. It is to be Christlike, to do others good, to be divested of all selfishness, and to have our lives marked with acts of disinterested benevolence. Our Redeemer throws souls into the arms of the church, for them to care for unselfishly and train for heaven, and thus be co-workers with Him. But the church too often thrusts them away, upon the devil's battlefield. One member will say, "It is not my

duty,” and then bring up some trifling excuse. “Well,” says another, “neither is it my duty;” and finally it is nobody’s duty, and the soul is left uncared for to perish. It is the duty of every Christian to engage in this self-denying, self-sacrificing enterprise. Cannot God return into their granaries and increase their flocks, so that instead of loss there shall be increase? “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.”

But every man’s work is to be tested, and brought into judgment, and he be rewarded as his works have been. “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty.” “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” Read the next verse, and notice the rich reward promised to those who do this. “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” Here is an abundantly precious promise for all who will interest themselves in the cases of those who need help. How can God come in and bless and prosper those who have no special care for anyone except themselves, and who do not use that which He has entrusted to them, to glorify His name on the earth?

[332]

Sister Hannah More is dead, and died a martyr to the selfishness of a people who profess to be seeking for glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life. Exiled from believers during the past cold winter, this self-sacrificing missionary died because no heart was bountiful enough to receive her. I blame no one. I am not judge. But when the Judge of all the earth shall make investigation, somebody will be found to blame. We are all narrowed up and consumed in our own selfishness. May God tear away this cursed covering and give us bowels of mercy, hearts of flesh, tenderness and compassion, is my prayer, offered from an oppressed, anguished soul. I am sure that a work must be done for us or we shall be found wanting in the day of God.

[333]

In regard to E, do not, I entreat of you, forget that he is a child, with only a child's experience. Do not measure him, a poor, weak, feeble boy, with yourselves and expect of him accordingly. I fully believe that it is in your power to do the right thing by this orphan. You can present inducements to him so that he will not feel that his task is cheerless, unrelieved by a ray of encouragement. You, my brother and sister, can enjoy yourselves in each other's confidence, you can sympathize with each other, interest and amuse each other, and tell your trials and burdens to each other. You have something to cheer you, while he is alone. He is a thinking boy, but has no one to confide in or to give him a cheering word amid his discouragements and severe trials, which I know he has as well as those more advanced in years.

If you shut yourselves up to each other, it is selfish love, unattended with Heaven's blessing. I have strong hope that you will love the orphan for Christ's sake, that you will feel that your possessions are but worthless unless employed in doing good. Do good; be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come that you may lay hold on eternal life. None will reap the reward of everlasting life but the self-sacrificing. A dying father and mother left their jewels to the care of the church to be instructed in the things of God and fitted for heaven. When these parents shall look about for their dear ones, and one is found missing because of neglect, what will the church answer? It is in a great degree responsible for the salvation of these orphan children.

In all probability you have failed to gain the boy's confidence and affection by not giving him more tangible proofs of your love by holding out some inducements. If you could not expend money you could at least in some way encourage him by letting him know you were not indifferent to his case. That the love and affection is to be all on one side is a mistake. How much affection have you educated yourselves to manifest? You are too much shut up to yourselves, and do not feel the necessity of surrounding yourselves with an atmosphere of tenderness and gentleness, which comes from true nobility of soul. Brother and Sister F left their children to the care of the church. They had plenty of wealthy relatives who wanted the children; but they were unbelievers, and if allowed to have the

care, or become the guardians, of the children, would lead their hearts away from the truth into error, and endanger their salvation. [334] Because these relatives were not allowed to take the children, they were dissatisfied, and have done nothing for them. The confidence of the parents in the church should be considered, and not be forgotten because of selfishness.

We have the deepest interest for these children. One has already developed a beautiful Christian character and married a minister of the gospel. And now, in return for the care and burdens borne for her, she is a true burden bearer in the church. She is sought unto for advice and counsel by the less experienced, and they seek not in vain. She possesses true Christian humility, with becoming dignity, which can but inspire respect and confidence in all who know her. These children are as near to me as my own. I shall not lose sight of them, nor cease my care for them. I love them sincerely, tenderly, affectionately.

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Chapter 50—Appeal to Ministers

October 2, 1868, I was shown the great and solemn work before us of warning the world of the coming judgment. Our example, if in accordance with the truth we profess, will save a few, and condemn the many, leaving them without excuse in the day when the cases of all will be decided. The righteous are to be prepared for everlasting life, and sinners, who will not become acquainted with the will and ways of God, are appointed to destruction.

[335] Not all who preach the truth to others are sanctified by it. Some have but faint views of the sacred character of the work. They fail to trust in God and to have all their works wrought in Him. Their inmost souls have not been converted. They have not in their daily life experienced the mystery of godliness. They are handling immortal truths, weighty as eternity, but are not careful and earnest to have these truths inwrought in their souls, made a part of themselves, so that they shall influence them in all they do. They are not so wedded to the principles which these truths inculcate that it is impossible to separate any part of the truth from them.

Sanctification of heart and life is alone acceptable with God. Said the angel, as he pointed to the ministers who are not right: “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” “Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.” God calls for integrity of soul; for truth in the inward parts, transforming the entire man by the renewing of the mind through the influences of the divine Spirit. Not all the ministers are devoted to the work; not all have put their hearts into it. They move as listlessly as though a temporal millennium were allowed them in which to work for souls. They shun burdens and responsibilities, care and privations. Self-denial, suffering, and weariness are not pleasant nor convenient. It is the study of some to save themselves from wearing labor. They study their own convenience and how to please themselves, their wives, and their children; and the work upon which they have entered is nearly lost sight of.

God calls for humiliation of soul and humble confessions from the ministers whose works have not been wrought in Him. I was cited to men who engage in worldly enterprises. They know that if they would gain their object they must suffer fatigue. They sacrifice ease and love of home, and endure privations; they are persevering, energetic, and ardent. Our ministers do not all manifest half the zeal shown by those who are securing earthly gain. They are not as intent upon their purpose, nor as earnest in their efforts; they are not as persevering, and are not as willing to deny themselves, as those who engage in worldly pursuits.

Compare these two enterprises. One is certain, eternal, enduring as the life of God; the other is a thing of this life, changeable, perishable, and if men succeed in their ambitious pursuits, that which they gain frequently stings like an adder, and drowns them in perdition. Oh, why should there be so great a contrast in the efforts of those who are engaged—the one class in a worldly enterprise, the other in a heavenly? the one laboring for a treasure here that is perishable, and in the effort suffering much pain for that which is frequently a source of great evil, the other putting forth efforts for the salvation of precious souls, which will be approved of Heaven and rewarded with heavenly riches. There are no risks to run here, no losses to be sustained, the profits are sure and immense.

[336]

Those who are in Christ's stead beseeching souls to be reconciled to God should by precept and example manifest an undying interest to save souls. Their earnestness, perseverance, self-denial, and spirit of sacrifice should as far exceed the diligence and earnestness of those securing earthly gain as the soul is more valuable than the trash of earth and the subject more elevated than earthly enterprises. All worldly enterprises are of trifling importance compared with the work of saving souls. Earthly things are not enduring, although they cost so much. But one soul saved will shine in the kingdom of heaven throughout eternal ages.

Some of the ministers are asleep, and the people are also asleep; but Satan is wide awake. There is but little sacrificing for God or the truth. Ministers must set the example. In their labors they should show that they esteem eternal things of infinite value and earthly things as nothing in comparison. There are ministers preaching present truth who must be converted. Their understanding must be

[337]

invigorated, their hearts purified, their affections centered in God. They should present the truth in a manner which will arouse the intellect to appreciate its excellence, purity, and sacredness. In order to do this, they should keep before their minds objects which are elevated and which have a purifying, quickening, and exalting influence upon the mind. They must have the purifying fire of truth burning upon the altar of their hearts, to influence and characterize their lives; then, go where they will, amid darkness and gloom, they will illuminate those in darkness with the light dwelling in them and shining round about them.

Ministers must be imbued with the same spirit as was their Master when He was upon earth. He went about doing good, blessing others with His influence. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Ministers should have clear conceptions of eternal things and of God's claims upon them; then they can impress others and excite in them a love for contemplating heavenly things.

Ministers should become Bible students. Are the truths which they handle mighty? Then they should seek to handle them skillfully. Their ideas should be clear and strong, and their spirits fervent, or they will weaken the force of the truth which they handle. By tamely presenting the truth, merely repeating the theory without being stirred by it themselves, they can never convert men. If they should live as long as did Noah, their efforts would be without effect. Their love for souls must be intense and their zeal fervent. A listless, unfeeling manner of presenting the truth will never arouse men and women from their deathlike slumber. They must show by their manners, by their acts and words, and by their preaching and praying, that they believe that Christ is at the door. Men and women are in the last hours of probation, and yet are careless and stupid, and ministers have no power to arouse them; they are asleep themselves. Sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people!

[338]

A great work must be accomplished for ministers in order for them to make the preaching of the truth a success. The word of God should be thoroughly studied. All other reading is inferior to this. A careful study of the Bible will not necessarily exclude all other reading of a religious nature; but if the word of God is studied prayerfully, all reading which will have a tendency to divert the mind from it will be excluded. If we study the word of God with an

interest, and pray to understand it, new beauties will be seen in every line. God will reveal precious truth so clearly that the mind will derive sincere pleasure and have a continual feast as its comforting and sublime truths are unfolded.

Visiting from house to house forms an important part of the minister's labors. He should aim to converse with all the members of the family, whether they profess the truth or not. It is his duty to ascertain the spiritual condition of all; and he should live so near to God that he can counsel, exhort, and reprove, carefully and in wisdom. He should have the grace of God in his own heart and the glory of God constantly in view. All lightness and trifling is positively forbidden in the word of God. His conversation should be in heaven, his words seasoned with grace. All flattery should be put away, for it is Satan's work to flatter. Poor, weak, fallen men generally think enough of themselves and need no help in this direction. Flattering your ministers is out of place. It perverts the mind and does not lead to meekness and humility; yet men and women love to be praised, and it is too frequently the case that ministers love it. Their vanity is gratified by it, but it has proved a curse to many. Reproof is more to be prized than flattery.

Not all who are preaching the truth realize that their testimony and example are deciding the destiny of souls. If they are unfaithful in their mission, and become careless in their work, souls will be lost as the result. If they are self-sacrificing and faithful in the work which the Master has given them to do, they will be instrumental in the salvation of many. Some permit trifles to divert them from the work. Bad roads, rainy weather, or little matters at home are sufficient excuses for them to leave the work of laboring for souls. And frequently this is done at the most important time in the work. When an interest has been raised and the minds of the people are agitated, the interest is left to die out because the minister chooses a more pleasant and easy field. Those who pursue this course show plainly that they do not have the burden of the work upon them. They wish to be carried by the people. They are not willing to endure the privations and hardships which are ever the lot of a true shepherd.

Some have no experience in taking hold of the work as though it was of vital importance. They do not enter upon it with that zeal and earnestness which would show that they are doing work which

will have to bear the test of the judgment. They work too much in their own strength. They do not make God their trust, and therefore errors and imperfections mark all their efforts. They do not give the Lord an opportunity to do anything for them. They do not walk by faith, but by sight. They will go no faster or further than they can see. They do not seem to understand that venturing something for the truth's sake has any part in their religious experience.

Some go from their homes to labor in the gospel field, but do not act as though the truths which they speak were a reality to them. Their actions show that they have not experienced the saving power of the truth themselves. When out of the desk, they appear to have no burden of the truth. They labor sometimes apparently to profit, but more frequently to no profit. Such feel as much entitled to the wages they receive as though they had earned them; notwithstanding their unconsecration has cost more labor, anxiety, and pain of heart [340] to those laborers who have the burden of the work upon them than all their efforts have done good. Such are not profitable workmen. But they will have to bear this responsibility themselves.

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

The churches give of their means to sustain the ministers in their labors. What have they to encourage them in their liberality? Some ministers labor from month to month and accomplish so little that the churches become disheartened; they cannot see that anything is being done to convert souls to the truth nor to make those who are church members more spiritual or fervent in their love to God and His truth. Those who are handling sacred things should be wholly consecrated to the work. They should possess an unselfish interest in it and a fervent love for perishing souls. If they do not have this they have mistaken their mission and should cease their labor of teaching others, for they do more harm than they can possibly do good. Some ministers display themselves, but do not feed the flock that are perishing for meat in due season.

[341]

There is a disposition with some to shrink from opposition. They fear to go into new places because of the darkness and the conflicts they expect to meet. This is cowardice. The people must be met where they are. They need stirring appeals and practical, as well as doctrinal, discourses. Precept backed up by example will have a powerful influence.

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

Those who engage in the business of schoolteaching prepare for the work. They qualify themselves by attending school and interesting their minds in study. They are not allowed to teach children and youth in the sciences unless they are capable of instructing them. Upon applying for a situation as teacher, they have to pass an examination before competent persons. It is an important work to deal with young minds and instruct them correctly in the sciences. But of how much greater importance is the work of the ministry! Yet many engage in the important business of interesting men and women to enter the school of Christ, where they are to learn how

[342] they may form characters for heaven, who need to become students themselves. Some who enter the ministry do not feel the burden of the work upon them. They have received incorrect ideas of the qualifications of a minister. They have thought that it required but little close study in the sciences or in the word of God to make a minister. Some who are teaching present truth are not acquainted with their Bibles. They are so deficient in Bible knowledge that it is difficult for them to quote a text of Scripture correctly from memory. By blundering along in the awkward manner they do, they sin against God. They mangle the scripture, and make the Bible say things that are not written therein.

Some who have all their lives been led by feeling have thought that an education or a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures was of no consequence if they only had the Spirit. But God never sends His Spirit to sanction ignorance. Those who have not knowledge, and who are so situated that it is impossible for them to obtain it, the Lord may, and does, pity and bless, and sometimes condescends to make His strength perfect in their weakness. But He makes it the duty of such to study His word. A lack of knowledge in the sciences is no excuse for a neglect of Bible study; for the words of inspiration are so plain that the unlearned may understand them.

[343] Of all men upon the face of the earth, those who are handling solemn truths for these perilous times should understand their Bibles and become acquainted with the evidences of our faith. Unless they possess a knowledge of the word of life they have no right to undertake to instruct others in the way to life. Ministers should give all diligence to add to their “faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.” Some of our ministers graduate when they have scarcely learned the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Those who are ambassadors for Christ, who stand in His stead, beseeching souls to be reconciled to God, should be qualified to present our faith intelligently and be able to give the reasons of their hope with meekness and fear. Said Christ: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.”

Ministers who teach unpopular truth will be beset by men who are urged on by Satan and who, like their master, can quote Scripture readily; and shall the servants of God be unequal to the servants of Satan in handling the words of Inspiration? They should, like Christ, meet scripture with scripture. Oh, that those who minister in holy things would awake, and, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures daily! Brethren in the ministry, I entreat of you to study the Scriptures with humble prayer for an understanding heart, that you may teach the way of life more perfectly. Your counsel, prayers, and example must be a savor of life unto life, or you are unqualified to point out the way of life to others.

The Master requires all His servants to improve upon the talents He has committed to them. But how much more will He require of those who profess to understand the way to life, and who take upon themselves the responsibility of guiding others therein. The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy: “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be *able* to teach others also.”

The glorious results that attended the ministry of the chosen disciples of Christ were the effects of bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. Some of those who testified of Christ were unlearned and ignorant men; but grace and truth reigned in their hearts, inspiring and purifying their lives, and controlling their actions. They were living representatives of the mind and spirit of Christ. They were living epistles, known and read of all men. They were hated and persecuted by all who would not receive the truth they preached, and who despised the cross of Christ. [344]

Wicked men will not oppose a form of godliness nor reject a popular ministry which presents no cross for them to bear. The natural heart will raise no serious objection to a religion in which there is nothing to make the transgressor of the law tremble or bring to bear upon the heart and conscience the terrible realities of a judgment to come. It is the demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God which raises opposition and leads the natural heart to rebel. The truth that saves the soul must not only come from God; but His Spirit must attend its communication to others, else it falls powerless before opposing influences. Oh, that the truth would fall

from the lips of God's servants with such power as to burn its way to the hearts of the people!

Ministers must be endued with power from on high. When the truth in its simplicity and strength, as it is in Jesus, is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, condemning its exciting pleasures and corrupting charms, it will then be plainly seen that there is no concord between Christ and Belial. The natural heart cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God. An unconsecrated minister, presenting the truth in an unimpassioned manner, his own soul unmoved by the truths he speaks to others, will do only harm. Every effort he makes only lowers the standard.

[345] Selfish interest must be swallowed up in deep anxiety for the salvation of souls. Some ministers have labored, not because they dared not do otherwise, not because the woe was upon them, but having in view the wages they were to receive. Said the angel: "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on Mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand."

It is entirely wrong to buy every errand that is done for the Lord. The treasury of the Lord has been drained by those who have been only an injury to the cause. If ministers give themselves wholly to the work of God, and devote all their energies to building up His cause, they will have no lack. As regards temporal things, they have a better portion than their Lord and better than His chosen disciples whom He sent forth to save perishing man. Our great Exemplar, who was in the brightness of His Father's glory, was despised and rejected of men. Reproach and falsehood followed Him. His chosen disciples were living examples of the life and spirit of their Master. They were honored with stripes and imprisonment; and it was finally their portion to seal their ministry with their blood.

When ministers are so interested in the work that they love it as a part of their existence, then they can say: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death,

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

[346]

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Chapter 51—Moral Pollution

I have been shown that we live amid the perils of the last days. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. The word “many” refers to the professed followers of Christ. They are affected by the prevailing iniquity and backslide from God, but it is not necessary that they should be thus affected. The cause of this declension is that they do not stand clear from this iniquity. The fact that their love to God is waxing cold because iniquity abounds shows that they are, in some sense, partakers in this iniquity, or it would not affect their love for God and their zeal and fervor in His cause.

A terrible picture of the condition of the world has been presented before me. Immorality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin of this age. Never did vice lift its deformed head with such boldness as now. The people seem to be benumbed, and the lovers of virtue and true goodness are nearly discouraged by its boldness, strength, and prevalence. The iniquity which abounds is not merely confined to the unbeliever and the scoffer. Would that this were the case, but it is not. Many men and women who profess the religion of Christ are guilty. Even some who profess to be looking for His appearing are no more prepared for that event than Satan himself. They are not cleansing themselves from all pollution. They have so long served their lust that it is natural for their thoughts to be impure and their imaginations corrupt. It is as impossible to cause their minds to dwell upon pure and holy things as it would be to turn the course of Niagara and send its waters pouring up the falls.

[347] Youth and children of both sexes engage in moral pollution, and practice this disgusting, soul-and-body-destroying vice. Many professed Christians are so benumbed by the same practice that their moral sensibilities cannot be aroused to understand that it is sin, and that if continued its sure results will be utter shipwreck of body and mind. Man, the noblest being upon the earth, formed in the image of God, transforms himself into a beast! He makes himself gross and corrupt. Every Christian will have to learn to restrain his passions

and be controlled by principle. Unless he does this he is unworthy of the Christian name.

Some who make a high profession do not understand the sin of self-abuse and its sure results. Long-established habit has blinded their understanding. They do not realize the exceeding sinfulness of this degrading sin, which is enervating the system and destroying their brain nerve power. Moral principle is exceedingly weak when it conflicts with established habit. Solemn messages from heaven cannot forcibly impress the heart that is not fortified against the indulgence of this degrading vice. The sensitive nerves of the brain have lost their healthy tone by morbid excitation to gratify an unnatural desire for sensual indulgence. The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind. In consideration of these facts, how important that ministers and people who profess godliness should stand forth clear and untainted from this soul-debasing vice!

My soul has been bowed down with anguish as I have been shown the weak condition of God's professed people. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. There are but few professed Christians who regard this matter in the right light and who hold proper government over themselves when public opinion and custom do not condemn them. How few restrain their passions because they feel under moral obligation to do so and because the fear of God is before their eyes! The higher faculties of man are enslaved by appetite and corrupt passions.

[348]

Some will acknowledge the evil of sinful indulgences, yet will excuse themselves by saying that they cannot overcome their passions. This is a terrible admission for any person to make who names Christ. "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Why is this weakness? It is because the animal propensities have been strengthened by exercise until they have gained the ascendancy over the higher powers. Men and women lack principle. They are dying spiritually because they have so long pampered their natural appetites that their power of self-government seems gone. The lower passions of their nature have taken the reins, and that

which should be the governing power has become the servant of corrupt passion. The soul is held in lowest bondage. Sensuality has quenched the desire for holiness and withered spiritual prosperity.

[349] My soul mourns for the youth who are forming characters in this degenerate age. I tremble for their parents also; for I have been shown that as a general thing they do not understand their obligations to train up their children in the way they should go. Custom and fashion are consulted, and the children soon learn to be swayed by these and are corrupted; while their indulgent parents are themselves benumbed and asleep to their danger. But very few of the youth are free from corrupt habits. They are excused from physical exercise to a great degree for fear they will overwork. The parents bear burdens themselves which their children should bear. Overwork is bad, but the result of indolence is more to be dreaded. Idleness leads to the indulgence of corrupt habits. Industry does not weary and exhaust one-fifth part as much as the pernicious habit of self-abuse. If simple, well-regulated labor exhausts your children, be assured, parents, there is something, aside from their labor, which is enervating their systems and producing a sense of constant weariness. Give your children physical labor, which will call into exercise the nerves and muscles. The weariness attending such labor will lessen their inclination to indulge in vicious habits. Idleness is a curse. It produces licentious habits.

Many cases have been presented before me, and as I have had a view of their inner lives, my soul has been sick and disgusted with the rotten-heartedness of human beings who profess godliness and talk of translation to heaven. I have frequently asked myself: Whom can I trust? Who is free from iniquity?

My husband and I once attended a meeting where our sympathies were enlisted for a brother who was a great sufferer with the phthisic. He was pale and emaciated. He requested the prayers of the people of God. He said that his family were sick and that he had lost a child. He spoke with feeling of his bereavement. He said that he had been waiting for some time to see Brother and Sister White. He had believed that if they would pray for him he would be healed. After the meeting closed, the brethren called our attention to the case. They said that the church was assisting them; that his wife was sick, and his child had died. The brethren had met at his house, and

united in praying for the afflicted family. We were much worn, and had the burden of labor upon us during the meeting, and wished to be excused.

I had resolved not to engage in prayer for anyone unless the Spirit of the Lord should dictate in the matter. I had been shown that there was so much iniquity abounding, even among professed Sabbathkeepers, that I did not wish to unite in prayer for those of whose history I had no knowledge. I stated my reason. I was assured by the brethren that, as far as they knew, he was a worthy brother. I conversed a few words with the one who had solicited our prayers that he might be healed, but I could not feel free. He wept, and said that he had waited for us to come, and he felt assured that if we would pray for him he would be restored to health. We told him that we were unacquainted with his life, that we would rather those who knew him would pray for him. He importuned us so earnestly that we decided to consider his case and present it before the Lord that night; and if the way seemed clear, we would comply with his request. [350]

That night we bowed in prayer and presented his case before the Lord. We entreated that we might know the will of God concerning him. All we desired was that God might be glorified. Would the Lord have us pray for this afflicted man? We left the burden with the Lord and retired to rest. In a dream the case of that man was clearly presented. His course from his childhood up was shown, and that if we should pray the Lord would not hear us; for he regarded iniquity in his heart. The next morning the man came for us to pray for him. We took him aside and told him we were sorry to be compelled to refuse his request. I related my dream, which he acknowledged was true. He had practiced self-abuse from his boyhood up, and he had continued the practice during his married life, but said he would try to break himself of it.

This man had a long-established habit to overcome. He was in the middle age of life. His moral principles were so weak that when brought in conflict with long-established indulgence they were overcome. The baser passions had gained the ascendancy over the higher nature. I asked him in regard to health reform. He said he could not live it. His wife would throw graham flour out of doors if it were brought into the house. This family had been helped by [351]

the church. Prayer had also been offered in their behalf. Their child had died, the wife was sick, and the husband and father would leave his case upon us for us to bring before a pure and holy God, that He might work a miracle and make him well. The moral sensibilities of this man were benumbed.

When the young adopt vile practices while the spirit is tender, they will never obtain force to fully and correctly develop physical, intellectual, and moral character. Here was a man debasing himself daily, and yet daring to venture into the presence of God and ask an increase of strength which he had vilely squandered, and which, if granted, he would consume upon his lust. What forbearance has God! If He should deal with man according to his corrupt ways, who could live in His sight? What if we had been less cautious and carried the case of this man before God while he was practicing iniquity, would the Lord have heard? would He have answered? “For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight: Thou hatest all workers of iniquity.” “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

[352] This is not a solitary case. Even the marriage relation was not sufficient to preserve this man from the corrupt habits of his youth. I wish I could be convinced that such cases as the one I have presented are rare, but I know they are frequent. Children born to parents who are controlled by corrupt passions are worthless. What can be expected of such children but that they will sink lower in the scale than their parents? What can be expected of the rising generation? Thousands are devoid of principle. These very ones are transmitting to their offspring their own miserable, corrupt passions. What a legacy! Thousands drag out their unprincipled lives, tainting their associates, and perpetuating their debased passions by transmitting them to their children. They take the responsibility of giving to them the stamp of their own characters.

I come again to Christians. If all who profess to obey the law of God were free from iniquity, my soul would be relieved; but they are not. Even some who profess to keep all the commandments of God are guilty of the sin of adultery. What can I say to arouse their benumbed sensibilities? Moral principle, strictly carried out, becomes the only safeguard of the soul. If ever there was a time

when the diet should be of the most simple kind, it is now. Meat should not be placed before our children. Its influence is to excite and strengthen the lower passions, and has a tendency to deaden the moral powers. Grains and fruits prepared free from grease, and in as natural a condition as possible, should be the food for the tables of all who claim to be preparing for translation to heaven. The less feverish the diet, the more easily can the passions be controlled. Gratification of taste should not be consulted irrespective of physical, intellectual, or moral health.

Indulgence of the baser passions will lead very many to shut their eyes to the light, for they fear that they will see sins which they are unwilling to forsake. All may see if they will. If they choose darkness rather than light, their criminality will be none the less. Why do not men and women read, and become intelligent upon these things which so decidedly affect their physical, intellectual, and moral strength? God has given you a habitation to care for and preserve in the best condition for His service and glory. Your bodies are not your own. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

[353]

**Number Eighteen—Testimony for the
Church**

[354]

Chapter 52—Christian Temperance

[Delivered in Battle Creek, March 6, 1869, and reported by U. Smith.]

“Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” [1 Corinthians 6:19, 20](#).

We are not our own. We have been purchased with a dear price, even the sufferings and death of the Son of God. If we could understand this, and fully realize it, we would feel a great responsibility resting upon us to keep ourselves in the very best condition of health, that we might render to God perfect service. But when we take any course which expends our vitality, decreases our strength, or beclouds the intellect we sin against God. In pursuing this course we are not glorifying Him in our bodies and spirits which are His, but are committing a great wrong in His sight.

Has Jesus given Himself for us? Has a dear price been paid to redeem us? And is it so, that we are not our own? Is it true that all the powers of our being, our bodies, our spirits, all that we have, and all we are, belong to God? It certainly is. And when we realize this, what obligation does it lay us under to God to preserve ourselves in that condition that we may honor Him upon the earth in our bodies and in our spirits which are His.

[355] We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When

the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is *now* that this work is to be accomplished for us.

We embrace the truth of God with our different faculties, and as we come under the influence of that truth, it will accomplish the work for us which is necessary to give us a moral fitness for the kingdom of glory and for the society of the heavenly angels. We are now in God's workshop. Many of us are rough stones from the quarry. But as we lay hold upon the truth of God, its influence affects us. It elevates us and removes from us every imperfection and sin, of what ever nature. Thus we are prepared to see the King in His beauty and finally to unite with the pure and heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory. It is here that this work is to be accomplished for us, here that our bodies and spirits are to be fitted for immortality.

[356]

We are in a world that is opposed to righteousness and purity of character, and to a growth in grace. Wherever we look we see corruption and defilement, deformity and sin. And what is the work that we are to undertake here just previous to receiving immortality? It is to preserve our bodies holy, our spirits pure, that we may stand forth unstained amid the corruptions teeming around us in these last days. And if this work is accomplished we need to engage in it at once, heartily and understandingly. Selfishness should not come in here to influence us. The Spirit of God should have perfect control of us, influencing us in all our actions. If we have a right hold on Heaven, a right hold of the power that is from above, we shall feel the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God upon our hearts.

When we have tried to present the health reform to our brethren and sisters, and have spoken to them of the importance of eating and drinking and doing all that they do to the glory of God, many by their actions have said: "It is nobody's business whether I eat this or that. Whatever we do we are to bear the consequences ourselves." Dear friends, you are greatly mistaken. You are not the only sufferers

from a wrong course. The society you are in bears the consequences of your wrongs, in a great degree, as well as yourselves. If you suffer from your intemperance in eating or drinking, we that are around you or associated with you are also affected by your infirmities. We have to suffer on account of your wrong course. If it has an influence to lessen your powers of mind or body, we feel it when in your society, and are affected by it. If, instead of having a buoyancy of spirit, you are gloomy, you cast a shadow upon the spirits of all around you. If we are sad and depressed, and in trouble, you could, if in a right condition of health, have a clear brain to show us the way out and speak a comforting word to us. But if your brain is so benumbed by your wrong course of living that you cannot give us the right counsel, do we not meet with a loss? Does not your influence seriously affect us? We may have a good degree of confidence in our own judgment, yet we want to have counselors; for "in the multitude of counselors there is safety." We desire that our course should look consistent to those we love, and we wish to seek their counsel and have them able to give it with a clear brain. But what care we for your judgment, if your brain nerve power has been taxed to the utmost, and the vitality withdrawn from the brain to take care of the improper food placed in your stomachs, or of an enormous quantity of even healthful food? What care we for the judgment of such persons? They see through a mass of undigested food. Therefore your course of living affects us. It is impossible for you to pursue any wrong course without causing others to suffer.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Those who engaged in running the race to obtain that laurel which was considered a special honor were temperate in all things so that their muscles, their brains, and every part of them might be in the very best condition to run. If they were not temperate in all things they would not have that elasticity that they

would have if they were. If temperate, they could run that race more successfully; they were more sure of receiving the crown.

But notwithstanding all their temperance,—all their efforts to subject themselves to a careful diet in order to be in the best condition,—those who ran the earthly race only ran at a venture. They might do the very best they could, and yet after all not receive the token of honor; for another might be a little in advance of them, and take the prize. Only one received the prize. But in the heavenly race we can all run and all receive the prize. There is no uncertainty, no risk, in the matter. We must put on the heavenly graces, and, with the eye directed upward to the crown of immortality, keep the Pattern ever before us. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The humble, self-denying life of our divine Lord we are to keep constantly in view. And then as we seek to imitate Him, keeping our eye upon the mark of the prize, we can run this race with certainty, knowing that if we do the very best we can, we shall certainly secure the prize. [358]

Men would subject themselves to self-denial and discipline in order to run and obtain a corruptible crown, one that would perish in a day, and which was only a token of honor from mortals here. But we are to run the race, at the end of which is a crown of immortality and everlasting life. Yes, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory will be awarded to us as the prize when the race is run. “We,” says the apostle, “an incorruptible.” And if those who engaged in this race here upon the earth for a temporal crown could be temperate in all things, cannot we, who have in view an incorruptible crown, an eternal weight of glory, and a life which measures with the life of God? When we have this great inducement before us, cannot we “run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith”? He has pointed out the way for us, and marked it all along by His own footsteps. It is the path that He traveled, and we may, with Him, experience the self-denial and the suffering, and walk in this pathway imprinted by His own blood. [359]

“I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.” There is work here for every man, woman, and child to do. Satan is constantly seeking to gain control of your bodies

and spirits. But Christ has bought you, and you are His property. And now it is for you to work in union with Christ, in union with the holy angels that minister unto you. It is for you to keep the body under and bring it into subjection. Unless you do this you will certainly lose everlasting life and the crown of immortality. And yet some will say: "What business is it to anybody what I eat or what I drink?" I have shown you what relation your course has to others. You have seen that it has much to do with the influence you exert in your families. It has much to do with molding the characters of your children.

As I said before, we live in a corrupt age. It is a time when Satan seems to have almost perfect control over minds that are not fully consecrated to God. Therefore there is a very great responsibility resting upon parents and guardians who have children to bring up. Parents have taken the responsibility of bringing these children into existence; and now what is their duty? Is it to let them come up just as they may, and just as they will? Let me tell you, a weighty responsibility rests upon these parents. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Do you do this when you prepare food for your tables and call your family to partake of it? Are you placing before your children only the food that you know will make the very best blood? Is it that food that will preserve their systems in the least feverish condition? Is it that [360] which will place them in the very best relation to life and health? Is this the food that you are studying to place before your children? Or do you, regardless of their future good, provide for them unhealthful, stimulating, irritating food?

Let me tell you that children are born to evil. Satan seems to have control of them. He takes possession of their young minds, and they are corrupted. Why do fathers and mothers act as though a lethargy were upon them? They do not mistrust that Satan is sowing evil seed in their families. They are as blind and careless and reckless in regard to these things as it is possible for them to be. Why do they not awake, and read and study upon these subjects? Says the apostle: "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience," etc. Here is a work which rests upon every one who professes to follow Christ; it is to live upon the plan of addition.

Chapter after chapter has been opened to me. I can select family after family of children in this house, every one of whom is as corrupt as hell itself. Some of them profess to be followers of Christ, and you, their parents, are as indifferent as though you had had a shock of paralysis.

I have said that some of you are selfish. You have not understood what I have meant. You have studied what food would taste best. Taste and pleasure, instead of the glory of God, and a desire to advance in the divine life, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God, have ruled. You have consulted your own pleasure, your own appetite; and while you have been doing this, Satan has been gaining a march upon you and, as is generally the case, has frustrated your efforts every time.

Some of you fathers have taken your children to the physician to see what was the matter with them. I could have told you in two minutes what was the trouble. Your children are corrupt. Satan has obtained control of them. He has come right in past you, while you, who are as God to them, to guard them, were at ease, stupefied, and asleep. God has commanded you to bring them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord. But Satan has passed right in before you and has woven strong bands around them. And yet you sleep on. May Heaven pity you and your children, for every one of you needs His pity.

[361]

Had you taken your position upon the health reform; had you added to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, things might have been different. But you have been only partially aroused by the iniquity and corruption that is in your houses. You have opened your eyes a little and then composed yourself to sleep again. Do you think angels can come into your dwellings? Do you think your children are susceptible of holy influences with these things among you? I can count family after family that are almost entirely under the control of Satan. I know these things are true, and I want the people to arouse before it shall be eternally too late, and the blood of souls, even the blood of the souls of their own children, be found upon their garments.

The minds of some of these children are so weakened that they have but one half or one third of the brilliancy of intellect that they might have had had they been virtuous and pure. They have thrown it

away in self-abuse. Right here in this church, corruption is teeming on every hand. Now and then there is a sing, or some gathering for pleasure. Every time I hear of these, I feel like clothing myself in sackcloth. "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!" "Spare Thy people, O Lord." I feel distressed. I have an agony of soul that is beyond anything that I can describe to you.

[362] You are asleep. Would the lightning and thunder of Sinai arouse this church? Would they arouse you, fathers and mothers, to commence the work of reformation in your own houses? You should be teaching your children. You should be instructing them how to shun the vices and corruptions of this age. Instead of this, many are studying how to get something good to eat. You place upon your tables butter, eggs, and meat, and your children partake of them. They are fed with the very things that will excite their animal passions, and then you come to meeting and ask God to bless and save your children. How high do your prayers go? You have a work to do first. When you have done all for your children which God has left for you to do then you can with confidence claim the special help that God has promised to give you.

You should study temperance in all things. You must study it in what you eat and in what you drink. And yet you say: "It is nobody's business what I eat, or what I drink, or what I place upon my table." It is somebody's business, unless you take your children and shut them up, or go into the wilderness where you will not be a burden upon others, and where your unruly, vicious children will not corrupt the society in which they mingle.

Many who have adopted the health reform have left off everything hurtful, but does it follow that because they have left off these things they can eat just as much as they please? They sit down to the table, and instead of considering how much they should eat, they give themselves up to appetite and eat to great excess. And the stomach has all it can do, or all it should do, the rest of that day, to worry away with the burden imposed upon it. All the food that is put into the stomach, from which the system cannot derive benefit, is a burden to nature in her work. It hinders the living machine.

[363] The system is clogged and cannot successfully carry on its work. The vital organs are unnecessarily taxed, and the brain nerve power is

called to the stomach to help the digestive organs carry on their work of disposing of an amount of food which does the system no good.

Thus the power of the brain is lessened by drawing so heavily upon it to help the stomach get along with its heavy burden. And after it has accomplished the task, what are the sensations experienced as the result of this unnecessary expenditure of vital force? A feeling of goneness, a faintness, as though you must eat more. Perhaps this feeling comes just before mealtime. What is the cause of this? Nature has worried along with her work and is so thoroughly exhausted in consequence that you have this sensation of goneness. And you think that the stomach says, "More food," when, in its faintness, it is distinctly saying, "Give me rest."

The stomach needs rest to gather up its exhausted energies for another work. But, instead of allowing it any period of rest, you think it needs more food, and so heap another load upon nature, and refuse it the needed rest. It is like a man laboring in the field all through the early part of the day until he is weary. He comes in at noon and says that he is weary and exhausted, but you tell him to go to work again and he will obtain relief. This is the way you treat the stomach. It is thoroughly exhausted. But instead of letting it rest, you give it more food, and then call the vitality from other parts of the system to the stomach to assist in the work of digestion.

Many of you have at times felt a numbness around the brain. You have felt disinclined to take hold of any labor which required either mental or physical exertion, until you have rested from the sense of this burden imposed upon your system. Then, again, there is this sense of goneness. But you say it is more food that is wanted, and place a double load upon the stomach for it to care for. Even if you are strict in the quality of your food, do you glorify God in your bodies and spirits, which are His, by partaking of such a quantity of food? Those who place so much food upon the stomach, and thus load down nature, could not appreciate the truth should they hear it dwelt upon. They could not arouse the benumbed sensibilities of the brain to realize the value of the atonement and the great sacrifice that has been made for fallen man. It is impossible for such to appreciate the great, the precious, and the exceedingly rich reward that is in reserve for the faithful overcomers. The animal part of our nature should never be left to govern the moral and intellectual.

And what influence does overeating have upon the stomach? It becomes debilitated, the digestive organs are weakened, and disease, with all its train of evils, is brought on as the result. If persons were diseased before, they thus increase the difficulties upon them and lessen their vitality every day they live. They call their vital powers into unnecessary action to take care of the food that they place in their stomachs. What a terrible condition is this to be in! We know something of dyspepsia by experience. We have had it in our family, and we feel that it is a disease much to be dreaded. When a person becomes a thorough dyspeptic, he is a great sufferer, mentally and physically; and his friends must also suffer, unless they are as unfeeling as brutes. And yet will you say: "It is none of your business what I eat or what course I pursue"? Does anybody around dyspeptics suffer? Just take a course that will irritate them in any way. How natural to be fretful! They feel bad, and it appears to them that their children are very bad. They cannot speak calmly to them, nor, without especial grace, act calmly in their families. All around them are affected by the disease upon them; all have to suffer the consequences of their infirmity. They cast a dark shadow. Then, do not your habits of eating and drinking affect others? They certainly do. And you should be very careful to preserve yourself in the best condition of health that you may render to God perfect service and do your duty in society and to your family.

But even health reformers can err in the quantity of food. They can eat immoderately of a healthy quality of food. Some in this house err in the quality. They have never taken their position upon health reform. They have chosen to eat and drink what they pleased and when they pleased. They are injuring their systems in this way. Not only this, but they are injuring their families by placing upon their tables a feverish diet which will increase the animal passions of their children and lead them to care but little for heavenly things. The parents are thus strengthening the animal, and lessening the spiritual, powers of their children. What a heavy penalty will they have to pay in the end! And then they wonder that their children are so weak morally!

Parents have not given their children the right education. Frequently they manifest the same imperfections which are seen in the children. They eat improperly, and this calls their nervous energies

to the stomach, and they have no vitality to expend in other directions. They cannot properly control their children because of their own impatience, neither can they teach them the right way. Perhaps they take hold of them roughly and give them an impatient blow. I have said that to shake a child would shake two evil spirits in, while it would shake one out. If a child is wrong, to shake it only makes it worse. It will not subdue it. When the system is not in a right condition, when the circulation is broken up, and the nervous power has all that it can do to take care of a bad quality of food, or too great a quantity even of that which is good, parents have not self-command. They cannot reason from cause to effect. Here is the reason why—in every move they make in their families they create more trouble than they cure. They do not seem to understand and reason from cause to effect, and they go to work like blind men. They seem to act as though it would especially glorify God for them to move like wild men, and if anything wrong should occur in their families, to put it down with roughness and violence.

[366]

Who are our children? They are only our younger brothers and sisters in the family that God acknowledges as His. We are dealing with the members of the Lord's family. And while the care of them is committed to us, how careful should we be that we bring them up for the Lord, so that when the Master comes we can say: "Here, Lord, are we, and the children that Thou hast given us." Shall we then be able to say: We have tried to do our work, and we have tried to do it well"?

I have seen mothers of large families, who could not see the work that lay right in their pathway, just before them in their own families. They wanted to be missionaries and do some great work. They were looking out for themselves some high position, but neglecting to take care of the very work at home which the Lord had left for them to do. How important that the brain be clear! How important that the body be as free as possible from disease, in order that we may do the work which Heaven has left for us to do, and perform it in such a manner that the Master can say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." My sisters, do not despise the few things which the Lord has left for you to do. Let each day's actions be such that in the day of final

settlement of accounts you will not be ashamed to meet the record made by the recording angel.

[367] But what about an impoverished diet? I have spoken of the importance of the quantity and quality of food being in strict accordance with the laws of health. But we would not recommend an impoverished diet. I have been shown that many take a wrong view of the health reform and adopt too poor a diet. They subsist upon a cheap, poor quality of food, prepared without care or reference to the nourishment of the system. It is important that the food should be prepared with care, that the appetite, when not perverted, can relish it. Because we from principle discard the use of meat, butter, mince pies, spices, lard, and that which irritates the stomach and destroys health, the idea should never be given that it is of but little consequence what we eat.

There are some who go to extremes. They must eat just such an amount and just such a quality, and confine themselves to two or three things. They allow only a few things to be placed before them or their families to eat. In eating a small amount of food, and that not of the best quality, they do not take into the stomach that which will suitably nourish the system. Poor food cannot be converted into good blood. An impoverished diet will impoverish the blood. I will mention the case of Sister A. That case was presented to me to show an extreme. Two classes were presented before me: First, those who were not living up to the light which God had given them. They started in the reform because somebody else did. They did not understand the system for themselves. There are many of you who profess the truth, who have received it because somebody else did, and for your life you could not give the reason. This is why you are as weak as water. Instead of weighing your motives in the light of eternity, instead of having a practical knowledge of the principles underlying all your actions, instead of having dug down to the bottom and built upon a right foundation for yourself, you are walking in the sparks kindled by somebody else. And you will fail in this, as you have failed in the health reform. Now, if you had moved from principle you would not have done this.

[368] Some cannot be impressed with the necessity of eating and drinking to the glory of God. The indulgence of appetite affects them in all the relations of life. It is seen in their family, in their church,

in the prayer meeting, and in the conduct of their children. It has been the curse of their lives. You cannot make them understand the truths for these last days. God has bountifully provided for the sustenance and happiness of all His creatures; and if His laws were never violated, and all acted in harmony with the divine will, health, peace, and happiness, instead of misery and continual evil, would be experienced.

Another class who have taken hold of the health reform are very severe. They take a position, and stand stubbornly in that position, and carry nearly everything over the mark. Sister A was one of these. She was not sympathizing, loving, and affectionate like our divine Lord. Justice was nearly all she could see. She carried matters further than Dr. Trall. Her patients had to even leave her because they could not get enough to eat. Her impoverished diet gave her impoverished blood.

Flesh meats will depreciate the blood. Cook meat with spices, and eat it with rich cakes and pies, and you have a bad quality of blood. The system is too heavily taxed in disposing of this kind of food. The mince pies and the pickles, which should never find a place in any human stomach, will give a miserable quality of blood. And a poor quality of food, cooked in an improper manner, and insufficient in quantity, cannot make good blood. Flesh meats and rich food, and an impoverished diet, will produce the same results.

Now in regard to milk and sugar: I know of persons who have become frightened at the health reform, and said they would have nothing to do with it, because it has spoken against a free use of these things. Changes should be made with great care, and we should move cautiously and wisely. We want to take that course which will recommend itself to the intelligent men and women of the land. Large quantities of milk and sugar eaten together are injurious. They impart impurities to the system. Animals from which milk is obtained are not always healthy. They may be diseased. A cow may be apparently well in the morning, and die before night. Then she was diseased in the morning, and her milk was diseased; but you did not know it. The animal creation is diseased. Flesh meats are diseased. Could we know that animals were in perfect health, I would recommend that people eat flesh meats sooner than large quantities of milk and sugar. It would not do the injury that milk

[369]

and sugar do. Sugar clogs the system. It hinders the working of the living machine.

[370] There was one case in Montcalm County, Michigan, to which I will refer. The individual was a noble man. He stood six feet and was of fine appearance. I was called to visit him in his sickness. I had previously conversed with him in regard to his manner of living. "I do not like the looks of your eyes," said I. He was eating large quantities of sugar. I asked him why he did this. He said that he had left off meat, and did not know what would supply its place as well as sugar. His food did not satisfy him, simply because his wife did not know how to cook. Some of you send your daughters, who have nearly grown to womanhood, to school to learn the sciences before they know how to cook, when this should be made of the first importance. Here was a woman who did not know how to cook; she had not learned how to prepare healthful food. The wife and mother was deficient in this important branch of education; and as the result, poorly cooked food not being sufficient to sustain the demands of the system, sugar was eaten immoderately, which brought on a diseased condition of the entire system. This man's life was sacrificed unnecessarily to bad cooking. When I went to see the sick man I tried to tell them as well as I could how to manage, and soon he began slowly to improve. But he imprudently exercised his strength when not able, ate a small amount not of the right quality, and was taken down again. This time there was no help for him. His system appeared to be a living mass of corruption. He died a victim to poor cooking. He tried to make sugar supply the place of good cooking, and it only made matters worse.

I frequently sit down to the tables of the brethren and sisters, and see that they use a great amount of milk and sugar. These clog the system, irritate the digestive organs, and affect the brain. Anything that hinders the active motion of the living machinery affects the brain very directly. And from the light given me, sugar, when largely used, is more injurious than meat. These changes should be made cautiously, and the subject should be treated in a manner not calculated to disgust and prejudice those whom we would teach and help.

Our sisters often do not know how to cook. To such I would say: I would go to the very best cook that could be found in the country,

and remain there if necessary for weeks, until I had become mistress of the art, an intelligent, skillful cook. I would pursue this course if I were forty years old. It is your duty to know how to cook, and it is your duty to teach your daughters to cook. When you are teaching them the art of cookery you are building around them a barrier that will preserve them from the folly and vice which they may otherwise be tempted to engage in. I prize my seamstress, I value my copyist; but my cook, who knows well how to prepare the food to sustain life and nourish brain, bone, and muscle, fills the most important place among the helpers in my family.

Mothers, there is nothing that leads to such evils as to lift the burdens from your daughters, and give them nothing special to do, and let them choose their own employment, perhaps a little crochet or some other fancywork to busy themselves. Let them have exercise of the limbs and muscles. If it wearies them, what then? Are you not wearied in your work? Will weariness hurt your children, unless overworked, more than it hurts you? No, indeed. They can recover from their weariness in a good night's rest and be prepared to engage in labor the next day. It is a sin to let them grow up in idleness. The sin and ruin of Sodom was abundance of bread and idleness.

[371]

We want to work from the right standpoint. We want to act like men and women that are to be brought into judgment. And when we adopt the health reform we should adopt it from a sense of duty, not because somebody else has adopted it. I have not changed my course a particle since I adopted the health reform. I have not taken one step back since the light from heaven upon this subject first shone upon my pathway. I broke away from everything at once,—from meat and butter, and from three meals,—and that while engaged in exhaustive brain labor, writing from early morning till sundown. I came down to two meals a day without changing my labor. I have been a great sufferer from disease, having had five shocks of paralysis. I have been with my left arm bound to my side for months because the pain in my heart was so great. When making these changes in my diet, I refused to yield to taste and let that govern me. Shall that stand in the way of my securing greater strength, that I may therewith glorify my Lord? Shall that stand in my way for a moment? Never! I suffered keen hunger. I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach and said: "I will not taste a morsel. I will

[372] eat simple food, or I will not eat at all.” Bread was distasteful to me. I could seldom eat a piece as large as a dollar. Some things in the reform I could get along with very well, but when I came to the bread I was especially set against it. When I made these changes I had a special battle to fight. The first two or three meals, I could not eat. I said to my stomach: “You may wait until you can eat bread.” In a little while I could eat bread, and graham bread, too. This I could not eat before; but now it tastes good, and I have had no loss of appetite.

When writing *Spiritual Gifts*, volumes three and four, I would become exhausted by excessive labor. I then saw that I must change my course of life, and by resting a few days I came out all right again. I left off these things from principle. I took my stand on health reform from principle. And since that time, brethren, you have not heard me advance an extreme view of health reform that I have had to take back. I have advanced nothing but what I stand to today. I recommend to you a healthful, nourishing diet.

I do not regard it a great privation to discontinue the use of those things which leave a bad smell in the breath and a bad taste in the mouth. Is it self-denial to leave these things and get into a condition where everything is as sweet as honey; where no bad taste is left in the mouth and no feeling of goneness in the stomach? These I used to have much of the time. I have fainted away with my child in my arms again and again. I have none of this now, and shall I call this a privation when I can stand before you as I do this day? There is not one woman in a hundred that could endure the amount of labor that I do. I moved out from principle, not from impulse. I moved because I believed Heaven would approve of the course I was taking to bring myself into the very best condition of health, that I might glorify God in my body and spirit, which are His.

[373] We can have a variety of good, wholesome food, cooked in a healthful manner, so that it can be made palatable to all. And if you, my sisters, do not know how to cook, I advise you to learn. It is of vital importance to you to know how to cook. There are more souls lost from poor cooking than you have any idea of. It produces sickness, disease, and bad tempers; the system becomes deranged, and heavenly things cannot be discerned. There is more religion in a loaf of good bread than many of you think. There is more religion in

good cooking than you have any idea of. We want you to learn what good religion is, and to carry it out in your families. When I have been from home sometimes, I have known that the bread upon the table, and the food generally, would hurt me; but I would be obliged to eat a little to sustain life. It is a sin in the sight of Heaven to have such food. I have suffered for want of proper food. For a dyspeptic stomach, you may place upon your tables fruits of different kinds, but not too many at one meal. In this way you may have a variety, and it will taste good, and after you have eaten your meals you will feel well.

I am astonished to learn that, after all the light that has been given in this place, many of you eat between meals! You should never let a morsel pass your lips between your regular meals. Eat what you ought, but eat it at one meal, and then wait until the next. I eat enough to satisfy the wants of nature; but when I get up from the table, my appetite is just as good as when I sat down. And when the next meal comes, I am ready to take my portion, and no more. Should I eat a double amount now and then, because it tastes good, how could I bow down and ask God to help me in my work of writing, when I could not get an idea on account of my gluttony? Could I ask God to take care of that unreasonable load upon my stomach? That would be dishonoring Him. That would be asking to consume upon my lust. Now I eat just what I think is right, and then I can ask Him to give me strength to perform the work that He has given me to do. And I have known that Heaven has heard and answered my prayer when I have offered this petition.

[374]

Again, when we eat immoderately, we sin against our own bodies. Upon the Sabbath, in the house of God, gluttons will sit and sleep under the burning truths of God's word. They can neither keep their eyes open, nor comprehend the solemn discourses given. Do you think that such are glorifying God in their bodies and spirits, which are His? No; they dishonor Him. And the dyspeptic—what has made him dyspeptic is taking this course. Instead of observing regularity, he has let appetite control him, and has eaten between meals. Perhaps, if his habits are sedentary, he has not had the vitalizing air of heaven to help in the work of digestion; he may not have had sufficient exercise for his health.

Some of you feel as though you would like to have somebody tell you how much to eat. This is not the way it should be. We are to act from a moral and religious standpoint. We are to be temperate in all things, because an incorruptible crown, a heavenly treasure, is before us. And now I wish to say to my brethren and sisters, I would have moral courage to take my position and to govern myself. I would not want to put that on someone else. You eat too much, and then you are sorry, and so you keep thinking upon what you eat and drink. Just eat that which is for the best, and go right away, feeling clear in the sight of Heaven, and not having remorse of conscience. We do not believe in removing temptations entirely away from either children or grown persons. We all have a warfare before us and must stand in a position to resist the temptations of Satan, and we want to know that we possess the power in ourselves to do this.

[375]

And while we would caution you not to overeat, even of the best quality of food, we would also caution those that are extremists not to raise a false standard and then endeavor to bring everybody to it. There are some who are starting out as health reformers who are not fit to engage in any other enterprise, and who have not sense enough to take care of their own families, or keep their proper place in the church. And what do they do? Why, they fall back as health reform physicians, as though they could make that a success. They assume the responsibilities of their practice, and take the lives of men and women into their hands, when they really know nothing about the business.

My voice shall be raised against novices undertaking to treat disease professedly according to the principles of health reform. God forbid that we should be the subjects for them to experiment upon! We are too few. It is altogether too inglorious a warfare for us to die in. God deliver us from such danger! We do not need such teachers and physicians. Let those try to treat disease who know something about the human system. The heavenly Physician was full of compassion. This spirit is needed by those who deal with the sick. Some who undertake to become physicians are bigoted, selfish, and mulish. You cannot teach them anything. It may be they have never done anything worth doing. They may not have made life a success. They know nothing really worth knowing, and yet they

have started up to practice the health reform. We cannot afford to let such persons kill off this one and that one. No; we cannot afford it!

We want to be just right every time. We want to bring our people up to the right position on the health reform. "Let us," says the apostle, "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." We must be right in order to stand in the last days. We need clear brains and sound minds in sound bodies. We should begin to work in earnest for our children, for every member of our families. Shall we take hold and work from the right standpoint? Jesus is coming; and if we pursue a course to blind ourselves to the soul-elevating truths of these last days, how can we be sanctified through the truth? How can we be prepared for immortality? May the Lord help us that we may commence to work here as never before.

[376]

We have spoken of having a series of meetings in this place, and of taking hold to labor for the people. But we dare not put our arms under to lift you. We want you to commence this work of reformation in your own houses. We want those that have been in the background to come up. You must begin to work. And when we see that you have commenced to labor for yourselves, we will come in and lift. We hope to reform your children, that they may be converted to Christ, and that the spirit of reformation may spread all through your midst. But when you appear twice dead, and ready to be plucked up by the roots, we dare not undertake the work. We would rather go to an unbelieving congregation where there are hearts to receive the truth. The burden of the truth is upon us. There are enough to hear the truth; and we long to be where we can speak it to them. Will you help us by going to work for yourselves?

May the Lord help you to feel as you never felt before. May He help you to die to self, and get the spirit of reformation in your homes, that the angels of God may come into your midst to minister unto you, and that you may be fitted for translation to heaven.

[377]

Chapter 53—Extremes in Health Reform

At the time of the yearly conference at Adams Center, New York, October 25, 1868, I was shown that the brethren in ----- were in great perplexity and distress because of the course pursued by B and C. Those who have the cause of God at heart cannot but feel jealous for its prosperity. I was shown that these men were not reliable. They were extremists and would run the health reform into the ground. They were not pursuing a course which would tend to correct or reform those who were intemperate in their diet; but their influence would disgust believers and unbelievers, and would drive them further from reform, instead of bringing them nearer to it.

Our views differ widely from those of the world in general. They are not popular. The masses will reject any theory, however reasonable it may be, if it lays a restriction upon the appetite. The taste is consulted instead of reason and health. All who leave the common track of custom, and advocate reform, will be opposed, accounted mad, insane, radical, let them pursue ever so consistent a course. But when men who advocate reform carry the matter to extremes, and are inconsistent in their course of action, people are not to blame if they do become disgusted with the health reform. These extremists do more injury in a few months than they can undo in their whole lives. By them the entire theory of our faith is brought into disrepute, and they can never bring those who witness such exhibitions of so-called health reform to think that there is anything good in it. These men are doing a work which Satan loves to see go on.

[378]

Those who advocate unpopular truth should be most consistent in their lives, and should be extremely careful to shun everything like extremes. They should not labor to see how far they can take their position from other men; but, otherwise, to see how near they can come to those whom they wish to reform, that they may help them to the position which they themselves so highly prize. If they feel thus, they will pursue a course which will recommend the truth

they advocate to the good judgment of candid, sensible men and women. These will be compelled to acknowledge that there is a consistency in the subject of health reform.

I was shown the course of B in his own family. He has been severe and overbearing. He adopted the health reform as advocated by Brother C, and, like him, took extreme views of the subject; and not having a well-balanced mind, he has made terrible blunders, the results of which time will not efface. Aided by items gathered from books, he commenced to carry out the theory he had heard advocated by Brother C, and, like him, made a point of bringing all up to the standard he had erected. He brought his own family to his rigid rules, but failed to control his own animal propensities. He failed to bring himself to the mark, and to keep his body under. If he had had a correct knowledge of the system of health reform he would have known that his wife was not in a condition to give birth to healthy children. His own unsubdued passions had borne sway without reasoning from cause to effect.

Before the birth of his children he did not treat his wife as a woman in her condition should be treated. He carried out his rigid rules for her, according to Brother C's ideas, which proved a great injury to her. He did not provide the quality and quantity of food that was necessary to nourish two lives instead of one. Another life was dependent upon her, and her system did not receive the nutritious, wholesome food necessary to sustain her strength. There was a lack in the quantity and in the quality. Her system required changes, a variety and quality of food that was more nourishing. Her children were born with feeble digestive powers and impoverished blood. From the food the mother was compelled to receive, she could not furnish a good quality of blood, and therefore gave birth to children filled with humors. [379]

The course pursued by the husband, the father of these children, deserves the severest censure. His wife suffered for want of wholesome, nutritious food. She did not have sufficient food or clothing to make her comfortable. She has borne a burden which has been galling to bear. He became God, conscience, and will to her. There are natures which will rebel against this assumed authority. They will not submit to such surveillance. They become weary of the pressure and rise above it. But it was not so in this case. She has

endured his being conscience for her and tried to feel that it was for the best. But outraged nature could not be so easily subdued. Her demands were earnest. The cravings of nature for something more nourishing led her to use entreaty, but without effect. Her wants were few, but they were not considered. Two children have been sacrificed to his blind errors and ignorant bigotry. Should men of intelligent minds treat dumb animals as he has treated his wife in regard to food, the community would take the matter into their own hands and bring them to justice.

[380] In the first place, B should not have committed so great a crime as to bring into being children that reason must teach him would be diseased because they must receive a miserable legacy from their parents. They must have a bad inheritance transmitted to them. Their blood must be filled with scrofulous humors from both parents, especially the father, whose habits have been such as to corrupt the blood and enervate his whole system. Not only must these poor children receive a scrofulous tendency in a double sense, but what is worse, they will bear the mental and moral deficiencies of the father, and the lack of noble independence, moral courage, and force in the mother. The world is already cursed by the increase of persons of this stamp, who must fall lower in the scale of physical, mental, and moral strength than their parents; for their condition and surroundings are not even as favorable as were those of their parents.

B is not capable of taking care of a family. He cannot sustain one as it ought to be sustained, and should never have had one. His marriage was all a mistake. He has made a life of misery for his wife, and has accumulated misery by having children born to them. Some of them exist, and that is about all.

Those professing to be Christians should not enter the marriage relation until the matter has been carefully and prayerfully considered from an elevated standpoint to see if God can be glorified by the union. Then they should duly consider the result of every privilege of the marriage relation, and sanctified principle should be the basis of every action. Before increasing their family, they should take into consideration whether God would be glorified or dishonored by their bringing children into the world. They should seek to glorify God by their union from the first, and during every year of their married life.

They should calmly consider what provision can be made for their children. They have no right to bring children into the world to be a burden to others. Have they a business that they can rely upon to sustain a family so that they need not become a burden to others? If they have not, they commit a crime in bringing children into the world to suffer for want of proper care, food, and clothing. In this fast, corrupt age these things are not considered. Lustful passion bears sway and will not submit to control, although feebleness, misery, and death are the result of its reign. Women are forced to a life of hardship, pain, and suffering because of the uncontrollable passions of men who bear the name of husband—more rightly could they be called brutes. Mothers drag out a miserable existence, with children in their arms nearly all the time, managing every way to put bread into their mouths and clothes upon their backs. Such accumulated misery fills the world.

[381]

There is but little real, genuine, devoted, pure love. This precious article is very rare. Passion is termed love. Many a woman has had her fine and tender sensibilities outraged, because the marriage relation allowed him whom she called husband to be brutal in his treatment of her. His love she found to be of so base a quality that she became disgusted.

Very many families are living in a most unhappy state because the husband and father allows the animal in his nature to predominate over the intellectual and moral. The result is that a sense of languor and depression is frequently felt, but the cause is seldom divined as being the result of their own improper course of action. We are under solemn obligations to God to keep the spirit pure and the body healthy, that we may be a benefit to humanity, and render to God perfect service. The apostle utters these words of warning: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." He urges us onward by telling us that "every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." He exhorts all who call themselves Christians to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." He says: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

It is an error generally committed to make no difference in the life of a woman previous to the birth of her children. At this important

[382]

period the labor of the mother should be lightened. Great changes are going on in her system. It requires a greater amount of blood, and therefore an increase of food of the most nourishing quality to convert into blood. Unless she has an abundant supply of nutritious food, she cannot retain her physical strength, and her offspring is robbed of vitality. Her clothing also demands attention. Care should be taken to protect the body from a sense of chilliness. She should not call vitality unnecessarily to the surface to supply the want of sufficient clothing. If the mother is deprived of an abundance of wholesome, nutritious food, she will lack in the quantity and quality of blood. Her circulation will be poor, and her child will lack in the very same things. There will be an inability in the offspring to appropriate food which it can convert into good blood to nourish the system. The prosperity of mother and child depends much upon good, warm clothing and a supply of nourishing food. The extra draft upon the vitality of the mother must be considered and provided for.

But, on the other hand, the idea that women, because of their special condition, may let the appetite run riot, is a mistake based on custom, but not on sound sense. The appetite of women in this condition may be variable, fitful, and difficult to gratify; and custom allows her to have anything she may fancy, without consulting reason as to whether such food can supply nutrition for her body and for the growth of her child. The food should be nutritious, but should not be of an exciting quality. Custom says that if she wants flesh meats, pickles, spiced food, or mince pies, let her have them; appetite alone is to be consulted. This is a great mistake, and does much harm. The harm cannot be estimated. If ever there is need of simplicity of diet and special care as to the quality of food eaten, it is in this important period.

[383]

Women who possess principle, and who are well instructed, will not depart from simplicity of diet at this time of all others. They will consider that another life is dependent upon them, and will be careful in all their habits, and especially in diet. They should not eat that which is innutritious and exciting, simply because it tastes good. There are too many counselors ready to persuade them to do things which reason would tell them they ought not to do.

Diseased children are born because of the gratification of appetite by the parents. The system did not demand the variety of food upon which the mind dwelt. Because once in the mind it must be in the stomach, is a great error, which Christian women should reject. Imagination should not be allowed to control the wants of the system. Those who allow the taste to rule, will suffer the penalty of transgressing the laws of their being. And the matter does not end here; their innocent offspring also will be sufferers.

The blood-making organs cannot convert spices, mince pies, pickles, and diseased flesh meats into good blood. And if so much food is taken into the stomach that the digestive organs are compelled to overwork in order to dispose of it and to free the system from irritating substances, the mother does injustice to herself and lays the foundation of disease in her offspring. If she chooses to eat as she pleases, and what she may fancy, irrespective of consequences, she will bear the penalty, but not alone. Her innocent child must suffer because of her indiscretion.

Great care should be exercised to have the surroundings of the mother pleasant and happy. The husband and father is under special responsibility to do all in his power to lighten the burden of the wife and mother. He should bear, as much as possible, the burden of her condition. He should be affable, courteous, kind, and tender, and specially attentive to all her wants. Not half the care is taken of some women while they are bearing children that is taken of animals in the stable.

B has been very deficient. While in her best condition of health, his wife was not provided with a plenty of wholesome food and with proper clothing. Then, when she needed extra clothing and extra food, and that of a simple yet nutritious quality, it was not allowed her. Her system craved material to convert into blood, but he would not provide it. A moderate amount of milk and sugar, and a little salt, white bread raised with yeast for a change, graham flour prepared in a variety of ways by other hands than her own, plain cake with raisins, rice pudding with raisins, prunes, and figs, occasionally, and many other dishes I might mention, would have answered the demand of appetite. If he could not obtain some of these things, a little domestic wine would have done her no injury; it would have been better for her to have it than to do without it. In some cases,

[384]

even a small amount of the least hurtful meat would do less injury than to suffer strong cravings for it.

I was shown that both B and C have dishonored the cause of God. They have brought upon it a stain which will never be fully wiped out. I was shown the family of our dear Brother D. If this brother had received proper help at the right time, every member of his family would have been alive today. It is a wonder that the laws of the land have not been enforced in this instance of maltreatment. That family were perishing for food, the plainest, simplest food. They were starving in a land of plenty. A novice was practicing upon them. The young man did not die of disease, but of hunger. Food would have strengthened the system and kept the machinery in motion.

[385]

In cases of severe fever, abstinence from food for a short time will lessen the fever and make the use of water more effectual. But the acting physician needs to understand the real condition of the patient and not allow him to be restricted in diet for a great length of time until his system becomes enfeebled. While the fever is raging, food may irritate and excite the blood; but as soon as the strength of the fever is broken, nourishment should be given in a careful, judicious manner. If food is withheld too long, the stomach's craving for it will create fever, which will be relieved by a proper allowance of food of a right quality. It gives nature something to work upon. If there is a great desire expressed for food, even during the fever to gratify that desire with a moderate amount of simple food would be less injurious than for the patient to be denied. When he can get his mind upon nothing else, nature will not be overburdened with a small portion of simple food.

Those who take the lives of others in their hands must be men who have been marked as making life a success. They must be men of judgment and wisdom, men who can sympathize and feel to the depths, men whose whole being is stirred when they witness suffering. Some men who have been unsuccessful in every other enterprise in life take up the business of a physician. They take the lives of men and women in their hands, when they have had no experience. They read a plan which somebody has followed with success, and adopt it, and then practice upon those who have confidence in them, actually destroying the last spark of life; yet

after all they do not learn anything, but will go on just as sanguine in the next case, observing the same rigid treatment. Some persons may have a power of constitution sufficient to withstand the terrible tax imposed upon them, and live. Then the novices take the glory to themselves, when none is due them. Everything is due to God and to a powerful constitution.

Brother C has been occupying an unworthy position in standing as a prop for B. He has been mind for him, and has stood by to sustain and back him up. These two men are fanatics on the subject of health reform. Brother C knows much less than he thinks he does. He is deceived in himself. He is selfish and bigoted in carrying out his views; he is not teachable. He has not had a subdued will. He is not a man of humble mind. Such a man has no business to be a physician. He may have gained some little knowledge by reading, but this is not enough. Experience is necessary. Our people are too [386] few to be sacrificed so cheaply and ingloriously as to submit to being experimented upon by such men. Altogether too many precious ones would fall a sacrifice to their rigid views and notions before they would give up, confess their errors, and learn wisdom by experience.

Brother C is too set and willful, and too unteachable for the Lord to use to do any special work in His cause. He is too stubborn to let a few sacrificed lives change his course. He would maintain his views and notions all the more earnestly. These men will yet learn to their sorrow that they might better be teachable, and not drive their extreme views, whatever the result may be. The community will be just as well off, and a little safer upon the whole, if both these men obtain employment in some other business where life and health will not be endangered by their course of action.

It is a great responsibility to take the life of a human being in hand. And to have that precious life sacrificed through mismanagement is dreadful. The case of Brother D's family is terrible. These men may excuse their course; but that will not save the cause of God from reproach, nor bring back that son who suffered and died for the want of food. A little good wine and food would have brought him up from a bed of death and given him back to his family. The father also would soon have been numbered with the dead if the same course had been continued which had been pursued toward the

son, but the presence and timely counsel of a doctor from the Health Institute saved him.

[387]

It is time that something was done to prevent novices from taking the field and advocating health reform. Their works and words can be spared; for they do more injury than the wisest and most intelligent men, with the best influence they can exert, can counteract. It is impossible for the best qualified advocates of health reform to fully relieve the minds of the public from the prejudice received through the wrong course of these extremists and to place the great subject of health reform upon a right basis in the community where these men have figured. The door is also closed in a great measure, so that unbelievers cannot be reached by the present truth upon the Sabbath and the soon coming of our Saviour. The most precious truths are cast aside by the people as unworthy of a hearing. These men are referred to as representatives of health reformers and Sabbathkeepers in general. A great responsibility rests upon those who have thus proved a stumbling block to unbelievers.

Brother C needs a thorough conversion. He does not see himself. If he possessed less self-esteem and more humility of mind, his knowledge could be put to a practical use. He has a work to do for himself which no one else can do for him. He will not yield his views or judgment to any man living, unless compelled to do so. He has traits of character which are most unfortunate and which should be overcome. He is more accountable than B, and his case is worse than his; for he possesses more intellect and knowledge. B has been the shadow of his mind.

Brother C has a set will; his likes and dislikes are very strong. If he starts on a wrong track, and follows the bent of his mind, not moving in wisdom, and his error is presented before him, even if he knows he is not right, he is so reluctant to acknowledge that he has been in error and has pursued a wrong course that he will frame some kind of excuse to make others believe that he is, after all, about right. This is the reason why he has been left to follow his own judgment and wisdom, which are foolishness.

[388]

In his father's family he has not been a blessing, but a cause of anxiety and sorrow. His will was not subdued in childhood. He had such a reluctance to acknowledge frankly that he had made mistakes and done wrong that, to get out of the difficulty, he would set the

powers of his mind at work to invent some excuse that he flattered himself was not a direct lie, rather than humble himself sufficiently to confess his wrong. This habit has been brought with him into his religious experience. He has a peculiar faculty of turning away a point by pleading forgetfulness, when, many times, he chooses to forget.

His relatives and friends might have been brought into the truth had he been what God would have him to be. But his set ways have made him disagreeable. He has used the truth as a subject to quarrel over. In spite of his father's opposition he has talked Bible subjects in his father's family, and has used the most objectionable subjects to quarrel over, instead of seeking in all humbleness of mind, and with an undying love for souls, to win to the truth and bring to the light.

When he has pursued a wrong course, evidently unbecoming a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, and has known that his words and acts were not in accordance with the sanctifying influence of truth, he has mulishly stood in his own defense, until his honesty has been questioned. He has made the most precious truth for these last days disgusting to his friends and relatives; he has proved a stumbling block to them. His evasions, his bigotry, and the extreme views he has taken have turned more souls away from the truth than his best endeavors have brought into it.

His combativeness, firmness, and self-esteem are large. He cannot bless any church with his influence until he is converted. He can see the faults of others, and will question the course of this one and that one if they do not fully endorse what he may present; but if anyone receives what he advocates, he cannot and will not see their faults and errors. This is not right. He may be correct upon many points, but he has not the mind which dwelt in Christ. When he can see himself as he is, and will correct the defects in his character, then he will be in a position to let his light so shine before men, that they, by seeing his good works, may be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven. His light has shone in such a manner that men have pronounced it darkness and turned from it in disgust. Self must die, and he must possess a teachable spirit, or he will be left to follow his own ways and be filled with his own doings.

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” “To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers [not talking the truth in a boasting, triumphant manner], but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.” “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”

Brother C wants *his* mind to control others, and unless he can have this privilege he is dissatisfied. He is not a peacemaker. His course will cause more confusion and distrust in a church than any ten persons can counteract. His peculiar temperament is such that he will be picking flaws, and finding fault with all but himself. He will not prosper until he learns the lesson that he ought to have learned years ago, humbleness of mind. At his age he will learn this lesson at much cost to self. All his life he has been trying to build himself up, to save himself, to preserve his own life; and he has lost his labor every time.

[390] What Brother C needs is to have the deceptive gloss taken from his eyes, that he may look, with eyes enlightened by the Spirit of God, into his own heart, and test and weigh every motive, and not let Satan put a false coloring upon his course of action. His position is extremely perilous. He will soon turn decidedly to the right, or he will go on deceiving others and deceiving himself. He needs to have his inmost soul converted, and to be subdued and transformed by the renewing of his mind. Then he can do good. But he can never come into the light until he encourages a spirit of humble confession and takes hold with decision to right his wrongs and, as far as he can, to do away the reproach he has brought upon the cause of God.

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Chapter 54—Sensuality in the Young

Dear Brother and Sister E,

It has been some time since I have taken my pen to write anything except urgent letters which could not be delayed. I have had a discouraging weight upon my spirits for months, which has nearly crushed me. That which discourages me the most is the fear that all I may write will do no more good than has our earnest, anxious, wearing labor in ----- the past winter and spring. The hopeless view I have taken of matters and things at that place has kept my pen nearly still and my voice nearly silent. My hands have been weakened and my heart depressed, to see nothing gained by the protracted effort there. I am nearly hopeless in regard to our efforts' being successful to awaken the sensibilities of our Sabbathkeeping people to see the elevated position which God requires them to occupy. They do not view religious things from an elevated standpoint. This is just your condition.

The Lord has given me a view of some of the corruptions everywhere existing. Wickedness, crime, and sensuality exist even in high places. Even in the churches professing to keep God's commandments there are sinners and hypocrites. It is sin, not trial and suffering, which separates God from His people and renders the soul incapable of enjoying and glorifying Him. It is sin that is destroying souls. Sin and vice exist in Sabbathkeeping families. Moral pollution has done more than every other evil to cause the race to degenerate. It is practiced to an alarming extent and brings on disease of almost every description. Even very small children, infants, being born with natural irritability of the sexual organs, find momentary relief in handling them, which only increases the irritation, and leads to a repetition of the act, until a habit is established which increases with their growth. These children, generally puny and dwarfed, are prescribed for by physicians and drugged; but the evil is not removed. The cause still exists.

[391]

Parents do not generally suspect that their children understand anything about this vice. In very many cases the parents are the real sinners. They have abused their marriage privileges, and by indulgence have strengthened their animal passions. And as these have strengthened, the moral and intellectual faculties have become weak. The spiritual has been overborne by the brutish. Children are born with the animal propensities largely developed, the parents' own stamp of character having been given to them. The unnatural action of the sensitive organs produces irritation. They are easily excited, and momentary relief is experienced in exercising them. But the evil constantly increases. The drain upon the system is sensibly felt. The brain force is weakened, and memory becomes deficient. Children born to these parents will almost invariably take naturally to the disgusting habits of secret vice. The marriage covenant is sacred, but what an amount of lust and crime it covers! Those who feel at liberty, because married, to degrade their bodies by beastly indulgence of the animal passions, will have their degraded course perpetuated in their children. The sins of the parents will be visited upon their children because the parents have given them the stamp of their own lustful propensities.

[392] Those who have become fully established in this soul-and-body-destroying vice can seldom rest until their burden of secret evil is imparted to those with whom they associate. Curiosity is at once aroused, and the knowledge of vice is passed from youth to youth, from child to child, until there is scarcely one to be found ignorant of the practice of this degrading sin.

Your children have practiced self-abuse until the draft upon the brain has been so great, especially in the case of your eldest son, that their minds have been seriously injured. The brilliancy of youthful intellect is dimmed. The moral and intellectual powers have become weakened, while the baser part of their nature has been gaining the ascendancy. For this reason your son turns with loathing from religious things. He has been losing his power of self-restraint, and has less and less reverence for sacred things, and less respect for anything of a spiritual character. You have charged this to your surroundings, but you have not known the real cause. Your son can be said to bear the impress of the satanic instead of the divine. He loves

sin and evil rather than true goodness, purity, and righteousness. It is a deplorable picture.

The effect of such debasing habits is not the same upon all minds. There are some children who have the moral powers largely developed, who, by associating with children that practice self-abuse, become initiated into this vice. The effect upon such will be too frequently to make them melancholy, irritable, and jealous; yet such may not lose their respect for religious worship, and may not show special infidelity in regard to spiritual things. They will at times suffer keenly from feelings of remorse, and will feel degraded in their own eyes, and lose their self-respect.

Brother and sister, you are not clear before God. You have failed to do your duty at home, in your own family. You have not controlled your children. You have greatly failed to know and do the will of God, and His blessing has not rested upon your family. Brother E, you have been selfish. You have had large self-esteem. You have thought that you possessed a good degree of humility, but you have not understood yourself. Your ways are not right before God. Your influence and example have not been in accordance with your profession. You have much fault to find with others; you see deviations from the right in them, but you are blind to the same in yourself. [393]

Sister E has been far from God. Her heart has not been subdued by grace. Her love of the world, and of the things that are in the world, has closed her heart to the love of God. The love of dress and appearance has kept her from good, and led her to place her mind and affections upon these frivolous things. Unbelief has been strengthening in her heart, and she has had less and less love for the truth, and could see but little attraction in the simplicity of true godliness. She has not encouraged a growth of Christian graces. She has not loved humility or devotion. She has taken the errors of those who professed to be devoted to the truth, and made their lack of spirituality, their errors, and their sins an excuse for her world-loving disposition. She has watched the course of those who were connected with the -----, and who were forward to take upon them the burdens of the church, and has offset her failures to their wrongs, saying that she was no worse than they. Such and such individuals in good standing did this or that, and she had as good a right as they.

Such and such ones did not live the health reform any better than she; they purchased and ate meat, and they were in high standing in the church, and she was excusable, of course, with such an example, if she did the same.

[394] This is not the only case where neglect to follow the light which the Lord has given has been shielded behind the faults of others. It is to the shame of men and women of intelligence that they have no higher standard than that of imperfect human beings. The course of those around them, however imperfect, is considered by some a sufficient excuse for them to follow in the same path. Many will be swayed by the influence of some leading brother. If he departs from the counsel of God his example is at once gladly seized by the unconsecrated, who now feel that they are free from restraint. They now have an excuse; and their unconsecrated hearts glory in the opportunity of indulging their desires and taking a step nearer the fellowship with the spirit of the world, where they can enjoy its pleasures and gratify their appetite. They therefore place upon their tables those things which are not the most healthful, and from which they have been taught to abstain, that they may preserve to themselves a better condition of health.

There has been a war in the hearts of some ever since the health reform was first introduced. They have felt the same rebellion as did the children of Israel when their appetites were restricted on their journey from Egypt to Canaan. Professed followers of Christ, who have all their lives consulted their own pleasure and their own interests, their own ease and their own appetites, are not prepared to change their course of action and live for the glory of God, imitating the self-sacrificing life of their unerring Pattern. A perfect example has been given for Christians to imitate. The words and works of Christ's followers are the channel through which the pure principles of truth and holiness are conveyed to the world. His followers are the salt of the earth, the light of the world.

[395] Sister E, you cannot realize the many blessings you have lost by making the failings of others a balm to soothe your conscience for a neglect of your duty. You have been measuring yourself by others. Their crooked paths, their failings, have been your textbook. But their errors, their follies and sins, do not make your disobedience to God less sinful. We regret that those who should be a strength to

you in your efforts to overcome your love of self, your pride of heart, your vanity and love of the approbation of worldlings, have been only a hindrance by their own lack of spirituality and true godliness. We cannot tell you how much we regret that those who should be self-denying Christians are so far from coming up to the standard. Those who should be steadfast, abounding in the work of God, are weakened by Satan because they remain at such a distance from God. They fail to obtain the power of His grace, through which they might overcome the infirmities of their nature, and, by obtaining signal victories in God, show those of weaker faith the way, the truth, and the life.

That which has caused us the greatest discouragement has been to see those in ----- who have had years of experience in the cause and work of God, shorn of their strength by their own unfaithfulness. They are outgeneraled by the enemy in nearly every attack. God would have made these persons strong, like faithful sentinels at their post, to guard the fort, had they walked in the light He had given them and remained steadfast to duty, seeking to know and do the whole will of God. Satan will, no doubt, through his delusions deceive these delinquent souls, and make them believe that they are about right after all. They have committed no grievous, outbreaking sins, and they must, after all, be on the true foundation, and God will accept their works. They see no special sins to repent of, no sins which call for special humiliation, humble confession, and rending of heart. The delusion upon such is strong indeed when they mistake the form of godliness for the power thereof, and flatter themselves that they are rich and have need of nothing. The curse of Meroz rests upon them: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

[396]

My sister, excuse not your defects because others are wrong. In the day of God you will not dare to plead as an excuse for your neglect to form a character for heaven, that others did not manifest devotion and spirituality. The same lack which you discovered in others was in yourself. And the fact that others were sinners makes your sins nonetheless grievous. Both they and you, if you continue in your present state of unfitness, will be separated from Christ, and will with Satan and his angels be punished with everlasting

destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

The Lord made ample provision for you, that if you would seek Him, and follow the light He would give you, you should not fall by the way. The word of God was given to you as a lamp to your feet, a light to your path. If you stumble, it will be because you have not consulted your guide, the word of God, and made that precious word the rule of your life. God has not given you as a pattern the life of any human being, however good and apparently blameless his life may be. If you do as others do, and act as others act, you will at last be left outside the Holy City, with a vast multitude who have done just as you have done, followed a pattern the Lord did not leave them, and who are lost just as you will be lost.

That which others have done, or may do in the future, will not lessen your responsibility or guilt. A pattern has been given you, a faultless life characterized by self-denial and disinterested benevolence. If you turn from this correct, this perfect pattern, and take an incorrect one, which has been clearly represented in the word of God as one that you should shun, your course of action will receive its merited reward; your life will be a failure.

[397] One of the greatest reasons for the declension of the church at ----- is their measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves. There are but few who have the living principle in the soul and who serve God with an eye single to His glory. Many at ----- will not consent to be saved in God's appointed way. They will not take the trouble to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. The latter they do not experience; and, rather than be at the trouble of obtaining an experience through individual effort, they will run the risk of leaning upon others and trusting in their experience. They cannot consent to watch and pray, to live for God and Him only. It is more pleasant to live in obedience to self.

The church at ----- are filled with their own backslidings, and they need not dream of prosperity until those who name the name of Christ are careful to depart from all iniquity, until they learn to refuse the evil and choose the good. We are required to watch and pray without ceasing; for a snare is set in our path, and we shall find some device of Satan when and where we least expect it. If at that

particular time we are not watching unto prayer we shall be taken by the enemy and meet with decided loss.

What a responsibility has rested upon you as parents! How little have you felt the weight of this burden! Pride of heart, love of show, and the indulgence of appetite have occupied your minds. These things have been first with you, and the incoming of the foe has not been perceived. He has planted his standard in your house and stamped his detestable image upon the characters of your children. But you were so blinded by the god of this world, so deadened to spiritual and divine things, that you could not discern the advantage which Satan had gained nor his workings right in your family.

You have brought children into the world who have had no voice in regard to their existence. You have made yourselves responsible in a great measure for their future happiness, their eternal well-being. The burden is upon you, whether you are sensible of it or not, to train these children for God, to watch with jealous care the first approach of the wily foe and be prepared to raise a standard against him. Build a fortification of prayer and faith about your children, and exercise diligent watching thereunto. You are not secure a moment against the attacks of Satan. You have no time to rest from watchful, earnest labor. You should not sleep a moment at your post. This is a most important warfare. Eternal consequences are involved. It is life or death with you and your family. Your only safety is to break your hearts before God and seek the kingdom of heaven as little children. You cannot be victors in this warfare if you continue to pursue the course you have pursued. You are not very near the kingdom of heaven. [398]

Some who have not professed Christ are nearer the kingdom of God than are very many professed Sabbathkeepers in ----- . You have not kept yourselves in the love of God and taught your children the fear of the Lord. You have not taught them the truth diligently, when you rose up, and when you sat down, when you went out, and when you came in. You have not restrained them. You look to other children and solace yourselves by saying: "My children are no worse than they." This may be true, but does the neglect of others to do their duty lessen the force of the requirements which God has especially enjoined upon you as parents? He has placed upon you the responsibility to bring these children up for Him, and

[399] their salvation depends in a great degree upon the education they receive in their childhood. This responsibility others cannot take; it is yours, solely yours, as parents. You may bring to your aid all the helps you can to assist in the solemn and important work; but after you have done this, there is a power above every human agency, that will work with you through the means which it is your privilege to use. God will come to your aid, and upon His power you can rely. This power is infinite. Human agencies may not prove successful, but God can make them fruitful by working in and through them.

You have a work to do to set your house in order. Pure, sinless angels cannot delight to come into a dwelling where so much iniquity is practiced. You are asleep at your post. Things of minor importance have occupied your minds to the exclusion of more weighty matters. It should be the first business of your life to seek the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness; then you have the promise that all things shall be added. Here is where you have failed in your family. Had you been agonizing that you and yours might enter in at the strait gate, you would have earnestly gathered every ray of light that the Lord has permitted to shine upon your pathway, and would have cherished and walked in it.

You have not regarded the light that the Lord has graciously given you upon the health reform. You have felt to rise up against it. You have seen no importance in it, no reason why you should receive it. You have not felt willing to restrict your appetite. You could not see the wisdom of God in giving light in regard to the restriction of appetite. All that you could discern was the inconvenience attending the denial of the taste. The Lord has let His light shine upon us in these last days, that the gloom and darkness which have been gathering in past generations because of sinful indulgences might in some degree be dispelled, and that the train of evils which have resulted because of intemperate eating and drinking might be lessened.

[400] The Lord in wisdom designed to bring His people into a position where they would be separate from the world in spirit and practice, that their children might not so readily be led into idolatry and become tainted with the prevailing corruptions of this age. It is God's design that believing parents and their children should stand forth as living representatives of Christ, candidates for everlasting life. All who are partakers of the divine nature will escape the

corruption that is in the world through lust. It is impossible for those who indulge the appetite to attain to Christian perfection. You cannot arouse the moral sensibilities of your children while you are not careful in the selection of their food. The tables that parents usually prepare for their children are a snare to them. Their diet is not simple, and is not prepared in a healthful manner. The food is frequently rich and fever-producing, having a tendency to irritate and excite the tender coats of the stomach. The animal propensities are strengthened and bear sway, while the moral and intellectual powers are weakened and become servants to the baser passions. You should study to prepare a simple yet nutritious diet. Flesh meats, and rich cakes and pies prepared with spices of any kind, are not the most healthful and nourishing diet. Eggs should not be placed upon your table. [See [Appendix](#).] They are an injury to your children. Fruits and grains, prepared in the most simple form, are the most healthful, and will impart the greatest amount of nourishment to the body, and, at the same time, not impair the intellect.

Regularity in eating is very important for health of body and serenity of mind. Your children should eat only at the regular meal-time. They should not be allowed to digress from this established rule. When you, Sister E, absent yourself from home, you cannot control these important matters. Already your eldest son has enervated his entire system and laid the foundation for permanent disease. Your second child is fast following in his steps, and not one of your children is safe from this evil.

You may be unable to obtain the truth from your children in regard to their habits. Those who practice secret vice will lie and deceive. Your children may deceive you, for you are not in a condition where you can know if they attempt to lead you astray. You have so long been blinded by the enemy that you have scarcely a ray of light to discern darkness. There is a great, a solemn, and an important work for you to do at once, to set your own hearts and house in order. Your only safe course is to take right hold of this work. Do not deceive yourselves into the belief that, after all, this matter is placed before you in an exaggerated light. I have not colored the picture. I have stated facts which will bear the test of the judgment. Awake! awake! I beseech you, before it shall be too late for wrongs to be righted, and you and your children perish in the general ruin.

[401]

Take hold of the solemn work, and bring to your aid every ray of light you can gather that has shone upon your pathway and that you have not cherished, and, together with the aid of the light now shining, commence an investigation of your life and character as if you were before the tribunal of God. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," is the exhortation of the apostle. Vice and corruption abound on every hand, and unless you have more than human strength to rely upon to stand against so powerful a current of evil, you will be overcome and borne down with the current to perdition. Without holiness no man shall see God.

[402] The Lord is proving and testing His people. Angels of God are watching the development of character and weighing moral worth. Probation is almost ended, and you are unready. Oh, that the word of warning might burn into your souls! Get ready! get ready! Work while the day lasts, for the night cometh when no man can work. The mandate will go forth: He that is holy, let him be holy still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. The destiny of all will be decided. A few, yes, only a few, of the vast number who people the earth will be saved unto life eternal, while the masses who have not perfected their souls in obeying the truth will be appointed to the second death. O Saviour, save the purchase of Thy blood! is the cry of my anguished heart.

I greatly fear for you and for many who profess to believe the truth in ----- . Oh, search, search diligently your own hearts, and make thorough work for the judgment! I am pained at heart when I call to mind how many children of Sabbathkeeping parents are ruining soul and body with secret vice. Near you is a family who reveal their evil habits in their bodies as well as their minds. These children are on the direct road to perdition. They are debased themselves, and have instructed many others in this vice. The eldest boy is dwarfed, physically and mentally, by indulging in its practice. What little intellect he has left is of a low order. If he continues in this vicious practice he will eventually become idiotic. Every indulgence of children who have attained their growth is a terrible evil and will produce terrible results, enervating the system and weakening the intellect. But in those who indulge this corrupting vice before attaining their growth, the evil effects are more plainly marked, and recovery from its effects is more nearly hopeless. The

frame is weak and stunted; the muscles are flabby; the eyes become small, and appear at times swollen; the memory is treacherous, and becomes sievelike; and inability to concentrate the thoughts upon study increases.

To the parents of these children I would say: You have brought children into the world to be only a curse to society. They are unruly, passionate, quarrelsome, and vicious. Their influence upon others is corrupting. They bear the stamp of the father's character, of his base passions. His hasty, violent temper is reflected in them. These parents should long ago have removed to the country, thus separating themselves and children from the society of those whom they could not benefit, but would only harm. Steady industry upon a farm would have proved a blessing to these children, and constant employment, as their strength could bear, would have given them less opportunity to corrupt their own bodies by self-abuse, and would have prevented them from instructing a large number in this hellish practice. Labor is a great blessing to all children, especially to that class whose minds are naturally inclined to vice and depravity.

[403]

These children have communicated more knowledge of vice in ----- than all the united efforts of ministers and people professing godliness can counteract. Many who have learned of your children will go to perdition rather than control their passions and cease the indulgence of this sin. One corrupt mind can sow more evil seed in a short period of time than many can root out in a whole lifetime. Your children are a byword in the mouths of blasphemers of the truth. These are the children of Sabbathkeepers, but they are worse than the children of worldlings in general. They possess less refinement, less self-respect. Brother F has been no honor to the cause of God. His impetuous temper and general influence have not had a tendency to elevate, but to bring down to a low level. The cause of God has been brought into disrepute by his lack of judgment and refinement. It would have been far better for the cause of truth had this family removed long ago to a less important post, where they would have been more secluded and their influence less felt. Their children have lived in the light of truth and have had privileges that but few children have had; yet all this time they have not been benefited, but have been growing more and more hardened in depravity. Their removal would be a blessing to the church and to society, and to the

entire family. Steady employment upon land would be a blessing to father and children if they would profit by the advantages of farm life.

[404] I saw that the family of Brother G need a great work done for them. H and I have gone to great lengths in this crime of self-abuse; especially is this true of H, who has gone so far in the practice of this sin that his intellect is affected, his eye-sight is weakened, and disease is fastening itself upon him. Satan has almost full control of this poor boy's mind, but his parents are not awake to see the evil and its results. His mind is debased, his conscience hardened, his moral sensibilities benumbed, and he will be a ready victim for evil associates to lead into sin and crime. Brother and Sister G, arouse yourselves, I beg of you. You have not received the light of health reform and acted upon it. If you had restricted your appetites you would have been saved much extra labor and expense; and, what is of vastly more consequence, you would have preserved to yourselves a better condition of physical health and a greater degree of intellectual strength to appreciate eternal truths; you would have a clearer brain to weigh the evidences of truth and would be better prepared to give to others a reason of the hope that is in you. Your food is not of that simple, healthful quality which will make the best kind of blood. Foul blood will surely becloud the moral and intellectual powers, and arouse and strengthen the baser passions of your nature. Neither of you can afford a feverish diet, for it is at the expense of the health of the body and the prosperity of your own souls and the souls of your children.

[405] You place upon your table food which taxes the digestive organs, excites the animal passions, and weakens the moral and intellectual faculties. Rich food and flesh meats are no benefit to you. Could you know just the nature of the meat you eat, could you see the animals when living from which the flesh is taken when dead, you would turn with loathing from your flesh meats. The very animals whose flesh you eat are frequently so diseased that, if left alone, they would die of themselves; but while the breath of life is in them, they are killed and brought to market. You take directly into your system humors and poison of the worst kind, and yet you realize it not. You love to indulge appetite. You have this lesson to learn: Whether

therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

I entreat you, for Christ’s sake, to set your house and hearts in order. Let the truth of heavenly origin elevate and sanctify you, soul, body, and spirit. “Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” Brother G, your eating has a tendency to strengthen the baser passions. You do not control your body as it is your duty to do in order to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Temperance in eating must be practiced before you can be a patient man. Remember that you have given to your children, in a great degree, the stamp of your own character. You should guard yourself, and not be harsh, severe, or impatient. Deal with them decidedly, yet patiently, lovingly, pityingly, as Jesus has dealt with you. Be careful how you censure. Bear with your children, yet restrain them. This you have neglected too much. You have not corrected them in the right manner, not having perfect control of your own spirit. A great work must be done for you both.

Brother G, if you had gone on from strength to strength, following in the light the Lord has given, He would now have chosen you as an instrument of righteousness. You have talents; you have ability; you can work for God’s glory; but you have not made an entire surrender of yourself to God. Oh, that you would even now seek meekness, seek the righteousness of Christ, that you might be hid in the day of the Lord’s fierce anger!

My dear brother and sister, you should take hold unitedly and perseveringly to right your mismanagement of your children. Sister G has been too indulgent; yet unitedly and in love you can do much, even now, to bind your children to your hearts and instruct them in the good and right way. You have a work to do in setting your own hearts and house in order. You should cultivate harmonious action. The transforming influence of the Spirit of God can do a great work for you both, and will unite your hearts and efforts in the work of reform in your own family. All repining, murmuring, and hasty irritability should cease. Its effects are to weaken you both and to destroy the influence you must exert if you succeed in training your children for heaven.

Satan now has the field. Your poor children are his captives; he has control of their minds and causes them to take a low turn. Their

moral sensibilities seem paralyzed. They have practiced self-abuse and gloried in their iniquities. Such boys are capable of poisoning an entire neighborhood or community, and their pernicious influence will endanger all who are brought in contact with them in school capacity. Your children are corrupt in body and in mind. Vice has placed its marks upon your elder children. They are tainted, deeply tainted, with sin. The animal propensities predominate, while the moral and intellectual faculties are very weak. The baser passions have gained strength by exercise, while conscience has become hardened and seared. This is the influence which vice will have upon the mental powers. Those who give themselves up to work the ruin of their own bodies and minds do not stop here. Eventually they will be found ready for crime in almost any form, for their consciences are seared. Parents have not been half aroused to realize their responsibility in becoming parents. They are remiss in their duty. They do not teach their children the sinfulness of these dangerous, virtue-destroying habits. Until parents arouse, there is no hope for their children.

[407] I might mention the cases of many others, but will forbear, except in a few instances. J is a dangerous associate. He is a subject of this vice. His influence is bad. The grace of God has no influence upon his heart. He has a good intellect, and his father has trusted much to this to balance him; but mental power alone is not a guarantee of virtuous superiority. The absence of religious principle makes him corrupt at heart and sly in his wrongdoing. His influence is pernicious everywhere. He is infidel in his principles and glories in his skepticism. When with those of his own age, or those younger than himself, he talks knowingly of religious things and jests and sneers at truth and the Bible. This pretended knowledge has an influence to corrupt minds and lead young men to feel ashamed of the truth. Such companions should be wholly avoided, for this is the only sure course of safety. Young girls are enamored with the society of this young man; even some who profess to be Christians prefer such society.

K is a boy who can be molded if surrounded by correct influences. He needs a right example. If the young who profess Christ would honor Him in their lives, they could exert an influence which would counteract the pernicious influence of such youth as J. But the young

generally have no more religion than those who have never named the name of Christ. They do not depart from iniquity. A smart, intelligent boy, like J, can have a powerful influence for evil. If this intelligence were controlled by virtue and rectitude, it would be powerful for good; but if it is swayed by depravity, its evil influence upon his associates cannot be estimated, and it will assuredly sink him in perdition. A good intellect corrupted makes a very bad heart. A brilliant intellect sanctified by the Spirit of God exerts a hidden power and diffuses light and purity upon all with whom the happy possessor associates.

If a boy of such mental abilities as J would surrender his heart to Christ, it would be his salvation. By means of pure religion his intel- [408]
lect would be brought into a healthy channel; his mental and moral powers would become vigorous and harmonious; the conscience, illuminated by divine grace, would be quick and pure, controlling the will and desires, and leading to frankness and uprightness in every act of life. Without the principles of religion, this boy will be cunning, artful, sly, in an evil course, and will poison all with whom he associates. I warn all the youth to beware of this young man if he continues to slight religion and the Bible. You cannot be too guarded in his society.

By associating with those boys who do not exert a right influence, L is also being corrupted. J and K are not profitable associates for him, for he is easily influenced in the wrong direction. ----- is not the best place for him. His habits are not pure; self-abuse is practiced by him. Because of this and his love for the company of evil associates, those desires which help to form a virtuous character and to secure heaven at last will be weakened. The young who desire immortality must stop where they are and not allow an impure thought or act. Impure thoughts lead to impure actions. If Christ be the theme of contemplation, the thoughts will be widely separated from every subject which will lead to impure acts. The mind will strengthen by dwelling upon elevating subjects. If trained to run in the channel of purity and holiness, it will become healthy and vigorous. If trained to dwell upon spiritual themes, it will naturally take that turn. But this attraction of the thoughts to heavenly things cannot be gained without the exercise of faith in God and an earnest, humble reliance

upon Him for that strength and grace which will be sufficient for every emergency.

[409] Purity of life and a character molded after the divine Pattern are not obtained without earnest effort and fixed principles. A vacillating person will not succeed in attaining Christian perfection. Such will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. Like a roaring lion, Satan is seeking for his prey. He tries his wiles upon every unsuspecting youth; there is safety only in Christ. It is through His grace alone that Satan can be successfully repulsed. Satan tells the young that there is time enough yet, that they may indulge in sin and vice this once and never again; but that one indulgence will poison their whole life. Do not once venture on forbidden ground. In this perilous day of evil, when allurements to vice and corruption are on every hand, let the earnest, heartfelt cry of the young be raised to heaven: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" And may his ears be open and his heart inclined to obey the instruction given in the answer: "By taking heed thereto according to Thy word." The only safety for the youth in this age of pollution is to make God their trust. Without divine help they will be unable to control human passions and appetites. In Christ is the very help needed, but how few will come to Him for that help. Said Jesus when upon the earth: "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." In Christ all can conquer. You can say with the apostle: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Again: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

[410] I have written out quite fully the case of Brother E and family because this one illustrates the true state of many families, and God would have these families take this as though written specially for their benefit. There are many more cases I might designate, but I have named enough already. Young girls are not as a general thing clear of the crime of self-abuse. They practice it, and, as the result, their constitutions are being ruined. Some who are just entering womanhood are in danger of paralysis of the brain. Already the moral and intellectual powers are weakened and benumbed, while the animal passions are gaining the ascendancy and corrupting body and soul. The youth, whether male or female, cannot be Christians unless they entirely cease to practice this hellish, soul-and-body-destroying vice.

Many of the young are eager for books. They read everything they can obtain. Exciting love stories and impure pictures have a corrupting influence. Novels are eagerly perused by many, and, as the result, their imagination becomes defiled. In the cars, photographs of females in a state of nudity are frequently circulated for sale. These disgusting pictures are also found in daguerrean saloons, and are hung upon the walls of those who deal in engravings. This is an age when corruption is teeming everywhere. The lust of the eye and corrupt passions are aroused by beholding and by reading. The heart is corrupted through the imagination. The mind takes pleasure in contemplating scenes which awaken the lower and baser passions. These vile images, seen through defiled imagination, corrupt the morals and prepare the deluded, infatuated beings to give loose rein to lustful passions. Then follow sins and crimes which drag beings formed in the image of God down to a level with the beasts, sinking them at last in perdition. Avoid reading and seeing things which will suggest impure thoughts. Cultivate the moral and intellectual powers. Let not these noble powers become enfeebled and perverted by much reading of even storybooks. I know of strong minds that have been unbalanced and partially benumbed, or paralyzed, by intemperance in reading.

I appeal to parents to control the reading of their children. Much reading does them only harm. Especially do not permit upon your tables the magazines and newspapers wherein are found love stories. It is impossible for the youth to possess a healthy tone of mind and correct religious principles unless they enjoy the perusal of the word of God. This book contains the most interesting history, points out the way of salvation through Christ, and is their guide to a higher and better life. They would all pronounce it the most interesting book they ever perused, if their imagination had not become perverted by exciting stories of a fictitious character. You who are looking for your Lord to come the second time to change your mortal bodies, and to fashion them like unto His most glorious body, must come up upon a higher plane of action. You must work from a higher standpoint than you have hitherto done, or you will not be of that number who will receive the finishing touch of immortality.

[411]

Chapter 55—True Love at Home

Brother M,

At Adams Center I was shown that you greatly lacked an unselfish spirit while at the Institute; you did not exert the influence that you should. You might have let your light shine there, but you did not. You often neglected your duty for amusements. You failed to take care and to bear responsibility. You do not enjoy active exercise. You love your ease; you and hard work are at variance. This is selfish. You allowed the property of the Institute to run down and be destroyed, when it was your business to see that it was kept up, and that everything was in order, and preserved with greater interest and care than if it were your own. You were an unfaithful steward. Every time you permitted yourself to engage in amusements, playing croquet or anything of the kind, you were using time for which you were paid and which did not belong to you. You would be just as excusable should you take money which you had not earned and appropriate it to yourself.

[412] Brethren Loughborough, Andrews, Aldrich, and others did not know you. They estimated you too highly. You could not fill the place they employed you to fill. They erred in judgment when they paid you so high a price for your labor. You did not earn the money that you received. You were very slow and lacked greatly in energy. You were not enough interested and awake to see and do, and things were terribly neglected by you.

My brother, you are far from God; you are in a state of backsliding. You do not possess noble moral courage. You yield to your own desires instead of denying self. In seeking after happiness, you have attended places of amusement which God does not approve, and in so doing have weakened your own soul. My brother, you have much to learn. You indulge your appetite by eating more food than your system can convert into good blood. It is sin to be intemperate in the quantity of food eaten, even if the quality is unobjectionable. Many feel that, if they do not eat meat and the grosser articles of

food, they may eat of simple food until they cannot well eat more. This is a mistake. Many professed health reformers are nothing less than gluttons. They lay upon the digestive organs so great a burden that the vitality of the system is exhausted in the effort to dispose of it. It also has a depressing influence upon the intellect, for the brain nerve power is called upon to assist the stomach in its work. Overeating, even of the simplest food, benumbs the sensitive nerves of the brain and weakens its vitality. Overeating has a worse effect upon the system than overworking; the energies of the soul are more effectually prostrated by intemperate eating than by intemperate working.

The digestive organs should never be burdened with a quantity or quality of food which it will tax the system to appropriate. All that is taken into the stomach above what the system can use to convert into good blood, clogs the machinery; for it cannot be made into either flesh or blood, and its presence burdens the liver and produces a morbid condition of the system. The stomach is overworked in its efforts to dispose of it, and then there is a sense of languor, which is interpreted to mean hunger; and without allowing the digestive organs time to rest from their severe labor, to recruit their energies, another immoderate amount is taken into the stomach, to set the weary machinery again in motion. The system receives less nourishment from too great a quantity of food, even of the right quality, than from a moderate quantity taken at regular periods. [413]

My brother, your brain is benumbed. A man who disposes of the quantity of food that you do should be a laboring man. Exercise is important to digestion and to a healthy condition of body and mind. You need physical exercise. You move and act as if you were wooden, as though you had no elasticity. Healthy, active exercise is what you need. This will invigorate the mind. Neither study nor violent exercise should be engaged in immediately after a full meal; this would be a violation of the laws of the system. Immediately after eating there is a strong draft upon the nervous energy. The brain force is called into active exercise to assist the stomach; therefore, when the mind or body is taxed heavily after eating, the process of digestion is hindered. The vitality of the system, which is needed to carry on the work in one direction, is called away and set to work in another.

You need to exercise temperance in all things. Cultivate the higher powers of the mind, and there will be less strength of growth of the animal. It is impossible for you to increase in spiritual strength while your appetite and passions are not under perfect control. Says the inspired apostle: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

[414] My brother, arouse yourself, I pray you, and let the work of the Spirit of God reach deeper than the external; let it reach down to the deep springs of every action. It is principle that is wanted, firm principle, and vigor of action in spiritual as well as temporal things. Your efforts lack earnestness. Oh, how many are low in the scale of spirituality because they will not deny their appetite! The brain nerve energy is benumbed and almost paralyzed by overeating. When such go to the house of God upon the Sabbath, they cannot hold their eyes open. The most earnest appeals fail to arouse their leaden, insensible intellects. The truth may be presented with deep feeling, but it does not awaken the moral sensibilities or enlighten the understanding. Have such studied to glorify God in all things?

It is impossible to have clear conceptions of eternal things unless the mind is trained to dwell upon elevated themes. All the passions must be brought under perfect subjection to the moral powers. When men and women profess strong faith and earnest spirituality, I know that their profession is false if they have not brought all their passions under control. God requires this. The reason why such spiritual darkness prevails is that the mind is content to take a low level and is not directed upward in a pure, holy, and heavenly channel.

I saw in regard to your family, Brother M, that you were not happy. Your wife has been disappointed, and you have been disappointed. Your wife expected to find in you a person of more noble, refined organization. She has been very unhappy. She has a large amount of pride. Her family connections upon her mother's side are naturally conscientious, yet proud and aristocratic. She partakes largely of these traits of character. She is not demonstrative. It is not natural for her to make advances and manifest affection. She looks upon the manifestation of affection between husband and wife as weak and childish. She has felt that if she encouraged affection, it would not be answered by fine, elevated love, but by the lower order

[415]

of passions; that these would be strengthened, but not pure, deep, holy love.

Your wife should make strong efforts to come out of her retired, dignified reserve, and cultivate simplicity in all her actions. And when the higher order of faculties is aroused in you, and strengthened by exercise, you will better understand the wants of women; you will understand that the soul craves love of a higher, purer order than exists in the low order of animal passions. These passions have been strengthened in you by encouragement and exercise. If now in the fear of God you keep your body under, and seek to meet your wife with pure, elevated love, the wants of her nature will be met. Take her to your heart; esteem her highly.

You have been exalted and have taken a position above your wife. You have not understood yourself. You have had a high appreciation of your religious experience and advancement in the divine life. These things have hindered, instead of helping, your wife. She feared for you, feared that you did not really understand yourself, and that you would go too fast. Your union has not been happy. You have been unsuited to each other. Your wife has a timid, fearful, shrinking nature. You have utterly failed to understand her. She hesitates and fears to move out because she is afraid of going too fast. She needs confidence in herself and should encourage independence.

Brother M, you fail to encourage the confidence of your wife. You are lacking in courteousness and in constant, kindly regard for her. You sometimes manifest love, but it is a selfish love. It is not principle with you, reaching down deep and underlying all your actions. It is not an unselfish love, which prompts a continual forethought for her and a care to have her in your society, showing her that you prefer her company above all others. You have sought for your own amusement, leaving her at home lonely and often sad. You pursued this course before moving to this place and have continued to do so since in a less degree for want of opportunity or excuse.

Your wife would scorn to let you know that she marked the deficiencies in you. She has a fear of you. Had you possessed genuine love, which such a nature as hers requires, you would have found an answering chord in her heart. You are too cold and stiff.

You have at times manifested affection, but it has not awakened love in return because you have not been courteous and attentive, and manifested a kind regard for your wife by consulting her happiness. You have too many times felt at liberty to saunter off in pursuit of your own pleasure without consulting her pleasure or happiness at all.

True, pure love is precious. It is heavenly in its influence. It is deep and abiding. It is not spasmodic in its manifestations. It is not a selfish passion. It bears fruit. It will lead to a constant effort to make your wife happy. If you have this love, it will come natural to make this effort. It will not appear to be forced. If you go out for a walk or to attend a meeting, it will be as natural as your breath to choose your wife to accompany you and to seek to make her happy in your society. You regard her spiritual attainments as inferior to your own, but I saw that God was better pleased with her spirit than with that possessed by yourself. You are not worthy of your wife. She is too good for you. She is a frail, sensitive plant; she needs to be cared for tenderly. She earnestly desires to do the will of God. But she has a proud spirit, and is timid, shrinking from reproach. It is as death to her to be the subject of observation or remark. Let your wife be loved, honored, and cherished, in fulfillment of the marriage vow, and she will come out of that reticent, diffident position which is natural to her.

[417] Only let a woman realize that she is appreciated by her husband and is precious to him, not merely because she is useful and convenient in his house, but because she is a part of himself, and she will respond to his affection and reflect the love bestowed upon her. Let your wife be the object of your special and hearty attention. When you feel as God would have you, you will feel lost without the society of your wife. You think her faith not worth having, yet it will bring answers sooner than the faith which you possess.

Brother M, you fail to understand the heart of a woman. You do not reason from cause to effect. You know that your wife is not so cheerful and happy as you wish to see her, but you do not investigate the cause. You do not analyze your deportment to see if the difficulty does not exist in yourself. Love your wife. She is hungering for deep, true, elevating love. Let her have tangible proof that her care and interest for you, shown in her attention to your

comfort, is appreciated and returned. Seek her opinion and approval in whatever you engage in. Respect her judgment. Do not feel that you know all that is worth knowing.

A house with love in it, where love is expressed in words and looks and deeds, is a place where angels love to manifest their presence, and hallow the scene by rays of light from glory. There the humble household duties have a charm in them. None of life's duties will be unpleasant to your wife under such circumstances. She will perform them with cheerfulness of spirit and will be like a sunbeam to all around her, and she will be making melody in her heart to the Lord. At present she feels that she has not your heart's affections. You have given her occasion to feel thus. You perform the necessary duties devolving upon you as head of the family, but there is a lack. There is a serious lack of love's precious influence which leads to kindly attentions. Love should be seen in the looks and manners, and heard in the tones of the voice.

Your wife does not venture to open her heart to you; for as soon as she utters a sentiment differing from you, you repel it. You talk so strong that she has no courage to say another word. You are not one in heart. You take a position above her and maintain a bearing as though her judgment and opinion were of no account. You consider your spiritual attainments far in advance of hers. My brother, you do not know yourself. God looks at the heart, not at the words or profession. The externals do not weigh with God as with men. A humble heart and a contrite spirit God values. Our Saviour is acquainted with the life conflicts of every soul. He judgeth not according to appearances, but righteously.

[418]

Your spirit is strong. When you take a position you do not weigh the matter well and consider what must be the effect of your maintaining your views and in an independent manner weaving them into your prayers and conversation, when you know that your wife does not hold the same views that you do. Instead of respecting the feelings of your wife, and kindly avoiding, as a gentleman would, those subjects upon which you know you differ, you have been forward to dwell upon objectionable points, and have manifested a persistency in expressing your views regardless of any around you. You have felt that others had no right to see matters differently from yourself. These fruits do not grow upon the Christian tree.

In the case of Sister N, you did not view things in their true light. If she had been healed in answer to the prayers of yourself and others, it would have proved the ruin of more than two or three of you. A wise God had oversight of this matter. He could read the motives and purposes of the heart.

[419] Your wife has just as much right to her opinion as you have to yours. Her marriage relation does not destroy her identity. She has an individual responsibility. You will not feel clear till you take things out of her way and manifest toward her a more charitable, Christlike spirit of forbearance, and regard others in the light in which you wish to be regarded. You have yet to learn to “let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”

Conducting Social Meetings

I was shown, Brother M, that you need a great work done for you before you can exert an influence in the church to correct their errors or bring them up. You do not possess that humbleness of mind that can reach the hearts of God’s people. You are exalted. You need to examine your motives and your actions to see if your eye is single to the glory of God. Neither Brother O nor you is exactly fitted to meet the wants of the youth and the church generally. You do not come right down in simplicity to understand the best manner to help them. It does not have the best influence for you and Brother O to leave your seats and take your position upon the platform in front of the people. When you occupy that position, you feel that you must say or do something in accordance with the position you have taken. Instead of getting up and speaking a few words to the point, you frequently make lengthy remarks, which really hurt the spirit of the meeting. Many feel relieved when you sit down. Were you in a country place where there were but few to improve the time, such lengthy remarks would be more appropriate.

[420] The work of the Lord is a great work, and wise men are needed to engage in it. Men are wanted who can adapt themselves to the wants of the people. If you expect to help the people you must not

take your position above them, but right down among them. This is Brother O's great fault. He is too stiff. It is not natural for him to use simplicity. He does not reason from cause to effect. He will not win affection and love. He does not come right down to the understanding of the children and speak in a touching manner which will melt its way to the heart. He stands up and talks to the children in a wise way, but it does them no good. His remarks are generally lengthy and wearisome. Sometimes if but one fourth were said that is said, a much better impression would be left on the mind.

Those who instruct children should avoid tedious remarks. Short remarks and to the point will have a happy influence. If much is to be said, make up for briefness by frequency. A few words of interest now and then will be more beneficial than to have it all at once. Long speeches burden the small minds of children. Too much talk will lead them to loathe even spiritual instruction, just as overeating burdens the stomach and lessens the appetite, leading even to a loathing of food. The minds of the people may be glutted with too much speechifying. Labor for the church, but especially for the youth, should be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Give minds time to digest the truths you feed them. Children must be drawn toward heaven, not rashly, but very gently.

Battle Creek, Michigan,

October 2, 1868.

Chapter 56—Importance of Self-Government

Dear Brother P,

I have several times attempted to write to you, but have as often been hindered. I will delay no longer. I have felt for a few days past especially anxious in regard to you. Last June some things were shown me in regard to you. I was carried back in the past and shown your unsettled, roving life. You were without God. Yours has been a hard, reckless life. Yet I saw that God had in mercy spared your life many times when it seemed that no human power or wisdom could preserve it. You now stand a miracle of mercy. When your life has been in imminent peril, Christ, your Advocate, has pleaded in your behalf: “Father, spare his life a little longer. He has been an unfruitful tree, which has cumbered the ground; yet cut it not down. I will patiently wait a little longer, and see if it will not bear fruit. I will impress his heart with the truth. I will convict him of sin.”

I was shown that the Lord opened the way for you to obey and serve Him. Your steps were directed West, where your surroundings would be more favorable to a growth in grace, and where it would be less difficult for you to form a character for heaven. You came into our family and were received into our hearts. This was all ordered of the Lord. You had not the experience which was necessary in order to live a life that God would approve. You were situated where in a few short months you could obtain more light and a more correct knowledge of present truth than you could have obtained in years if you had remained East.

Our compassionate High Priest was acquainted with your weakness and your errors and did not leave you in your inexperience to battle with the great foe amid unfavorable surroundings. Had you remained in ----- you would not have retained the truth. The opposition you would have received would have raised your combativeness, and you would have dishonored the truth by a hasty spirit; and then, as obstacles arose in your Christian journey, you would have become discouraged and yielded the truth. You have much to be thankful

for. Your heart should be filled with gratitude to your loving Saviour for His mercy to you, to you who have so long abused His love.

I was shown that you were a rough stone from the quarry, which needed much hewing, squaring, and polishing before it could fill a place in the heavenly building. Some of this work has been done for you; but, oh, there is a much greater work yet to be done! You have had a very unhappy spirit. You have seen the rough side of life. You have not had much happiness; but you were the one who stood in your own light, debarring yourself from good. In your youth you encouraged a spirit of discontent; you would not be ruled; you chose to walk in your own way, irrespective of others' judgment or counsel. You would not submit to be controlled by your stepfather, because you wanted to follow your own way. He did not understand the best way to manage you, and you were determined not to respect his authority. As soon as he would speak to you, you would place yourself upon the defensive. Your combativeness was large, and you would battle everything and everybody that crossed your plans. Even when suggestions were made of a better course to pursue in your plans and labors, you would fly in an instant. You thought you were censured, thought you were blamed, and felt grieved with those who were your true friends. Your imagination was diseased. You thought that everybody was against you and that your lot was exceedingly hard. It has been hard, but you have made it so.

Your course toward your stepfather was unbecoming. He did not deserve to be treated by you as he was. He had faults and had committed errors, but while you were awake to see these in an aggravated light you did not see your own errors. In the providence of God your wife was prostrated by disease. She was a proud-spirited woman; but she repented of her sins, and her repentance was accepted of God.

[423]

Your way has been hedged up, on the right hand and on the left, to hinder your progress to perdition. The Lord has brought your unruly, untamable spirit to submit to Him. By a mixture of judgment and mercy you have been brought to repentance. Like Jonah, you fled from present duty to sea. God hedged up your way by the visitations of His providence. You could not prosper or be happy, because you could not leave yourself behind. You took self and sin with you. You cherished a discontented, restless spirit and

would not do the duties in your path. You wanted a change, some larger work. You became roving in disposition.

The eye of the dear Saviour has been upon you, or you would have been left in your unsettled state, and in your sins, to become abandoned in character and miserable in circumstances. While in the land of strangers and in the hour of sickness, you have sadly felt your forlorn, desolate condition. You have passed long nights and weary days of restlessness and pain, away from your mother and sisters, with none but stranger hands to do a kindly office for you, and no Christian hope to sustain you.

You were seeking after happiness, but did not obtain it. You had neglected the advice of your mother and her entreaties not to violate the commands of God. At times this neglect has caused you bitterness of spirit. But I cannot enter into every particular, for I am not strong. I will dwell upon the most essential things shown me.

[424] I saw that a work is before you which you do not comprehend. It is to die to self, to crucify self. You have a quick, impetuous temper, which you must subdue. You possess noble traits of character, which will secure you friends if your hasty spirit does not wound. You have a strong attachment for those who manifest an interest for you. When you comprehend things aright you are conscientious; but you often move from impulse, without stopping to reflect.

You pass your judgment upon individuals, and comment upon their ways and manners, when you do not understand their position or their work. You view things from your standpoint and then are ready to question or condemn the course they pursue, without candidly viewing matters on all sides. You have no knowledge of the duties of others and should not feel responsible for their acts, but do your duty, leaving others with the Lord. Possess your spirit in patience, preserve peace and calmness of mind, and be thankful.

I saw that the Lord had given you light and experience, that you might see the sinfulness of a hasty spirit and control your passions. So surely as you fail to do this, just so surely you will fail of everlasting life. You must overcome this disease of the imagination. You are extremely sensitive, and if a word is spoken favoring an opposite course from that which you have been pursuing, you are hurt. You feel that you are blamed, and that you must defend yourself, save your life; and in your earnest effort to save your life, you lose it. You

have a work to do to die to self and to cultivate a spirit of forbearance and patience. Get over the idea that you are not used right, that you are wronged, that somebody wants to crowd or harm you. You see through false eyes. Satan leads you to take these distorted views of things.

Dear Brother P, at Adams Center your case was again shown me. I saw that you had ever failed to exercise true self-government. You have made efforts; but these efforts have only reached the external, they have not touched the spring of action. Your hasty temper often causes you sincere and painful regret and self-condemnation. This passionate spirit, unless subdued, will increase to a peevish, fault-finding spirit; indeed, this is already upon you in a degree. You will be ready to resent everything. If jostled upon the sidewalk, you will be offended, and a word of complaint will spring to your lips. When driving in the street, if full half the road is not given you, you will feel stirred in a moment. If asked to put yourself out of your course to accommodate others, you will chafe and fret, and feel that your dignity is imposed upon. You will show to all your besetting sin. Your very countenance will indicate an impatient spirit, and your mouth will seem always ready to utter an angry word. In this habit, as in tobacco using, total abstinence is the only sure remedy. An entire change must take place in you. You frequently feel that you must be more guarded. You resolutely say, "I will be more calm and patient;" but in doing this you only touch the evil on the outside; you consent to retain the lion and watch him. You must go further than this. Strength of principle alone can dislodge this destroying foe and bring peace and happiness.

[425]

You have repeatedly said: "I can't keep my temper." "I have to speak." You lack a meek, humble spirit. Self is all alive, and you stand guard continually to preserve it from mortification or insult. Says the apostle: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Those who are dead to self will not feel so readily and will not be prepared to resist everything which may irritate. Dead men cannot feel. You are not dead. If you were, and your life were hid in Christ, a thousand things which you now notice, and which afflict you, would be passed by as unworthy of notice; you would then be grasping the eternal and would be above the petty trials of this life.

"The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity." "The discretion of a

[426]

man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.” “He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.” “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” “He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.” Margin, “a cool spirit.”

Our great Exemplar was exalted to be equal with God. He was high commander in heaven. All the holy angels delighted to bow before Him. “And again, when He bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.” Jesus took upon Himself our nature, laid aside His glory, majesty, and riches to perform his mission, to save that which was lost. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto others. Jesus, when reviled, abused, and insulted, did not retaliate. “Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again.” When the cruelty of man caused Him to suffer painful stripes and wounds, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously. The apostle Paul exhorted his Philippian brethren: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” Is the servant greater than his master? Christ has given us His life as a pattern, and we dishonor Him when we become jealous of every slight, and are ready to resent every injury, supposed or real. It is not an evidence of a noble mind to be prepared to defend self, to preserve our own dignity. We would better suffer wrongfully a hundred times than wound the soul by a spirit of retaliation, or by giving vent to wrath. There is strength to be obtained of God. He can help. He can give grace and heavenly wisdom. If you ask in faith, you will receive; but you must watch unto prayer. Watch, pray, work, should be your watchword.

[427]

Your wife might be a blessing if she would only take upon her the responsibility that it is her duty to take. But she has shunned responsibility all her life, and now is in danger of being influenced, instead of influencing you. Instead of having a softening, elevating

influence upon you, there is danger of her thinking as you think, and acting as you act, without reaching down deep to be guided by principle in all her actions. You sympathize with each other, and, unfortunately, help each other to view matters incorrectly. She can exert an influence for good, but she possesses a spirit which savors of spiritual indolence and sloth. She is reluctant to engage in any good work if it is not pleasant and agreeable. What was the sin of Meroz? Doing nothing. It was not because of great crimes that they were condemned, but because they did not come up to the help of the Lord.

I was shown that your wife does not understand herself. She shunned caretaking in her youth and is not disposed to engage in it even now. She is inclined to lean upon others, rather than upon her own powers. She has not encouraged a noble independence. She should, for years back, have been educating herself to bear burdens. She is not in health. She is predisposed to torpidity of the liver and is not inclined to exercise. She has not the faculty of setting herself to work unless she sees that she must. She eats nearly double the amount which she ought to eat. All that she takes into her stomach, above that which her system can convert into good blood, becomes waste matter, to burden nature in the disposal of it. Her system is clogged with a mass of matter which hinders her in her work, clogs the machinery, and weakens the life forces.

[428]

Taking more food into the system than it can convert into good blood causes a depraved quality of blood and taxes the vitality to a much greater degree than labor or physical exercise. This overeating causes a dull stupor. The brain nerves are called upon to aid the digestive organs, and are thus constantly overtaxed, weakened, and benumbed. This leaves a sense of dullness in the head, and makes your wife liable to a shock of paralysis any day. What she requires is not encouragement to cease exercise. There would be nothing so dangerous for her as to remain where her physical powers would not be called into active exercise. Physical exercise is very essential. This will strengthen her body and mind. When she awakes to the responsibility of her position, and sees the benefit which will result from her seeking to have an aim in life, she will not be so disposed to sink down in indolence and to shun hardships. She does not put her heart into what she does; therefore she moves about too much

like a machine, feeling that labor is a burden. She cannot, while she feels thus, realize that new life and vigor which it is her privilege to have. She lacks spirit and energy. She is too much inclined to be lost in dullness and leaden insensibility. The heavy torpor she feels can only be overcome by a spare diet, perfect control over her appetite and all her passions, and by calling her *will* to aid her in taking exercise. She wants the will to electrify the nerve power so that she may resist indolence.

[429] Sister P, you never can be of use in the world unless your purposes are strong enough to enable you to overcome this unwillingness to take care and bear burdens. As you daily exercise the forces within you, the task will grow less difficult, until it will become second nature for you to do duty, to be careful and diligent. You can accustom yourself to think, when you lay less burden upon your stomach. This burden taxes the brain.

You should also have an aim, a purpose, in life. Where there is no purpose, there is a disposition to indolence, but where there is a sufficiently important object in view, all the powers of the mind will come into spontaneous activity. In order to make life a success, the thoughts must be steadily fixed upon the object of life, and not left to wander off and be occupied with unimportant things, or to be satisfied with idle musing, which is the fruit of shunning responsibility. Castle-building depraves the mind.

Take up present duty. Do it with a will, with all the heart. You should resolve to do something which will require an effort of the mental as well as the physical powers. Your heart should be in your present labor. The duty now before you is the very work which Heaven wishes you to do. To dream of a work far off, and imagine and plan in regard to the future, will prove unprofitable, and will unfit you for the work, small though it may be, which Heaven now places before you. It should not be your study to do some great work, but to do cheerfully and well the work which you see to do today. Talents are entrusted to your care, to be doubled. You are responsible for their proper use or their abuse. You are not to aspire after great things in order to do great service, but to do your little work. Improve your talents, even though they are few, and let a sense of your responsibility to God for their right use rest upon you.

You need not expect to avoid pain and weariness in the toils and trials of life. The Son of God was partaker of the human frame. He was frequently wearied in body and spirit. Said He: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." You should cease your far-off dreaming, and bring your mind to present duties, and cheerfully perform them.

This world is not the Christian's heaven. It is merely the fitting-up place. It is the scene of our life battles, our conflicts and sorrows; and it is important that we all have a firm grasp of the better world, where will be found, when the warfare is ended, peace, joy, and bliss, to be enjoyed forever. I saw that you would both be in greater danger of making shipwreck of faith were you united, because you would look upon matters in a false light. You both have a great work to do for yourselves, but you are in danger of blinding your eyes to each other's faults.

[430]

Sister P should be guarded so as not to stir up the hasty spirit of her husband by relating her supposed grievances to him to obtain sympathy. He views things in a strong light and feels deeply over matters which are not worthy of notice. She will have to learn this and understand that it is wisdom to be silent. She needs the power of endurance. It is much easier to throw a thing into the mind than to get it out when once it is there. It is easier to dwell upon a supposed wrong than to pacify or control the feelings when once aroused.

Brother P has qualities which would be excellent if they were refined by the elevating influences of pure religion. He can be useful. Sincere piety alone can qualify him to perform his duties well in this world and give him a fitness for heaven. A heavenly character must be acquired upon earth, my brother, or you will never possess it; therefore you should engage at once in the work which you have to do. You should labor earnestly to obtain a fitness for heaven. Live for heaven. Live by faith.

Brother P, you are a rough stone; but the hand of a skillful workman is upon you. Will you let Him hew and square you, and polish you for that building which is coming together without the sound of ax or hammer? Not a blow is to be struck after probation closes. You must now, in the hours of probation, overcome your impetuous temper, or be separated from God at last.

[431]

Jesus loves you both and will save you if you will be saved in His own appointed way. You may have experimental religion if you really hunger and thirst for it. Go to God in faith and humility, and ask, and you will receive; but remember that the disciple is not above his Master nor the servant greater than his Lord. You need to cherish that humility and humbleness of mind which dwelt in Christ.

Battle Creek, Michigan,

February 9, 1869.

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Chapter 57—Industry and Economy

Dear Brother and Sister R,

I have been seeking an opportunity to write to you, but have been sick, and unable to write to anyone. But I will try to write a few lines this morning.

As I was shown the duties resting upon God's people in regard to the poor, especially the widows and orphans, I was shown that my husband and I were in danger of taking upon us burdens which God has not laid upon us, and thereby lessening our courage and strength by increasing our cares and anxiety. I saw that my husband went farther in your case than it was his duty to go. His interest in you led him to take a burden which carried him beyond his duty, and which has been no benefit to you, but has encouraged in you a disposition to depend upon your brethren. You look to them to help and favor you, while you do not labor as hard as they, nor economize at all times as they feel it their duty to do.

I was shown that you, my brother and sister, have much to learn. You have not lived within your means. You have not learned to economize. If you earn high wages, you do not know how to make it go as far as possible. You consult taste or appetite instead of prudence. At times you expend money for a quality of food in which your brethren cannot afford to indulge. Dollars slip from your pocket very easily. [432]

Sister R is in poor health. She indulges her appetite and places too heavy a tax upon her stomach. She burdens it by overeating and by placing in it a quality of food not best calculated to nourish her system. Her food is taken in immoderate quantities, and she takes but little exercise; thus the system is severely taxed. According to the light which the Lord has given us, simple food is the best to ensure health and strength. Exercise is necessary to her health.

Self-denial is a lesson which you both have yet to learn. Restrict your appetite, Brother R. God has given you a capital of strength. This is of more value to you than money and should be more highly

prized. Strength cannot be purchased with gold or silver, houses or lands. It is a great possession that you have. God requires you to make a judicious use of the capital of strength with which He has blessed you. You are just as much His steward as is the man who has a capital of money. It is as wrong for you to fail to use your strength to the best advantage as it is for a rich man to covetously retain his riches because it is agreeable to do so. You do not make the exertion that you should to support your family. You can and do work if work is conveniently prepared to hand, but you do not exert yourself to set yourself to work feeling that it is a duty to use your time and strength to the very best advantage and in the fear of God.

[433] You have been in a business which would at times yield you large profits at once. After you have earned means you have not studied to economize in reference to a time when means could not be earned so easily, but have expended much for imaginary wants. Had you and your wife understood it to be a duty that God enjoined upon you to deny your taste and your desires, and make provision for the future instead of living merely for the present, you could now have had a competency and your family have had the comforts of life. You have a lesson to learn which you should not be backward in learning. It is to make a little go the longest way.

Sister R has leaned too heavily upon her husband. She has been all her life too dependent upon others for sympathy, thinking of herself, making herself a center. She has been petted too much, and has not learned to be self-reliant. She has not been the help to her husband that she might have been in temporal or spiritual things. She must learn to bear bodily infirmities and not dwell upon them as she does. She must fight the battles of life for herself; an individual responsibility rests upon her.

Sister R, your life has been a mistake. You have indulged in reading anything and everything. Your mind has not been benefited by so much reading. Your nerves have been excited while hurriedly chasing through the story. If your children interrupt you while thus employed, you speak fretfully, impatiently. You do not have self-control, and therefore fail to hold your children with a firm, steady hand. You move from impulse. You pet and indulge them, and then fret and scold, and are severe. This variable manner is very

detrimental to them. They need a firm, steady hand; for they are wayward. They need regular, wise, judicious discipline.

You might save yourself much perplexity if you would put on the woman and move from principle, not from impulse. You have imagined that your husband must be with you, that you could not stay alone. You should see that his duty is to labor to sustain his family. You should bring yourself to deny your desires and wishes, and not lead him to feel that he must accommodate himself to you. You have a part to act in bearing the burdens of life. You must put on courage and fortitude. Be a woman, not a capricious child. You have been petted and have had your burdens borne for you too long. It is now your duty to seek to deny your wishes and desires, and act from principle, for the present and future good of your family. You are not well; but if you should cultivate a contented, cheerful mind, it would help you to a better hold on this life, and also on the life to come.

[434]

Brother R, it is your duty to make a careful, judicious use of the capital of strength which God has given you.

Sister R, your brain is wearied and taxed by reading. You should deny your propensity for crowding your mind with everything it can devour. Your lifetime has not been spent in the best manner. You have not benefited yourself, nor those around you. You have leaned on your mother more than has been for your good. If you had depended more upon the powers within yourself, if you had been more self-reliant, you would have been happier. Now you should bear your own burdens as well as you can, and encourage your husband to bear his in doing his work.

If you had denied your taste for reading and seeking to please yourself, had devoted more time to prudent physical exercise, and had eaten carefully of proper, healthful food, you would have avoided much suffering. A part of this suffering has been imaginary. If you had braced your mind to resist the disposition to yield to infirmities, you would not have had nervous spasms. Your mind should be drawn away from yourself to household duties, keeping your house with order, neatness, and taste. Much reading, and permitting your mind to be diverted with small things, has led to a neglect of your children and your household duties. These are the very duties which God has given you to perform.

[435]

You have had much sympathy for yourself. You have called your mind to yourself and have dwelt upon your poor feelings. My sister, eat less. Engage in physical labor, and devote your mind to spiritual things. Keep your mind from dwelling upon yourself. Cultivate a contented, cheerful spirit. You talk too much upon unimportant things. You gain no spiritual strength from this. If the strength spent in talking were devoted to prayer, you would receive spiritual strength and would make melody in your heart to God.

You have been controlled by feeling, not by duty and principle. You have given up to homesick feelings and injured your health by indulging a spirit of unrest. Your habits of life are not healthful. You need to reform. Neither of you is willing to work as others work, or to eat as your brethren eat. If it is in your power to get things, you have them. It is your duty to economize.

In contrast with your case was presented that of Sister S. She is in feeble health, and has two children to support with her needle at the very low prices which are paid for her work. For years she received scarcely a farthing of help. She suffered with ill health, yet she carried her own burdens. Here was an object of charity indeed. Now look at your case. A man with a small family and a good capital of strength, yet constantly involved in debt and leaning upon others. This is all wrong. You have lessons to learn. With Sister S, economy is the battle of life. Here you are with a man's strong energies, and yet are not self-sustaining. You have a work to do. You should have uniformity of diet. Live at all times as simply as your brethren live. Live out the health reform.

[436]

Jesus wrought a miracle and fed five thousand, and then He taught an important lesson of economy: "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Duties, important duties, rest upon you. "Owe no man anything." Were you infirm, were you unable to labor, then your brethren would be in duty bound to help you. As it is, all you needed from your brethren when you changed your location was a start. If you felt as ambitious as you should, and you and your wife would agree to live within your means, you could be free from embarrassment. You will have to labor for small wages as well as for large. Industry and economy would have placed your family, ere this, in a much more favorable condition. God wants you

to be a faithful steward of your strength. He wants you to use it to place your family above want and dependence.

Battle Creek, Michigan,

March 22, 1869.

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Chapter 58—Stirring Up Opposition

Dear Sister T,

I have been shown that there has been a fault in your religious life. You have possessed too much of a combative spirit. While it is your privilege to think and act for yourself, you have carried the matter too far. You have had more independence than humility. You have pursued a course to irritate rather than to pacify. It has been necessary for you to possess firmness in order to stand in defense of the truth; yet you have frequently erred in not possessing that meek and quiet spirit which God esteems of great price. In your family you have met with opposition and a manifest disrelish of the truth, but you have failed to meet these trials in the best manner. You have talked too much and been too positive. You have mingled too little love and tenderness with your efforts for your family, especially for your husband. You are in danger of carrying points to extremes, overdoing the matter, and hurting instead of healing. Wherever you can yield your judgment and not sacrifice the principles of truth, it is best for you to do so, even if you think you are right. You have a responsibility, an identity, which cannot be merged in your husband. Yet there is a bond which makes you one, and in many things, if you were more yielding, it would be far better for your husband, your children, and yourself. You are too exacting. You do not seek to win those who differ with you. You are quick to discern when you have the advantage, and you make the most of it. If you possessed more forbearance mingled with sweet love, and if you should for Christ's sake pass over many things without taking them up and pressing them home, thus creating uncomfortable feelings, the influence would be better, more saving. You need love, tender pity, and affection.

You see the truth, and then you mark out how this one and that one should practice it; and if they fail to come up to the mark you set, you feel to draw off from them. You cannot fellowship them, and love dies out of your heart for them, when in reality they are just as

near right as you are. You make yourself enemies when you might have friends. You are ardent and positive in your temperament, and when you see points of truth, you carry matters to extremes. You thus repulse persons, instead of winning and binding them to your heart. You look upon the objectionable features in the character of those with whom you associate, and dwell upon their seeming inconsistencies and wrongs, overlooking their redeeming traits. I was referred to this scripture: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be *any* virtue, and if there be any praise, think on *these* things." Here, dear sister, you may meditate and speculate with profit. Dwell upon the good qualities of those with whom you associate, and see as little as possible of their errors and failings. You possess too much of a spirit of war, and throw things into confusion and strife. You must change your life and character if you are ever classed with those who hear the words: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Let nothing but kind, loving words fall from your lips concerning the members of your family or of the church. [438]

You need to open your heart to love, to that love which dwelt in the bosom of Jesus. Should your Saviour deal with you as you would deal with those with whom you differ, you would certainly be in a distressed condition. Your case would be nearly hopeless. But I thank the Lord that we have a merciful high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. You have been tried with others, and have pursued a course toward them that Heaven does not approve. You have a work to do to let the softening influence of the grace of God into your heart; seek meekness, seek righteousness.

You are zealous for the truth. You love it and wish to invest something in it. This is all right, but be careful that the precepts you give to others are backed up with example. You must seek for peace. You can do this and not sacrifice one principle of truth. You have stormed and fought your way through, and now you need to soften your influence, to sweeten, to soothe, instead of stirring up opposition. You have possessed a large share of self-confidence and self-esteem, and have been self-exalted. Now you need to exalt

Jesus and imitate the harmless life of Him whom peace everywhere followed.

[439] You, my sister, will prove a trial to God's people unless you are willing to learn, willing to be counseled. You must not continue to feel that you know it all. You have much yet to learn before you can be perfect before God. The sweetest and best lesson to be learned will be that of humility. "Learn of Me," says the humble Nazarene; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This lesson of meekness, forbearance, patience, and love you have yet to learn and practice. You can be a blessing. You can help such as need help; but you must lay down your measuring tape, for that is not for you to use. One who is unerring in judgment, who understands the weakness of our fallen, corrupt natures, holds the standard Himself. He weighs in the balances of the sanctuary, and His just measure we shall all accept.

You err in your course toward your husband. You need to cultivate more gentleness and deference toward him. You are exacting. You carry matters to extremes and do harm to your own soul and to the truth. You make the truth repulsive and cause souls to be afraid of it. Let love soften your words and give tone to your actions, and you will find a change in those with whom you associate. There will be peace, union, and harmony, instead of strife, jealousy, and discord. Let love and tenderness be exercised, especially in your family, and you will receive a blessing.

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Chapter 59—An Appeal to the Church

October 2, 1868, I was shown the state of God's professed people. Many of them were in great darkness, yet seemed to be insensible of their true condition. The sensibilities of a large number seemed to be benumbed in regard to spiritual and eternal things, while their minds seemed all awake to their worldly interests. Many were cherishing idols in their hearts and were practicing iniquity which separated them from God and caused them to be bodies of darkness. I saw but few who stood in the light, having discernment and spirituality to discover these stumbling blocks and remove them out of the way. Men who stand in very responsible positions at the heart of the work are asleep. Satan has paralyzed them in order that his plans and devices may not be discerned, while he is active to ensnare, deceive, and destroy.

Some who occupy the position of watchmen to warn the people of danger have given up their watch and recline at ease. They are unfaithful sentinels. They remain inactive, while their wily foe enters the fort and works successfully by their side to tear down what God has commanded to be built up. They see that Satan is deceiving the inexperienced and unsuspecting; yet they take it all quietly, as though they had no special interest, as though these things did not concern them. They apprehend no special danger; they see no cause to raise an alarm. To them everything seems to be going well, and they see no necessity of raising the faithful, trumpet notes of warning which they hear borne by the plain testimonies, to show the people their transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. These reproofs and warnings disturb the quiet of these sleepy, ease-loving sentinels, and they are not pleased. They say in heart, if not in words: "This is all uncalled for. It is too severe, too harsh. These men are unnecessarily disturbed and excited, and seem unwilling to give us any rest or quietude 'Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them.' They are not willing that we should have any comfort, peace, or happiness. It is

[440]

active labor, toil, and unceasing vigilance alone which will satisfy these unreasonable, hard-to-be-suited watchmen. Why don't they prophesy smooth things, and cry: Peace, peace? Then everything would move on smoothly."

[441] These are the true feelings of many of our people. And Satan exults at his success in controlling the minds of so many who profess to be Christians. He has deceived them, benumbed their sensibilities, and planted his hellish banner right in their midst, and they are so completely deceived that they know not that it is he. The people have not erected graven images, yet their sin is no less in the sight of God. They worship mammon. They love worldly gain. Some will make any sacrifice of conscience to obtain their object. God's professed people are selfish and self-caring. They love the things of this world, and have fellowship with the works of darkness. They have pleasure in unrighteousness. They have not love toward God nor love for their neighbors. They are idolaters, and are worse, far worse, in the sight of God than the heathen, graven-image worshipers who have no knowledge of a better way.

Christ's followers are required to come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean, and they have the promise of being the sons and daughters of the Most High, members of the royal family. But if the conditions are not complied with on their part, they will not, cannot, realize the fulfillment of the promise. A profession of Christianity is nothing in the sight of God; but true, humble, willing obedience to His requirements designates the children of His adoption, the recipients of His grace, the partakers of His great salvation. Such will be peculiar, a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. Their peculiar, holy character will be discernible, and will distinctly separate them from the world, from its affections and lust.

I saw that but few among us answer to this description. Their love to God is in word, not in deed and in truth. Their course of action, their works, testify of them that they are not children of the light but of darkness. Their works have not been wrought in God, but in selfishness, in unrighteousness. Their hearts are strangers to His renewing grace. They have not experienced the transforming power which leads them to walk even as Christ walked. Those who are living branches of the heavenly Vine will partake of the sap and

nourishment of the Vine. They will not be withered and fruitless branches, but will show life and vigor, and will flourish and bear fruit to the glory of God. They will be careful to depart from all iniquity and to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

Like ancient Israel the church has dishonored her God by departing from the light, neglecting her duties, and abusing her high and exalted privilege of being peculiar and holy in character. Her members have violated their covenant to live for God and Him only. They have joined with the selfish and world-loving. Pride, the love of pleasure, and sin have been cherished, and Christ has departed. His Spirit has been quenched in the church. Satan works side by side with professed Christians; yet they are so destitute of spiritual discernment that they do not detect him. They have not the burden of the work. The solemn truths they profess to believe are not a reality to them. They have not genuine faith. Men and women will act out all the faith which they in reality possess. By their fruits ye shall know them. Not their profession, but the fruit they bear, shows the character of the tree. Many have a form of godliness, their names are upon the church records; but they have a spotted record in heaven. The recording angel has faithfully written their deeds. Every selfish act, every wrong word, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling, is faithfully chronicled in the book of records kept by the recording angel.

[442]

Very many who profess to be servants of Christ are none of His. They are deceiving their souls to their own destruction. While they profess to be servants of Christ, they are not living in obedience to His will. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Many, while professing to be servants of Christ, are obeying another master, working daily against the Master whom they profess to serve. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Earthly and selfish interests engage the soul, mind, and strength of God's professed followers. To all intents and purposes they are servants of mammon. They have not experienced a crucifixion to the world, with its affections and lusts. But few among the many

[443]

who profess to be Christ's followers can say in the language of the apostle: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." If willing obedience and true love characterize the lives of the people of God, their light will shine with a holy brightness to the world.

The words which Christ addressed to His disciples were designed for all who should believe on His name: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men." A profession of godliness without the living principle is as utterly valueless as salt without its saving properties. An unprincipled professed Christian is a byword, a reproach to Christ, a dishonor to His name. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

[444] The good works of God's people have a more powerful influence than words. By their virtuous life and unselfish acts the beholder is led to desire the same righteousness which produced so good fruit. He is charmed with that power from God which transforms selfish human beings into the divine image, and God is honored, His name glorified. But the Lord is dishonored and His cause reproached by His people's being in bondage to the world. They are in friendship with the world, the enemies of God. Their only hope of salvation is to separate from the world and zealously maintain their separate, holy, and peculiar character. Oh! why will not God's people comply with the conditions laid down in His word? If they would do this they would not fail to realize the excellent blessings freely given of God to the humble and obedient.

I was amazed as I beheld the terrible darkness of many of the members of our churches. The lack of true godliness was such that they were bodies of darkness and death, instead of being the light of

the world. Many professed to love God, but in works denied Him. They did not love, serve, nor obey Him. Their own selfish interests were primary. With a large number there seemed to be an alarming lack of principle. They were swayed by unconsecrated influence and seemed to have no root in themselves. I inquired what these things meant. Why was there such a destitution of spirituality, so few who had a living experience in religious things? I was referred to the words of the prophet: "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from Me through their idols."

The people of God were represented to me as in a backslidden state. They have not an eye single to the glory of God. Their own glory is prominent. They seek to glorify themselves and yet call themselves Christians. Holiness of heart and purity of life was the great subject of the teachings of Christ. In His Sermon on the Mount, after specifying what must be done in order to be blessed, and what must not be done, He says: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

[445]

Perfection, holiness, nothing short of this, would give them success in carrying out the principles He had given them. Without this holiness the human heart is selfish, sinful, and vicious. Holiness will lead its possessor to be fruitful and abound in all good works. He will never become weary in well-doing, neither will he look for promotion in this world. He will look forward for promotion to the time when the Majesty of heaven shall exalt the sanctified ones to His throne. Then shall He say unto them: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The Lord then enumerates the works of self-denial and mercy, compassion and righteousness, which they had wrought. Holiness of heart will produce right actions. It is the absence of spirituality, of holiness, which leads to unrighteous acts, to envy,

hatred, jealousy, evil surmisings, and every hateful and abominable sin.

[446] I have tried in the fear of God to set before His people their danger and their sins, and have endeavored, to the best of my feeble powers, to arouse them. I have stated startling things, which, if they had believed, would have caused them distress and terror, and led them to zeal in repenting of their sins and iniquities. I have stated before them that, from what was shown me, but a small number of those now professing to believe the truth would eventually be saved—not because they could not be saved, but because they would not be saved in God’s own appointed way. The way marked out by our divine Lord is too narrow and the gate too strait to admit them while grasping the world or while cherishing selfishness or sin of any kind. There is no room for these things; and yet there are but few who will consent to part with them, that they may pass the narrow way and enter the strait gate.

The words of Christ are plain: “Strive [agonize] to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Not all professed Christians are Christians at heart. There are sinners in Zion now, as there were anciently. Isaiah speaks of them in referring to the day of God: “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”

There are hypocrites now who will tremble when they obtain a view of themselves. Their own vileness will terrify them in that day which is soon to come upon us, a day when “the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” Oh, that terror might now lay hold upon them, that they might have a vivid sense of their condition and arouse while there is mercy and hope, confess their sins, and humble their souls greatly before God, that He might pardon their transgressions and heal their backslidings! The people of God are unready for the fearful, trying scenes before

us, unready to stand pure from evil and lust amid the perils and corruptions of this degenerate age. They have not on the armor of righteousness, and are unprepared to war against the prevailing iniquity. Many are not obeying the commandments of God, yet they profess so to do. If they would be faithful to obey all the statutes of God they would have a power which would carry conviction to the hearts of the unbelieving.

[447]

I have sought to do my duty. I have pointed out the special sins of some. I was shown that in the wisdom of God the sins and errors of all would not be revealed. All would have sufficient light to see their sins and errors, if they desired to do so and earnestly wished to put them away, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. They could see what sins God marked and reprov'd in others. If these were cherished by themselves, they should know that they were abhorred of God and were separated from Him; and that unless they earnestly and zealously set about the work of putting them away they would be left in darkness. God is too pure to behold iniquity. A sin is just as grievous in His sight in one case as in another. No exception will be made by an impartial God. All who are guilty are addressed in these individual testimonies, although their names may not be attached to the special testimony borne; and if individuals pass over and cover up their own sins because their names are not especially called, they will not be prospered of God. They cannot advance in the divine life, but will become darker and darker, until the light of heaven will be entirely withdrawn.

Those who profess godliness, yet are not sanctified by the truth which they profess, will not change materially their course of action, which they know is hateful before God, because they are not subjected to the trial of being reprov'd individually for their sins. They see, by the testimonies of others, their own case faithfully pointed out before them. They are cherishing the same evil. By continuing their course of sin, they are violating their consciences, hardening their hearts, and stiffening their necks, just the same as though the testimony had been borne directly to them. In passing on and refusing to put away their sins and correct their wrongs by humble confession, repentance, and humiliation, they choose their own way, and are given up to the same, and are finally led captive by Satan at his will. They may become quite bold because they are able

[448]

to conceal their sins from others and because the judgments of God do not come in a visible manner upon them. They may be apparently prosperous in this world. They may deceive poor, shortsighted mortals and be regarded as patterns of piety while in their sins. But God cannot be deceived. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God." Although the life of a sinner may be prolonged upon the earth, yet not in the earth made new. He shall be of that number whom David mentions in his psalm: "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth."

Mercy and truth are promised to the humble and penitent, but judgments are prepared for the sinful and rebellious. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne." A wicked and adulterous people will not escape the wrath of God and the punishment they have justly earned. Man has fallen; and it will be the work of a lifetime, be it longer or shorter, to recover from that fall, and regain, through Christ, the image of the divine, which he lost by sin and continued transgression. God requires a thorough transformation of soul, body, and spirit in order to regain the estate lost through Adam. The Lord mercifully sends rays of light to show man his true condition. If he will not walk in the light he manifests a pleasure in darkness. He will not come to the light lest his deeds shall be reprov[ed].

[449]

The case of N. Fuller has caused me much grief and anguish of spirit. That he should yield himself to the control of Satan to work wickedness as he has done is terrible. I believe that God designed that this case of hypocrisy and villainy should be brought to light in the manner it has been, that it might prove a warning to others. Here is a man who was acquainted with the teachings of the Bible, and who had listened to testimonies borne by me in his presence against the very sins which he was practicing. More than once he had heard me speak decidedly in regard to the prevailing sins

of this generation, that corruption was teeming everywhere, that base passions controlled men and women generally, that among the masses crimes of the darkest dye were continually practiced, and they were reeking in their own corruption. The nominal churches are filled with fornication and adultery, crime and murder, the result of base, lustful passion; but these things are kept covered. Ministers in high places are guilty; yet a cloak of godliness covers their dark deeds, and they pass on from year to year in their course of hypocrisy. The sins of the nominal churches have reached unto heaven, and the honest in heart will be brought to the light and come out of them.

From the light that God has given me, fornication and adultery are estimated by a large number of the first-day Adventists as sins which God winks at. These sins are practiced to a great extent. They do not acknowledge the claims of God's law upon them. They have broken the commandments of the great Jehovah and zealously teach their hearers to do the same, declaring that the law of God is abolished and has no claims upon them. In accordance with this free state of things, sin does not appear so exceedingly sinful; "for by the law is the knowledge of sin." We may expect to find in this company men who will deceive, and lie, and give loose rein to lustful passions. But men and women who acknowledge the Ten Commandments binding, who observe the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, should carry out in their lives the principles of all ten of the precepts given in awful grandeur from Sinai.

[450]

Seventh-day Adventists, who profess to be looking for and loving the appearing of Christ, should not follow the course of worldlings. These are no criterion for commandment keepers. Neither should they pattern after first-day Adventists, who refuse to acknowledge the claims of the law of God and trample it under their feet. This class should be no criterion for them. Commandment-keeping Adventists occupy a peculiar, exalted position. John viewed them in holy vision and thus described them: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

The Lord made a special covenant with ancient Israel: "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." He addresses His commandment-keeping people

in these last days: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”

[451] Not all who profess to keep the commandments of God possess their bodies in sanctification and honor. The most solemn message ever committed to mortals has been entrusted to this people, and they can have a powerful influence if they will be sanctified by it. They profess to be standing upon the elevated platform of eternal truth, keeping all of God’s commandments; therefore, if they indulge in sin, if they commit fornication and adultery, their crime is of tenfold greater magnitude than is that of the classes I have named, who do not acknowledge the law of God as binding upon them. In a peculiar sense do those who profess to keep God’s law dishonor Him and reproach the truth by transgressing its precepts.

It was the prevalence of this very sin, fornication, among ancient Israel, which brought upon them the signal manifestation of God’s displeasure. His judgments then followed close upon their heinous sin; thousands fell, and their polluted bodies were left in the wilderness. “But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 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. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

Seventh-day Adventists, above all other people in the world, should be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation. I related in the presence of N. Fuller that the people whom God had chosen as His peculiar treasure were required to be elevated, refined, sanctified, partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the

corruption that is in the world through lust. Should they who make so high a profession indulge in sin and iniquity, their guilt would be very great. The Lord reproveth the sins of one, that others may take warning and fear. [452]

Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists because their lives are more blameworthy than are the lives of professed Christians of the nominal churches, nor because their example or their acts are worse than those of the Adventists who will not yield obedience to the claims of God's law, but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God's special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts. They signify their loyalty to the God of heaven by yielding obedience to the laws of His government. They are God's representatives upon the earth. Any sin in them separates them from God and, in a special manner, dishonors His name by giving the enemies of His holy law occasion to reproach His cause and His people, whom He has called "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," that they should show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

The people who are at war with the law of the great Jehovah, who consider it a special virtue to talk, write, and act the most bitter and hateful things to show their contempt of that law, may make exalted profession of love to God, and apparently have much religious zeal, as did the Jewish chief priests and elders; yet, in the day of God, "Found wanting" will be said of them by the Majesty of heaven. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The mirror which would discover to them the defects in their characters, they are infuriated against, because it points out their sins. Leading Adventists who have rejected the light are fired with madness against God's holy law, as the Jewish nation were against the Son of God. They are in a terrible deception, deceiving others and being deceived themselves. [453] They will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd. Such will not be taught. But the Lord reproveth and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear and be prepared to die in the Lord or to be translated to heaven.

God rebukes, reproveth, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to His own throne.

Elder Fuller has heard the testimony borne in public, that the professed people of God were not all holy, that some were corrupt. God sought to elevate them, but they refused to come up upon a high plane of action. The corrupt animal passions bore sway, and the moral and intellectual powers were overborne and made their servants. Those who do not control their base passions cannot appreciate the atonement or place a right value upon the soul. Salvation is not experienced or understood by them. The gratification of animal passion is the highest ambition of their lives. God will accept nothing but purity and holiness; one spot, one wrinkle, one defect in the character, will forever debar them from heaven, with all its glories and treasures.

Ample provisions have been made for all who sincerely, earnestly, and thoughtfully set about the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Strength, grace, and glory have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation. None are so low, so corrupt and vile, that they cannot find in Jesus, who died for them, strength, purity, and righteousness, if they will put away their sins, cease their course of iniquity, and turn with full purpose of heart to the living God. He is waiting to strip them of their garments, stained and polluted by sin, and to put upon them the white, bright robes of righteousness; and He bids them [454] live and not die. In Him they may flourish. Their branches will not wither nor be fruitless. If they abide in Him, they can draw sap and nourishment from Him, be imbued with His Spirit, walk even as He walked, overcome as He overcame, and be exalted to His own right hand.

Elder Fuller has been warned. The warnings given to others condemned him. The sins reproveth in others reproveth him and gave him sufficient light to see how God regarded crimes of such a character as he was committing, yet he would not turn from his evil course. He continued to pursue his fearful, impious work, corrupting the bodies and souls of his flock. Satan had strengthened the lustful passions which this man did not subdue, and engaged them in his cause to lead souls to death.

While he professed to keep the law of God, he was, in a most wanton manner, violating its plain precepts. He has given himself up to the gratification of sensual pleasure. He has sold himself to work wickedness. What will be the wages of such a man? The indignation and wrath of God will punish him for sin. The vengeance of God will be aroused against all those whose lustful passions have been concealed under a ministerial cloak. While professing to be a shepherd of the flock, he was leading the flock to certain ruin. These dreadful results are the fruits of the carnal mind, which “is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

I was referred to this scripture: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Professed Christians, if no further light is given you than that contained in this text, you will be without excuse if you suffer yourselves to be controlled by base passions.

The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow. Yet those who serve their own lusts turn from all this light. They will not cease their course of sin, but continue to take pleasure in unrighteousness in the face of the threatenings and vengeance of God against those who do such things.

[455]

I have long been designing to speak to my sisters and tell them that, from what the Lord has been pleased to show me from time to time, there is a great fault among them. They are not careful to abstain from all appearance of evil. They are not all circumspect in their deportment, as becometh women professing godliness. Their words are not as select and well chosen as those of women who have received the grace of God should be. They are too familiar with their

brethren. They linger around them, incline toward them, and seem to choose their society. They are highly gratified with their attention.

From the light which the Lord has given me, our sisters should pursue a very different course. They should be more reserved, manifest less boldness, and encourage in themselves “shamefacedness and sobriety.” Both brethren and sisters indulge in too much jovial talk when in each other’s society. Women professing godliness indulge in much jesting, joking, and laughing. This is unbecoming and grieves the Spirit of God. These exhibitions reveal a lack of true Christian refinement. They do not strengthen the soul in God, but bring great darkness; they drive away the pure, refined, heavenly angels and bring those who engage in these wrongs down to a low level.

[456] Our sisters should encourage true meekness; they should not be forward, talkative, and bold, but modest and unassuming, slow to speak. They may cherish courteousness. To be kind, tender, pitiful, forgiving, and humble, would be becoming and well pleasing to God. If they occupy this position they will not be burdened with undue attention from gentlemen in the church or out. All will feel that there is a sacred circle of purity around these God-fearing women, which shields them from any unwarrantable liberties.

With some women professing godliness, there is a careless, coarse freedom of manner which leads to wrong and evil. But those godly women whose minds and hearts are occupied in meditating upon themes which strengthen purity of life, and which elevate the soul to commune with God, will not be easily led astray from the path of rectitude and virtue. Such will be fortified against the sophistry of Satan; they will be prepared to withstand his seductive arts.

Vainglory, the fashion of the world, the desire of the eye, and the lust of the flesh are connected with the fall of the unfortunate. That which is pleasing to the natural heart and carnal mind is cherished. If the lust of the flesh had been rooted out of their hearts they would not be so weak. If our sisters would feel the necessity of purifying their thoughts, and never suffer in themselves a carelessness of deportment which leads to improper acts, they need not in the least stain their purity. If they viewed the matter as God has presented it to me, they would have such an abhorrence of impure acts that they

would not be found among those who fall through the temptations of Satan, no matter whom he might select as the medium.

A preacher may be dealing in sacred, holy things, and yet not be holy in heart. He may give himself to Satan to work wickedness and to corrupt the souls and bodies of his flock. Yet if the minds of women and youth professing to love and fear God were fortified with His Spirit, if they had trained their minds to purity of thought and educated themselves to avoid all appearance of evil, they would be safe from any improper advances and be secure from the corruption prevailing around them. The apostle Paul wrote concerning himself: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

[457]

If a minister of the gospel does not control his baser passions, if he fails to follow the example of the apostle and so dishonors his profession and faith as to even name the indulgence of sin, our sisters who profess godliness should not for an instant flatter themselves that sin or crime loses its sinfulness in the least because their minister dares to engage in it. The fact that men who are in responsible places show themselves to be familiar with sin should not lessen the guilt and enormity of the sin in the minds of any. Sin should appear just as sinful, just as abhorrent, as it had been heretofore regarded; and the minds of the pure and elevated should abhor and shun the one who indulges in sin, as they would flee from a serpent whose sting was deadly.

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

[458]

that, although his profession is as exalted as the heavens, an impure proposal coming from him is from Satan disguised as an angel of light. I cannot believe that the word of God is abiding in the hearts of those who so readily yield up their innocence and virtue upon the altar of lustful passions.

My sisters, avoid even the appearance of evil. In this fast age, reeking with corruption, you are not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare. I appeal to you as followers of Christ, making an exalted profession, to cherish the precious, priceless gem of modesty. This will guard virtue. If you have any hope of being finally exalted to join the company of the pure, sinless angels, and to live in an atmosphere where there is not the least taint of sin, cherish modesty and virtue. Nothing but purity, sacred purity, will stand the grand review, abide the day of God, and be received into a pure and holy heaven.

The slightest insinuations, from whatever source they may come, inviting you to indulge in sin or to allow the least unwarrantable liberty with your persons, should be resented as the worst of insults to your dignified womanhood. The kiss upon your cheek, at an improper time and place, should lead you to repel the emissary of Satan with disgust. If it is from one in high places who is dealing in sacred things, the sin is of tenfold greater magnitude, and should lead a God-fearing woman or youth to recoil with horror, not only from the sin he would have you commit, but from the hypocrisy and villainy of one whom the people respect and honor as God's servant. He is handling sacred things, yet hiding his baseness of heart under a ministerial cloak. Be afraid of anything like this familiarity. Be sure that the least approach to it is evidence of a lascivious mind and a lustful eye. If the least encouragement is given in this direction, if any of the liberties mentioned are tolerated, no better evidence can be given that your mind is not pure and chaste as it should be, and that sin and crime have charms for you. You lower the standard of your dignified, virtuous womanhood, and give unmistakable evidence that a low, brutal, common passion and lust has been suffered to remain alive in your heart and has never been crucified.

As I have been shown the dangers of those who profess better things, and the sins that exist among them,—a class who are not suspected of being in any danger from these polluting sins,—I have

been led to inquire: Who, O Lord, shall stand when Thou appearest? Only those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall abide the day of His coming.

I feel impelled by the Spirit of the Lord to urge my sisters who profess godliness to cherish modesty of deportment and a becoming reserve, with shamefacedness and sobriety. The liberties taken in this age of corruption should be no criterion for Christ's followers. These fashionable exhibitions of familiarity should not exist among Christians fitting for immortality. If lasciviousness, pollution, adultery, crime, and murder are the order of the day among those who know not the truth, and who refuse to be controlled by the principles of God's word, how important that the class professing to be followers of Christ, closely allied to God and angels, should show them a better and nobler way. How important that by their chastity and virtue they stand in marked contrast to that class who are controlled by brute passions.

I have inquired: When will the youthful sisters act with propriety? I know there will be no decided change for the better until parents feel the importance of greater carefulness in educating their children correctly. Teach them to act with reserve and modesty. Educate them for usefulness, to be helps, to minister to others rather than to be waited upon and be ministered unto. [460]

Satan controls the minds of the youth in general. Your daughters are not taught self-denial and self-control. They are petted, and their pride is fostered. They are allowed to have their own way until they become headstrong and self-willed, and you are put to your wit's end to know what course to pursue to save them from ruin. Satan is leading them on to be a proverb in the mouth of unbelievers because of their boldness, their lack of reserve and womanly modesty. The young boys are likewise left to have their own way. They have scarcely entered their teens before they are by the side of little girls of their own age, accompanying them home and making love to them. And the parents are so completely in bondage through their own indulgence and mistaken love for their children that they dare not pursue a decided course to make a change and restrain their too-fast children in this fast age.

With many young ladies the boys are the theme of conversation; with the young men, it is the girls. "Out of the abundance of the

heart the mouth speaketh.” They talk of those subjects upon which their minds mostly run. The recording angel is writing the words of these professed Christian boys and girls. How will they be confused and ashamed when they meet them again in the day of God! Many children are pious hypocrites. The youth who have not made a profession of religion stumble over these hypocritical ones and are hardened against any effort that may be made by those interested in their salvation.

[461] There ought to be picked men at the heart of the work, men who in every emergency can be relied upon to keep the fort, men who are unselfish, abounding in generosity and all good works, whose lives are hid in God, and who consider the better life of more value than food and clothing. “Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” God calls for faithful sentinels right at the heart of the work, who will love souls for whom Christ died, and who will bear the burden for perishing souls, looking forward to that recompense of reward which will be theirs when they enter into the joy of their Lord and behold souls saved through their instrumentality to live as long as God shall live, and be happy, eternally happy, in His glorious kingdom. Oh, that we could arouse fathers and mothers to a sense of their duty! Oh, that they would feel deeply the weight of responsibility resting upon them! Then they might forestall the enemy and gain precious victories for Jesus. Parents are not clear in this matter. They should closely investigate their lives, analyze their thoughts and motives, and see if they have been circumspect in their course of action. They should watch closely to see if their example in conversation and deportment has been such as they would wish their children to imitate. Purity and virtue should shine out in their words and acts before their children.

I have been shown families where the husband and father has not preserved that reserve, that dignified, godlike manhood, which is befitting a follower of Christ. He has failed to perform the kind, tender, courteous acts due to his wife, whom he has promised before God and angels to love, respect, and honor while they both shall live. The girl employed to do the work has been free and somewhat forward to dress his hair and to be affectionately attentive, and he is pleased, foolishly pleased. In his love and attention to his wife he is not as demonstrative as he once was. Be sure that Satan is at

work here. Respect your hired help, treat them kindly, considerately, but go no further. Let your deportment be such that there will be no advances to familiarity from them. If you have words of kindness and acts of courtesy to give, it is always safe to give them to your wife. It will be a great blessing to her, and will bring happiness to her heart, to be reflected upon you again. [462]

I have been shown also that the wife has let her sympathies and interest and affection go out to other men, who may be members of the family. She makes these her confidants, shows a preference for their society, and relates to them her troubles and perhaps her private family matters.

This is all wrong. Satan is at the bottom of it; and unless you are alarmed and stop just where you are, he will lead you to ruin. You cannot observe too great caution and encourage too much reserve in this matter. If you have tender, loving words and kindly attentions to bestow, let them be given to him whom you have promised before God and angels to love, respect, and honor while you both shall live. Oh, how many lives are made bitter by the breaking down of the walls which enclose the privacies of every family and which are calculated to preserve its purity and sanctity! A third person is taken into the confidence of the wife, and her private family matters are laid open before the special friend. This is the device of Satan to estrange the hearts of the husband and wife. Oh, that this would cease! what a world of trouble would be saved! Lock within your own hearts the knowledge of each other's faults. Tell your troubles alone to God. He can give you right counsel and sure consolation, which will be pure, having no bitterness in it.

I am acquainted with a number of women who have thought their marriage a misfortune. They have read novels until their imaginations have become diseased, and they live in a world of their own creating. They think themselves women of sensitive minds, of superior, refined organizations, and imagine that their husbands are not so refined, that they do not possess these superior qualities, and therefore cannot appreciate their own supposed virtue and refined organizations. Consequently these women think themselves great sufferers, martyrs. They have talked of this and thought upon it until they are nearly maniacs upon this subject. They imagine their worth superior to that of other mortals, and it is not agreeable to their fine [463]

sensibilities to associate with common humanity. These women are making themselves fools; and their husbands are in danger of thinking that they do possess a superior order of mind.

From what the Lord has shown me, the women of this class have had their imaginations perverted by novel reading, daydreaming, and castle-building, living in an imaginary world. They do not bring their own ideas down to the common, useful duties of life. They do not take up the life burdens which lie in their path, and seek to make a happy, cheerful home for their husbands. They rest their whole weight upon them, not bearing their own burden. They expect others to anticipate their wants and do for them, while they are at liberty to find fault and to question as they please. These women have a lovesick sentimentalism, constantly thinking they are not appreciated, that their husbands do not give them all the attention they deserve. They imagine themselves martyrs.

The truth of the matter is, if they would show themselves useful their value might be appreciated; but when they pursue a course to constantly draw upon others for sympathy and attention, while they feel under no obligation to give the same in return, passing along reserved, cold, and unapproachable, bearing no burden for others and having no feeling for their woes, there can be in their lives but little that is valuable. These women have educated themselves to think and act as though it was a great condescension in them to marry the men they did, and that therefore their fine organizations would never be fully appreciated. They have viewed things all wrong. They are unworthy of their husbands. They are a constant tax upon their care and patience, when they might be helps, lifting the burdens of life with them, instead of dreaming over unreal life found in novels and love romances. May the Lord pity the men who are bound to such useless machines, fit only to be waited upon, to breathe, eat, and dress.

[464]

These women who suppose they possess such sensitive, refined organizations make very useless wives and mothers. It is frequently the case that they withdraw their affections from their husbands, who are useful, practical men, and show much attention to other men, and with their lovesick sentimentalism draw upon the sympathies of others, tell them their trials, their troubles, their aspirations to do some elevated work, and reveal the fact that their married life is a

disappointment, a hindrance to their doing the work they had hoped to do.

Oh, what wretchedness exists in families that might be happy! These women are a curse to themselves and a curse to their husbands. In supposing themselves to be angels, they make themselves fools, and are nothing but heavy burdens. The common duties of life which the Lord has left for them to do, they leave right in their path, and are restless and complaining, always looking for an easy, more exalted, and more agreeable work. Supposing themselves to be angels, they are found human after all. They are fretful, peevish, dissatisfied, jealous of their husbands because the larger portion of their time is not spent waiting upon them. They complain of being neglected when their husbands are doing the very work they ought to do. Satan finds easy access to this class. They have no real love for anyone but themselves. Yet Satan tells them that if such a one were their husband, they would be happy indeed. They are easy victims to the device of Satan, being readily led to dishonor their own husbands and to transgress the law of God.

I would say to women of this description: You can make or destroy your own happiness. You can make your position happy or unbearable. The course which you pursue will create happiness or misery for yourself. Have these persons never thought that their husbands must tire of them in their uselessness, their peevishness, their faultfinding, their passionate fits of weeping while imagining their case so pitiful? Their irritable, peevish disposition is indeed weaning from them the affections of their husbands and driving them to seek for sympathy, and peace, and comfort elsewhere than at home. A poisonous atmosphere is in their dwelling, and home is to them anything but a place of rest, peace, or happiness. The husband is subject to Satan's temptation, and his affections are placed on forbidden objects, and he is lured on to crime and finally lost.

[465]

Great is the work and mission of women, especially those who are wives and mothers. They can be a blessing to all around them. They can have a powerful influence for good if they will let their light so shine that others may be led to glorify our heavenly Father. Women may have a transforming influence if they will only consent to yield their way and their will to God, and let Him control their mind, affections, and being. They can have an influence which will

tend to refine and elevate those with whom they associate. But this class are generally unconscious of the power they possess. They exert an unconscious influence which seems to work out naturally from a sanctified life, a renewed heart. It is the fruit that grows naturally upon the good tree of divine planting. Self is forgotten, merged in the life of Christ. To be rich in good works is as natural as their breath. They live to do others good and yet are ready to say: We are unprofitable servants.

[466] God has assigned woman her mission; and if she, in her humble way, yet to the best of her ability, makes a heaven of her home, faithfully and lovingly performing her duties to her husband and children, continually seeking to let a holy light shine from her useful, pure, and virtuous life to brighten all around her, she is doing the work left her of the Master, and will hear from His divine lips the words: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. These women who are doing with ready willingness what their hands find to do, with cheerfulness of spirit aiding their husbands to bear their burdens, and training their children for God, are missionaries in the highest sense. They are engaged in an important branch of the great work to be done on earth to prepare mortals for a higher life, and they will receive their reward. Children are to be trained for heaven and fitted to shine in the courts of the Lord's kingdom. When parents, especially mothers, have a true sense of the important, responsible work which God has left for them to do, they will not be so much engaged in the business which concerns their neighbors, with which they have nothing to do. They will not go from house to house to engage in fashionable gossip, dwelling upon the faults, wrongs, and inconsistencies of their neighbors. They will feel so great a burden of care for their own children that they can find no time to take up a reproach against their neighbor. Gossipers and news carriers are a terrible curse to neighborhoods and churches. Two thirds of all the church trials arise from this source.

God requires all to do with faithfulness the duties of today. This is much neglected by the larger share of professed Christians. Especially is present duty lost sight of by the class I have mentioned, who imagine that they are of a finer order of beings than their fellow mortals around them. The fact that their minds turn in this channel is proof that they are of an inferior order, narrow, conceited, and

selfish. They feel high above the lowly and humble poor, such as Jesus says He has called. They are forever trying to secure position, to gain applause, to obtain credit for doing some great work that others cannot do. But it disturbs the fine grain of their refined organism to associate with the humble, the unfortunate. They mistake the reason altogether. The reason why they shun any of these duties not so agreeable is found in their supreme selfishness. Dear self is the center of all their actions and motives. [467]

I was pointed to the Majesty of heaven. When He whom angels worshiped, He who was rich in honor, splendor, and glory, came to the earth, and found Himself in fashion as a man, He did not plead His refined nature as an excuse to hold Himself aloof from the unfortunate. In His work He was found among the afflicted, the poor, distressed, and needy ones. Christ was the embodiment of refinement and purity; His was an exalted life and character; yet in His labor He was found not among men of high-sounding titles, not among the most honorable of this world, but with the despised and needy. I came, says the divine Teacher, "to save that which was lost." Yes; the Majesty of heaven was ever found working to help those who most needed help. May the example of Christ put to shame the excuses of that class who are so attracted to their poor selves that they consider it beneath their refined taste and their high calling to help the most helpless. Such have taken a position higher than their Lord, and in the end will be astonished to find themselves lower than the lowest of that class whom their refined, sensitive natures were shocked to mingle with and work for. True, it may not always be agreeable to unite with the Master and become co-workers with Him in helping the very class who stand most in need of help; but this is the work which Christ humbled Himself to do. Is the servant greater than his Lord? He has given the example, and enjoins upon us to copy it. It may be disagreeable, yet duty demands that just such a work be performed.

Faithful and picked men are needed at the head of the work. Those who have not had an experience in bearing burdens, and who do not wish to have that experience, should not, on any account, live there. Men are wanted who will watch for souls as they that must give an account. Fathers and mothers in Israel are wanted at this important post. Let the selfish and self-caring, the stingy, covetous [468]

souls, find a location where their miserable traits of character will not be so conspicuous. The more isolated such ones are, the better for the cause of God. I appeal to the people of God, wherever they may be found: Awake to your duty. Take it to heart that we are really living amid the perils of the last days.

I hope that the case of N. Fuller will awaken you, fathers and mothers, to see the necessity of thorough work in your houses, among yourselves and your children, that not one of you may be so deluded by Satan as to regard sin as this poor, much-to-be-pitied man has done. Those who have participated with him in crime would never have been left to be deceived and ruined had they possessed a high sense of virtue and purity, and cherished a constant and lively horror of sin and iniquity. While living under and proclaiming the most solemn message ever borne to mortals, presenting the law of God as a test of character and as the seal of the living God, they are transgressing its holy precepts. The consciences of those who do this have become seared and terribly hardened. They have resisted the influences of the Spirit of God until they can use sacred truth as a cloak to hide the deformity of their corrupted souls. This man has been terribly deluded by Satan. He has been serving vicious passions while professing to be consecrated to the work of God, ministering in sacred things. He has considered himself in health while there was no soundness in him.

[469] I have felt deeply as I have seen the powerful influence of animal passions in controlling men and women of no ordinary intelligence and ability. They would be capable of engaging in a good work, of exerting a powerful influence, were they not enslaved by base passions. My confidence in humanity has been terribly shaken. I have been shown that persons of apparently good deportment, not taking unwarrantable liberties with the other sex, were guilty of practicing secret vice nearly every day of their lives. They have not refrained from this terrible sin even while most solemn meetings have been in session. They have listened to the most solemn, impressive discourses upon the judgment, which seemed to bring them before the tribunal of God, causing them to fear and quake; yet hardly an hour would elapse before they would be engaged in their favorite, bewitching sin, polluting their own bodies. They were such slaves to this awful crime that they seemed devoid of power to

control their passions. We have labored for some earnestly, we have entreated, we have wept and prayed over them; yet we have known that right amid all our earnest effort and distress the force of sinful habit has obtained the mastery, and these sins have been committed.

Through severe attacks of sickness or by powerful conviction the consciences of some of the guilty have been aroused and have so scourged them that it has led to confession of these things with deep humiliation. Others are equally guilty. They have practiced this sin nearly their whole lifetime and, in their broken-down constitutions and sievelike memories, are reaping the result of this pernicious habit; yet they are too proud to confess. They are secretive, and have not shown compunctions of conscience for this great sin. My confidence in the Christian experience of such is very small. They seem to be insensible to the influence of the Spirit of God. The sacred and common are alike to them. The common practice of a vice so degrading as the polluting of their own bodies has not led to bitter tears and heartfelt repentance. They feel that their sin is against themselves alone. Here they mistake. Are they diseased in body or mind, others are made to feel, others suffer. The imagination is at fault, the memory is deficient, mistakes are made, and there is a deficiency everywhere which seriously affects those with whom they live and who associate with them. Mortification and regret are felt because these things are known by others.

[470]

I have mentioned these cases to illustrate the power of this soul-and-body-destroying vice. The entire mind is given up to low passion. The moral and intellectual faculties are over-borne by the baser powers. The body is enervated, the brain weakened. The material deposited there to nourish the system is squandered. The drain upon the system is great. The fine nerves of the brain, being excited to unnatural action, become benumbed and in a measure paralyzed. The moral and intellectual powers are weakening, while the animal passions are strengthening and being more largely developed by exercise. The appetite for unhealthful food clamors for indulgence. When persons are addicted to the habit of self-abuse, it is impossible to arouse their moral sensibilities to appreciate eternal things or to delight in spiritual exercises. Impure thoughts seize and control the imagination and fascinate the mind, and next follows an almost uncontrollable desire for the performance of impure actions. If the

mind were educated to contemplate elevating subjects, the imagination trained to reflect upon pure and holy things, it would be fortified against this terrible, debasing, soul-and-body-destroying indulgence. It would, by training, become accustomed to linger upon the high, the heavenly, the pure, and the sacred, and could not be attracted to this base, corrupt, and vile indulgence.

What can we say of those who are living right in the blazing light of truth, yet daily practicing and following in a course of sin and crime? Forbidden, exciting pleasures have a charm for them and hold and control their entire being. Such take pleasure in unrighteousness and iniquity, and must perish outside of the city of God, with every abominable thing.

[471] I have sought to arouse parents to their duty, yet they sleep on. Your children are practicing secret vice, and they deceive you. You have such implicit confidence in them that you think them too good and innocent to be capable of secretly practicing iniquity. Parents fondle and pet their children, and indulge them in pride, but do not restrain them with firmness and decision. They are so much afraid of their willful, stubborn spirits that they fear to come in contact with them; the sin of negligence, which was marked against Eli, will be their sin. The exhortation of Peter is of the highest value to all who are striving for immortality. He addresses those of like precious faith:

“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our

Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” [472]

We are in a world where light and knowledge abound, yet many claiming to be of like precious faith are willingly ignorant. Light is all around them, yet they do not appropriate it to themselves. Parents do not see the necessity of informing themselves, obtaining knowledge, and putting it to a practical use in their married life. If they followed out the exhortation of the apostle, and lived upon the plan of addition, they would not be unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But many do not understand the work of sanctification. They seem to think they have attained to it, when they have learned only the first lessons in addition. Sanctification is a progressive work; it is not attained to in an hour or a day, and then maintained without any special effort on our part.

Many parents do not obtain the knowledge that they should in the married life. They are not guarded lest Satan take advantage of them and control their minds and their lives. They do not see that God requires them to control their married lives from any excesses. But very few feel it to be a religious duty to govern their passions. They have united themselves in marriage to the object of their choice, and therefore reason that marriage sanctifies the indulgence of the baser passions. Even men and women professing godliness give loose rein to their lustful passions, and have no thought that God holds them accountable for the expenditure of vital energy, which weakens their hold on life and enervates the entire system.

The marriage covenant covers sins of the darkest hue. Men and women professing godliness debase their own bodies through the indulgence of the corrupt passions, and thus lower themselves beneath the brute creation. They abuse the powers which God has given them to be preserved in sanctification and honor. Health and life are sacrificed upon the altar of base passion. The higher, nobler powers are brought into subjection to the animal propensities. Those who thus sin are not acquainted with the result of their course. Could all see the amount of suffering which they bring upon themselves by [473]

their own sinful indulgence, they would be alarmed, and some, at least, would shun the course of sin which brings such dreaded wages. So miserable an existence is entailed upon a large class that death would to them be preferable to life; and many do die prematurely, their lives sacrificed in the inglorious work of excessive indulgence of the animal passions. Yet because they are married they think they commit no sin.

Men and women, you will one day learn what is lust and the result of its gratification. Passion of just as base a quality may be found in the marriage relation as outside of it. The apostle Paul exhorts husbands to love their wives “even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.” “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.” It is not pure love which actuates a man to make his wife an instrument to minister to his lust. It is the animal passions which clamor for indulgence. How few men show their love in the manner specified by the apostle: “Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might [not pollute it, but] sanctify and cleanse it; ... that it should be holy and without blemish.” This is the quality of love in the marriage relation which God recognizes as holy. Love is a pure and holy principle; but lustful passion will not admit of restraint, and will not be dictated to or controlled by reason. It is blind to consequences; it will not reason from cause to effect. Many women are suffering from great debility and settled disease because the laws of their being have been disregarded; nature’s laws have been trampled upon. The brain nerve power is squandered by men and women, being called into unnatural action to gratify base passions; and this hideous monster, base, low passion, assumes the delicate name of love.

[474]

Many professed Christians who passed before me seemed destitute of moral restraint. They were more animal than divine. In fact, they were about all animal. Men of this type degrade the wife whom they have promised to nourish and cherish. She is made an instrument to minister to the gratification of low, lustful propensities. And very many women submit to become slaves to lustful passion; they do not possess their bodies in sanctification and honor. The wife does not retain the dignity and self-respect which she possessed

previous to marriage. This holy institution should have preserved and increased her womanly respect and holy dignity; but her chaste, dignified, godlike womanhood has been consumed upon the altar of base passion; it has been sacrificed to please her husband. She soon loses respect for the husband, who does not regard the laws to which the brute creation yield obedience. The married life becomes a galling yoke; for love dies out, and frequently distrust, jealousy, and hate take its place.

No man can truly love his wife when she will patiently submit to become his slave and minister to his depraved passions. In her passive submission, she loses the value she once possessed in his eyes. He sees her dragged down from everything elevating, to a low level; and soon he suspects that she will as tamely submit to be degraded by another as by himself. He doubts her constancy and purity, tires of her, and seeks new objects to arouse and intensify his hellish passions. The law of God is not regarded. These men are worse than brutes; they are demons in human form. They are unacquainted with the elevating, ennobling principles of true, sanctified love.

The wife also becomes jealous of the husband and suspects that if opportunity should offer he would just as readily pay his addresses to another as to her. She sees that he is not controlled by conscience or the fear of God; all these sanctified barriers are broken down by lustful passions; all that is god-like in the husband is made the servant of low, brutish lust. [475]

The world is filled with men and women of this order; and neat, tasty, yea, expensive houses contain a hell within. Imagine, if you can, what must be the offspring of such parents. Will not the children sink still lower in the scale? The parents give the stamp of character to their children. Therefore children that are born of these parents inherit from them qualities of mind which are of a low, base order. And Satan nourishes anything tending to corruption. The matter now to be settled is: Shall the wife feel bound to yield implicitly to the demands of her husband, when she sees that nothing but base passions control him, and when her reason and judgment are convinced that she does it to the injury of her body, which God has enjoined upon her to possess in sanctification and honor, to preserve as a living sacrifice to God?

It is not pure, holy love which leads the wife to gratify the animal propensities of her husband at the expense of health and life. If she possesses true love and wisdom, she will seek to divert his mind from the gratification of lustful passions to high and spiritual themes by dwelling upon interesting spiritual subjects. It may be necessary to humbly and affectionately urge, even at the risk of his displeasure, that she cannot debase her body by yielding to sexual excess. She should, in a tender, kind manner, remind him that God has the first and highest claim upon her entire being, and that she cannot disregard this claim, for she will be held accountable in the great day of God. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” “Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.”

If she will elevate her affections, and in sanctification and honor preserve her refined, womanly dignity, woman can do much by her judicious influence to sanctify her husband, and thus fulfill her high mission. In so doing, she can save both her husband and herself, thus performing a double work. In this matter, so delicate and so difficult to manage, much wisdom and patience are necessary, as well as moral courage and fortitude. Strength and grace can be found in prayer. Sincere love is to be the ruling principle of the heart. Love to God and love to the husband can alone be the right ground of action.

Let the wife decide that it is the husband’s prerogative to have full control of her body, and to mold her mind to suit his in every respect, to run in the same channel as his own, and she yields her individuality; her identity is lost, merged in that of her husband. She is a mere machine for his will to move and control, a creature of his pleasure. He thinks for her, decides for her, and acts for her. She dishonors God in occupying this passive position. She has a responsibility before God which it is her duty to preserve.

When the wife yields her body and mind to the control of her husband, being passive to his will in all things, sacrificing her conscience, her dignity, and even her identity, she loses the opportunity of exerting that mighty influence for good which she should possess to elevate her husband. She could soften his stern nature, and her sanctifying influence could be exerted in a manner to refine and

purify, leading him to strive earnestly to govern his passions and be more spiritually minded, that they might be partakers together of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The power of influence can be great to lead the mind to high and noble themes, above the low, sensual indulgences for which the heart unrenewed by grace naturally seeks. If the wife feels that in order to please her husband she must come down to his standard, when animal passion is the principal basis of his love and controls his actions, she displeases God; for she fails to exert a sanctifying influence upon her husband. If she feels that she must submit to his animal passions without a word of remonstrance, she does not understand her duty to him nor to her God. Sexual excess will effectually destroy a love for devotional exercises, will take from the brain the substance needed to nourish the system, and will most effectively exhaust the vitality. No woman should aid her husband in this work of self-destruction. She will not do it if she is enlightened and has true love for him. [477]

The more the animal passions are indulged, the stronger do they become, and the more violent will be their clamors for indulgence. Let God-fearing men and women awake to their duty. Many professed Christians are suffering with paralysis of nerve and brain because of their intemperance in this direction. Rottenness is in the bones and marrow of many who are regarded as good men, who pray and weep, and who stand in high places, but whose polluted carcasses will never pass the portals of the heavenly city.

Oh, that I could make all understand their obligation to God to preserve the mental and physical organism in the best condition to render perfect service to their Maker! Let the Christian wife refrain, both in word and act, from exciting the animal passions of her husband. Many have no strength at all to waste in this direction. From their youth up they have weakened the brain and sapped the constitution by the gratification of animal passions. Self-denial and temperance should be the watchword in their married life; then the children born to them will not be so liable to have the moral and intellectual organs weak, and the animal strong. Vice in children is almost universal. Is there not a cause? Who have given them the stamp of character? May the Lord open the eyes of all to see that they are standing in slippery places! [478]

From the picture that has been presented before me of the corruption of men and women professing godliness, I have feared that I should altogether lose confidence in humanity. I have seen that a fearful stupor is upon nearly all. It is almost impossible to arouse the very ones who should be awakened, so as to have any just sense of the power which Satan holds over minds. They are not aware of the corruption teeming all around them. Satan has blinded their minds and lulled them to carnal security. The failures in our efforts to bring others up to understand the great dangers that beset souls have sometimes led me to fear that my ideas of the depravity of the human heart were exaggerated. But when facts are brought to us showing the sad deformity of one who has dared to minister in sacred things while corrupt at heart, one whose sin-stained hands have profaned the vessels of the Lord, I am sure that I have not drawn the picture any too strong.

[479] I have been bearing a very strong testimony, both in writing and in speaking, hoping to awaken God's people to understand that they have fallen upon perilous times. I have felt sick at heart at the indifference manifested by those who should understand the workings of Satan, and who ought to be awake and guarded. I have seen that Satan is leading the minds of even those who profess the truth to indulge in the terrible sin of fornication. The mind of a man or woman does not come down in a moment from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to transform the human to the divine, or to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. By beholding we become changed. Though formed in the image of his Maker, man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him. As he ceases to watch and pray, he ceases to guard the citadel, the heart, and engages in sin and crime. The mind is debased, and it is impossible to elevate it from corruption while it is being educated to enslave the moral and intellectual powers, and bring them in subjection to grosser passions. Constant war against the carnal mind must be maintained; and we must be aided by the refining influence of the grace of God, which will attract the mind upward and habituate it to meditate upon pure and holy things.

The body is not kept under by many professed Sabbathkeepers. Some have embraced the Sabbath whose minds have ever been

depraved. And when they embraced the truth they did not feel the necessity of turning square about and changing their whole course of action. They have been for years following the inclinations of an unregenerate heart, and have been swayed by the corrupt passions of their carnal natures, which had defaced the image of God in them and defiled everything they touched; therefore their entire future life would be all too short, at the longest, to climb Peter's ladder of Christian perfection, preparatory to their entering into the kingdom of God. But there are not many who feel that they cannot be saved by a profession of the truth, unless they become sanctified through the truth in answer to the prayer of our divine Lord to His Father: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."

Men and women who profess to be disciples of Christ and to keep all the commandments of God will have to feel in their daily lives the true spirit of agonizing to enter in at the strait gate. The agonizing ones are the only ones who will urge their passage through the strait gate and narrow way that lead to life eternal, to fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. Those who merely seek to enter in will never be able. The entire Christian life of many will be spent in no greater effort than that of seeking, and their only reward will be to find it an utter impossibility for them to enter in at that strait gate.

[480]

I have been surprised to see how many families are blinded by Satan so that they have no sense of his workings, his wiles and deceptions, practiced in their very midst. Parents seem to be stupefied by the paralyzing influence of the evil one, and yet think they are all right. I have been shown that Satan seeks to debase the minds of those who unite in marriage, that he may stamp his own hateful image upon their children. Because they have entered into the marriage relation, many think that they may permit themselves to be controlled by animal passions. They are led on by Satan, who deceives them and leads them to pervert this sacred institution. He is well pleased with the low level which their minds take; for he has much to gain in this direction. He knows that if he can excite the baser passions, and keep them in the ascendancy, he has nothing to be troubled about in their Christian experience; for the moral and intellectual faculties will be subordinate, while the animal propensities will predominate and keep in the ascendancy; and these

baser passions will be strengthened by exercise, while the nobler qualities will become weaker and weaker.

[481] He can mold their posterity much more readily than he could the parents, for he can so control the minds of the parents that through them he may give his own stamp of character to their children. Thus many children are born with the animal passions largely in the ascendancy, while the moral faculties are but feebly developed. These children need the most careful culture to bring out, strengthen, and develop the moral and intellectual powers, that these may take the lead. But the workings of Satan are not perceived; his wiles are not understood. Children are not trained for God. Their moral and religious education is neglected. The animal passions are constantly strengthened, while the moral faculties become enfeebled.

Some children begin to practice self-pollution in their infancy; and as they increase in years, the lustful passions grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength. Their minds are not at rest. Girls desire the society of boys, and boys that of the girls. Their deportment is not reserved and modest. They are bold and forward, and take indecent liberties. The habit of self-abuse has debased their minds and tainted their souls. Vile thoughts, and the reading of novels, love stories, and vile books excite their imagination, and just such suit their depraved minds. They do not love work, and when engaged in labor they complain of fatigue; their backs ache; their heads ache. Is there not sufficient cause? Are they fatigued because of their labor? No, no! Yet the parents indulge these children in their complaints, and release them from labor and responsibility. This is the very worst thing that they can do for them. They are thus removing almost the only barrier that prevents Satan from having free access to their weakened minds. Useful labor would in some measure be a safeguard from his decided control of them.

We have some knowledge of Satan's manner of working and how well he succeeds in it. From what has been shown me, he has paralyzed the minds of parents. They are slow to suspect that their own children can be wrong and sinful. Some of these children profess to be Christians, and parents sleep on, fearing no danger, while the minds and bodies of their children are becoming wrecked. Some parents do not even take care to keep their children with them when in the house of God. Young girls attend meetings and take

their seats, it may be, with their parents, but more frequently back in the congregation. They are in the habit of making an excuse to leave the house. Boys understand this, and go out before or after the exit of the girls, and then, as the meeting closes, they accompany them home. Parents are none the wiser for this. Again, excuses are made to walk, and boys and girls assemble in the fair grounds, or some other secluded place, and there play and have a regular high time, with no experienced eye upon them to caution them. They imitate men and women of advanced age.

[482]

This is a fast age. Little boys and girls commence paying attentions to one another when they should both be in the nursery, taking lessons in modesty of deportment. What is the effect of this common mixing up? Does it increase chastity in the youth who thus gather together? No, indeed! it increases the first lustful passions; after such meetings the youth are crazed by the devil and give themselves up to their vile practices.

Parents are asleep and know not that Satan has planted his hellish banner right in their households. What, I was led to inquire, will become of the youth in this corrupt age? I repeat, Parents are asleep. The children are infatuated with a lovesick sentimentalism, and the truth has no power to correct the wrong. What can be done to stay the tide of evil? Parents can do much if they will. If a young girl just entering her teens is accosted with familiarity by a boy of her own age, or older, she should be taught to so resent this that no such advances will ever be repeated. When a girl's company is frequently sought by boys or young men, something is wrong. That young girl needs a mother to show her her place, to restrain her, and teach her what belongs to a girl of her age.

The corrupting doctrine which has prevailed, that, as viewed from a health standpoint, the sexes must mingle together, has done its mischievous work. When parents and guardians manifest one tithe of the shrewdness which Satan possesses, then can this association of sexes be nearer harmless. As it is, Satan is most successful in his effort to bewitch the minds of the youth; and the mingling of boys and girls only increases the evil twentyfold. Let boys and girls be kept employed in useful labor. If they are tired, they will have less inclination to corrupt their own bodies. There is nothing to be hoped for in the case of the young, unless there is an entire change in the

[483]

minds of those who are older. Vice is stamped upon the features of boys and girls, and yet what is done to stay the progress of this evil? Boys and young men are allowed and encouraged to take liberties by immodest advances of girls and young women. May God arouse fathers and mothers to work earnestly to change this terrible state of things, is my prayer.

I have been looking over the *Testimonies* given for Sabbathkeepers and I am astonished at the mercy of God and His care for His people in giving them so many warnings, pointing out their dangers, and presenting before them the exalted position which He would have them occupy. If they would keep themselves in His love and separate from the world, He would cause His special blessings to rest upon them and His light to shine round about them. Their influence for good might be felt in every branch of the work and in every part of the gospel field. But if they fail to meet the mind of God, if they continue to have so little sense of the exalted character of the work as they have had in the past, their influence and example will prove a terrible curse. They will do harm and only harm. The blood of precious souls will be found upon their garments.

[484] Testimonies of warning have been repeated. I inquire: Who have heeded them? Who have been zealous in repenting of their sins and idolatry, and have been earnestly pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? Who have shown the inward work of God, leading to self-denial and humble self-sacrifice? Who that have been warned have so separated themselves from the world, from its affections and lusts, that they have shown a daily growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Whom do we find among the active ones, that feel the burden for the church? Whom do we see that God is especially using, working by and through them to elevate the standard, and to bring the church up to it, that they may prove the Lord and see if He will not pour them out a blessing?

I have waited anxiously, hoping that God would put His Spirit upon some and use them as instruments of righteousness to awaken and set in order His church. I have almost despaired as I have seen, year after year, a greater departure from that simplicity which God has shown me should characterize the life of His followers. There has been less and less interest in, and devotion to, the cause of God.

I ask: Wherein have those who profess confidence in the *Testimonies* sought to live according to the light given in them? Wherein have they regarded the warnings given? Wherein have they heeded the instructions they have received?

I saw that great changes must be wrought in the hearts and lives of very many before God can work in them by His power for the salvation of others. They must be renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Then the love of the world, the love of self, and every ambition of life calculated to exalt self will be changed by the grace of God and employed in the special work of saving souls for whom Christ died. Humility will take the place of pride, and haughty self-esteem will be exchanged for meekness. Every power of the heart will be controlled by disinterested love for all mankind. Satan, I saw, will arouse when they in earnest commence the work of reformation in themselves. He knows that these persons, if consecrated to God, could prove the strength of His promises and realize a power working with them that the adversary would not be able to gainsay or resist. They would realize the life of God in the soul.

[485]

One family in particular have needed all the benefits they could receive from the reform in diet, yet these very ones have been completely backslidden. Meat and butter have been used by them quite freely, and spices have not been entirely discarded. This family could have received great benefit from a nourishing, well-regulated diet. The head of the family needed plain, nutritious food. His habits were sedentary, and his blood moved sluggishly through the system. He could not, like others, have the benefit of healthful exercise; therefore his food should have been of the right quality and quantity. There has not been in this family the right management in regard to diet; there has been irregularity. There should have been a specified time for each meal, and the food should have been prepared in a simple form and free from grease; but pains should have been taken to have it nutritious, healthful, and inviting. In this family, as also in many others, a special parade has been made for visitors, many dishes prepared and frequently made too rich, so that those seated at the table would be tempted to eat to excess. Then in the absence of company there was a great reaction, a falling off in the preparations brought on the table. The diet was spare and lacked

nourishment. It was considered not so much matter “just for ourselves.” The meals were frequently picked up, and the regular time for eating not regarded. Every member of the family was injured by such management. It is a sin for any of our sisters to make such great preparations for visitors, and wrong their own families by a spare diet which will fail to nourish the system.

[486] The brother referred to felt a lack in his system; he was not nourished, and he thought that meat would give him the needed strength. Had he been suitably cared for, his table spread at the right time with food of a nourishing quality, all the demands of nature would have been abundantly supplied. The butter and meat stimulate. These have injured the stomach and perverted the taste. The sensitive nerves of the brain have been benumbed, and the animal appetite strengthened at the expense of the moral and intellectual faculties. These higher powers, which should control, have been growing weaker, so that eternal things have not been discerned. Paralysis has benumbed the spiritual and devotional. Satan has triumphed to see how easily he can come in through the appetite and control men and women of intelligence, calculated by the Creator to do a good and great work.

The case above referred to is not an isolated one; if it were, I would not introduce it here. When Satan takes possession of the mind, how soon the light and instruction that the Lord has graciously given, fade away and have no force! How many frame excuses and make necessities which have no existence, to bear them up in their course of wrong in setting aside the light and trampling it underfoot! I speak with assurance. The greatest objection to health reform is that this people do not live it out; and yet they will gravely say they cannot live the health reform and preserve their strength.

[487] We find in every such instance a good reason why they cannot live out the health reform. They do not live it out, and have never followed it strictly, therefore they cannot be benefited by it. Some fall into the error that because they discard meat they have no need to supply its place with the best fruits and vegetables, prepared in their most natural state, free from grease and spices. If they would only skillfully arrange the bounties with which the Creator has surrounded them, parents and children with a clear conscience unitedly engaging in the work, they would enjoy simple food, and would then be able

to speak understandingly of health reform. Those who have not been converted to health reform, and have never fully adopted it, are not judges of its benefits. Those who digress occasionally to gratify the taste in eating a fattened turkey or other flesh meats, pervert their appetites, and are not the ones to judge of the benefits of the system of health reform. They are controlled by taste, not by principle.

I have a well-set table on all occasions. I make no change for visitors, whether believers or unbelievers. I intend never to be surprised by an unreadiness to entertain at my table from one to half a dozen extra who may chance to come in. I have enough simple, healthful food ready to satisfy hunger and nourish the system. If any want more than this, they are at liberty to find it elsewhere. No butter or flesh meats of any kind come on my table. Cake is seldom found there. I generally have an ample supply of fruits, good bread, and vegetables. Our table is always well patronized, and all who partake of the food do well, and improve upon it. All sit down with no epicurean appetite, and eat with a relish the bounties supplied by our Creator.

A wonderful indifference has been manifested upon this important subject by those right at the heart of the work. The lack of stability in regard to the principles of health reform is a true index of their character and their spiritual strength. They are deficient in thoroughness in their Christian experience. Conscience is not regarded. The basis or cause of every right action existing and operating in the renewed heart secures obedience without external or selfish motives. The spirit of truth and a good conscience are sufficient to inspire and regulate the motives and conduct of those who learn of Christ and are like Him. Those who have no strength of religious principle in themselves are easily swayed, by the example of others, in a wrong direction. Those who have never learned their duty from God, and acquainted themselves with His purposes concerning them, are not reliable in times of severe conflict with the powers of darkness. They are swayed by external and present appearances. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles; they can appreciate no other. But Christians should not be governed by these principles. They should not seek to strengthen themselves in the performance of duty by any other consideration than a love to obey every requirement of God as found in His word and dictated by an enlightened conscience.

In the renewed heart there will be a fixed principle to obey the will of God, because there is a love for what is just, and good, and holy. There will be no hesitating, conferring with the taste, or studying of convenience, or moving in a certain course because others do so. Everyone should live for himself. The minds of all who are renewed by grace will be an open medium, continually receiving light, grace, and truth from above, and transmitting the same to others. Their works are fruitful. Their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

But very few have an experimental knowledge of the sanctifying influence of the truths which they profess. Their obedience and devotion have not been in accordance with their light and privileges. They have no real sense of the obligation resting upon them to walk as children of the light, and not as children of darkness. If the light that has been given to these had been given Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, and would have escaped the signal wrath of God. It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those who have been privileged with the clear light, and have had a vast amount of labor, but have not profited by it. They have neglected the great salvation [489] which God in mercy was willing to bestow. They were so blinded by the devil that they verily thought themselves rich and in the favor of God, when the True Witness declares them to be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

* * * * *

Chapter 60—A Cross in Accepting the Truth

Dear Sister U,

I am somewhat acquainted with your peculiar temperament, your caution, your fears, your lack of hope and confidence. I sympathize with you in your sufferings of mind, as you cannot see everything in regard to our position and faith as clearly as you could wish. We know you to be strictly conscientious, and have not a doubt that, could you have the privilege of hearing on all points of present truth, and of weighing the evidences for yourself, you would be established, strengthened, settled, so that opposition or reproach would not move you from the sure foundation. As you have not had the privilege, as many others have, of attending meetings and experiencing for yourself the evidences attending the presentation of the truth we hold sacred, we feel the more solicitous for you. Our hearts are drawn out after you, and our love toward you is sincere and fervent. We fear that amid the perils of these last days you may make shipwreck. Be not grieved with me for thus writing. You cannot have a full sense, as I have, of the wiles and sophistry of Satan. His deceptions are many; his snares are carefully and cunningly prepared to entangle the unwary and unsuspecting. We want you to escape his wiles; we want you to be fully on the Lord's side, loving, and waiting and earnestly longing for, the appearing of our Saviour in the clouds of heaven.

Since your first efforts to keep the Sabbath, many things have arisen to discourage you; yet we hope that these things will not divert your mind from the important truths for these last days. Although the advocates of the truth do not all do as they should, because they are unsanctified by the truths they profess, the truth is the same; its luster is undimmed. Although these may stand between the truth and those who have not fully taken hold upon it, and their dark shadow may appear for a time to cloud its bright luster, yet it does not in reality; the truth of heavenly origin is undimmed. Its purity and exalted character are changeless. It lives; for it is immortal.

[490]

My beloved sister, cling to the truth. Obtain an experience for yourself. You have an individuality. You are accountable only for the manner in which you, independent of all others, use the light that shines upon your pathway. The lack of consecration in others will be no excuse for you. The fact that they pervert the truth by their wrong course of action, because they are unsanctified by it, will not render you less responsible. A solemn obligation rests upon you to exalt the standard of truth, to bear it aloft. Even if the standard-bearer faints and falls, do not leave the precious standard to trail in the dust. Seize it, and bear it aloft, even at the peril of your good name, your worldly honor, and your life, if required. My much-respected sister, I entreat you to look up. Cling fast to your heavenly Father's hand. Jesus, our Advocate, lives to make intercession for us. Whoever may deny the faith by their unholy lives, it does not change the truth into a lie. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." At times I fear that your feet will slide, that you will refuse to walk in the humble, straight, and narrow way which leads to eternal life in the kingdom of glory.

[491] I present before you the life of self-denial, humility, and sacrifice of our divine Lord. The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, left His riches, His splendor, His honor and glory, and, in order to save sinful man, condescended to a life of humility, poverty, and shame; "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." Oh, why are we so sensitive to trial and reproach, to shame and suffering, when our Lord has given us such an example? Who would wish to enter into the joy of their Lord while they were unwilling to partake of His sufferings? What! the servant unwilling to bear the humility and shame and reproach which the Master bore unselfishly for him! the servant shrinking from a life of humility and sacrifice which is for his own eternal happiness, by which he may finally obtain an exceedingly great, an eternal reward! The language of my heart is: Let me be a partaker with Christ of His sufferings, that I may finally share with Him the glory.

The truth of God has never been popular with the world. The natural heart is ever averse to the truth. I thank God that we must renounce the love of the world, and pride of heart, and everything which tends to idolatry, in order to be followers of the Man of Cal-

vary. Those who obey the truth will never be loved and honored by the world. From the lips of the divine Teacher, as He walked in humility among the children of men, were heard the words: Whosoever will be My disciple, let him take up his *cross*, and follow Me. Yes, follow our Exemplar. Was He seeking for praise and honor of men? Oh, no! Shall we then seek for honor or praise from worldlings?

Those who have no love for God will not love the children of God. Listen to the words of heavenly instruction: “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you.” “Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.” “But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.” In the Gospel of John we again find the words of Christ: “These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also.” “I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

[492]

In First John we read: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” In Paul’s Epistle to the Romans he beseeches them, by the mercies of God, that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” And James declares: “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

I entreat you to carefully consider the instructions in Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians: “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be

the servant of Christ.” I fear that you are in great danger of making shipwreck of faith. You consider that you have sacrifices to make to obey the truth. We believe that you have made some sacrifices, but [493] had you been more thorough in this work, your feet would not now be stumbling, your faith wavering. I do not refer now to sacrifice of means, but to what comes closer than this, to that which would cause you a more painful conflict than to give your means, to that which touches self especially. You have not yielded your pride, your love of the approbation of an unbelieving world. You love to have men speak well of you.

You have not received and practiced the truth in its simplicity. You have, I fear, felt somewhat as though you were condescending to receive the unpopular truth as advocated by Sabbathkeeping Adventists. You have sought, to quite a degree, to retain the spirit of the world and yet adopt the truth. This cannot be. Christ will accept of nothing but the whole heart, the entire affections. The friendship of the world is enmity with God. When you desire to so live as to shun reproach, you are seeking a position above your suffering Lord; and while engaged in this, you are separating from your Father in heaven, exchanging His love for that which is not worth obtaining.

I have felt pressed in spirit in regard to you, my sister, and also your husband. As I have taken my pen to write, your cases have been clearly brought before me. I am fully aware of your dangers, of your state of perplexity and doubt. Everything has been unfavorable for you, Sister U, since you have sought to obey the law of God. But nothing has been as great a hindrance to you both as your pride. You are both fond of display; this has no part in good, humble religion. I saw that you both had a fiery ordeal to pass, that you would be tested and proved. In this conflict, Satan would strive hard to blind your eyes to your eternal interest, and would present the advantages of the present time, this little, short life which is so uncertain. You would see charms in this life, and unless you parted with your love [494] of show and the favor of the world you could not retain the love of God. Jesus was presented to me, pointing to the charms of heaven, seeking to attract your eyes from the world, and saying: “Which will ye choose, *Me*, or the *world*? You cannot have *Me* and the love of the world, too. Will you sacrifice Him who died for you for the

pride of life, for the treasures of the world? Choose between Me and the world; the world has no part in Me.”

I saw your feet faltering, your faith wavering. Doubt and unbelief were enclosing you about, and the light of Jesus was departing. Vanity is one of the strongest principles of our depraved natures, and Satan will constantly appeal to it with success. Persons have not been wanting who were ready to aid Satan in his work—to flatter you, to present your ability and the influence you could have in society, to urge that it would be a great pity for you to unite your interests with a people of humble faith and mingle in a class of society, as they regard it, beneath you. It has seemed to you that you were making a great sacrifice for the truth. It is true that the masses who possess influence do not choose to sacrifice their worldly ambition, to separate their affections from the world, and turn their footsteps into the narrow, humble path traveled by the suffering Man of Calvary. They consider their talents and influence too precious to be devoted to the cause of God, too precious to be given back to glorify the Giver who lent them these talents to be improved upon and returned to Him, both principal and interest. For the temporal advantages they hope to gain they will sacrifice the eternal. For the flattery of men they will turn from the approval of the Lord, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and will forfeit all right to the honor which cometh from above. How few know what is for their best interest! You do not appreciate this. Jesus, through a life of unexampled suffering and an ignominious death, has opened a way whereby man may follow in His footsteps, and finally be exalted to His throne, and receive the reward of immortality and eternal life. For a life of obedience he will receive an immortal inheritance, a treasure undefiled that fadeth not away.

[495]

In the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians we read: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things

of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.” You have the example of Christ, His unpretending life without display or grandeur. Is the servant *above* his Lord?

Dear sister, you have a good mind and can do good. You can be as an anchor to your husband and a strength to many others. But if you stand halting between two opinions, unreconciled to the humble work of God, your influence in connection with your husband’s will be exerted in a wrong direction. How reads the word of God? Turn from the opinions of men to the law and to the testimony. Shut out every worldly consideration. Make your decision for eternity. Weigh evidence in this important time. We surely need not expect to escape trial and persecution in following our Saviour; for this is the salary of those who follow Him. He plainly declares that we shall suffer persecution. Our earthly interests must be subservient to the eternal. Listen to the words of Christ: “Then Peter began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.” Eternal interests are here involved.

Do not flatter yourselves that if you should yield the truth all obstacles to your acquiring property would be removed. Satan tells you this; it is his sophistry. If God’s blessing rests upon you because you surrender all to Him, you will prosper. If you turn from God, He will turn from you. His hand can scatter faster than you can gather. “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

You, my dear sister, need a thorough conversion to the truth, which shall slay self. Cannot you trust in God? Please read [Matthew 10:25-40](#). Please read also, with a prayerful heart, [Matthew 6:24-34](#). Let these words impress your heart: “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” The better life is here referred to. By the body is

meant the inward adorning, which makes sinful mortals, possessing the meekness and righteousness of Christ, valuable in His sight, as was Enoch, and entitles them to receive the finishing touch of immortality. Our Saviour refers us to the fowls of the air, which sow not, neither reap, nor gather into barns, yet their heavenly Father feedeth them. Then He says: "Are ye not much better than they? ... And why take ye thought for raiment? 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." These lilies, in their simplicity and innocence, meet the mind of God better than Solomon in his costly decorations yet destitute of the heavenly adorning. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Can you not trust in your heavenly Father? Can you not rest upon His gracious promise? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Precious promise! Can we not rely upon it? Can we not have implicit trust, knowing that He is faithful who hath promised? I entreat you to let your trembling faith again grasp the promises of God. Bear your whole weight upon them with unwavering faith; for they will not, they cannot, fail.

[497]

**Number Nineteen—Testimony for the
Church**

[498]

Chapter 61—Address to Ministers

Dear Brethren,

October 25, 1868, I was shown that not all who profess to be called to teach the truth are qualified for this sacred work. Some are far from meeting the mind and will of God. Some indulge in slothfulness in temporal things, and their religious life is marked with spiritual sloth. Where there is a lack of persevering energy and close application in temporal matters and business transactions, the same deficiency will be apparent in spiritual things.

Some of you are heads of families, and your example and influence are molding the characters of your children. Your example will be followed by them in a greater or less degree, and your lack of thoroughness is setting a bad example for others. But your deficiencies are more sensibly felt, with more weighty results, in the cause and work of God. Your families have felt this deficiency and suffered on account of it; they have lacked many things which diligent industry and perseverance might have supplied. But this deficiency has been seen and felt in the cause and work of God in as much greater degree as His cause and work is of higher importance than the things pertaining to this life.

[499] The influence of some ministers is not good. They have not carefully guarded their moments, thus giving the people an example of industry. They spend in indolence moments and hours which, once passed into eternity with their record of results, can never be recalled. Some are naturally indolent, which makes it difficult for them to make a success of any enterprise they undertake. This deficiency has been seen and felt all through their religious experience. Those at fault are not alone the losers; others are made to suffer by their deficiencies. At this late period, many have lessons to learn which should have been learned at a much earlier date.

Some are not close Bible students. They are disinclined to apply themselves diligently to the study of God's word. In consequence of this neglect they have labored at great disadvantage and have not, in

their ministerial efforts, accomplished one tenth of the work which they might have done had they seen the necessity of closely applying their minds to the study of the word. They might have become so familiar with the Scriptures, so fortified with Bible arguments, that they could meet opponents and so present the reasons of our faith that the truth would triumph and silence their opposition.

Those who minister in the word must have as thorough a knowledge of that word as it is possible for them to obtain. They must be continually searching, praying, and learning, or the people of God will advance in the knowledge of His word and will, and leave these professed teachers far behind. Who will instruct the people when they are in advance of their teachers? All the efforts of such ministers are fruitless. There is need that the people teach them the word of God more perfectly before they are capable of instructing others.

Some might now have been thorough workmen had they made a good use of their time, feeling that they would have to give an account to God for their misspent moments. They have displeased God because they have not been industrious. Self-gratification, self-love, and selfish love of ease have kept some from good, withheld them from obtaining a knowledge of the Scriptures that they might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Some do not appreciate the value of time and have idled away in bed the hours that might have been employed in the study of the Bible. There are a few subjects that they have dwelt upon the most, with which they are familiar, and upon these they can speak with acceptance; but they have in a great degree rested the matter here. They have not felt altogether satisfied with themselves, and have at times realized their deficiencies; yet they have not been sufficiently awakened to the crime of neglecting to become acquainted with the word of God, which they profess to teach. On account of their ignorance the people are disappointed; they do not receive the intelligence which they might obtain from them and which they expect to obtain from ministers of Christ.

[500]

By rising early and economizing their moments, ministers can find time for a close investigation of the Scriptures. They must have perseverance, and not be thwarted in their object, but persistently employ their time in a study of the word, bringing to their aid the

truths which other minds, through wearing labor, have brought out for them, and with diligent, persevering effort, prepared to their hand. There are ministers who have been laboring for years, teaching the truth to others, while they themselves are not familiar with the strong points of our position. I beg of such to have done with their idleness. It is a continual curse to them. God requires them to make every moment fruitful of some good to themselves or to others. “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” “He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.”

[501] It is important for ministers of Christ to see the necessity of self-culture, in order to adorn their profession and maintain a becoming dignity. Without mental training they will certainly fail in everything they undertake. I have been shown that there is a decided lack with some who preach the word. God is not pleased with their ways and ideas. Their haphazard manner of quoting Scripture is a disgrace to their profession. They claim to be teachers of the word, and yet fail to repeat Scripture correctly. Those who give themselves wholly to the preaching of the word should not be guilty of quoting one text incorrectly. God requires thoroughness of all His servants.

The religion of Christ will be exemplified by its possessor in the life, in the conversation, in the works. Its strong principles will prove an anchor. Those who are teachers of the word should be patterns of piety, ensamples to the flock. Their example should rebuke idleness, slothfulness, lack of industry and economy. The principles of religion exact diligence, industry, economy, and honesty. “Give an account of thy stewardship” will soon be heard by all. Brethren, what account could you render if the Master should now appear? You are unready. You would as surely be reckoned with the slothful servants as they exist. Precious moments are yet left you. I entreat you to redeem the time.

Paul exhorted Timothy: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that

they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

In order to accomplish the work which God requires of them, ministers need to be qualified for their position. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossians, speaks thus concerning his ministry: “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.”

[502]

No less sacred appreciation of and devotion to the work of the ministry does God require of His servants who are living so near the end of all things. He cannot accept the work of laborers unless they realize in their own hearts the life and power of the truth which they present to others. He will not accept of anything short of earnest, active, zealous heart labor. Vigilance and fruitfulness are required for this great work. God wants unselfish workmen, those who will labor with disinterested benevolence and give their undivided interest to the work.

Brethren, you lack devotion and consecration to the work. Your hearts are selfish. The deficiencies in you must be supplied, or you will ere long meet with a fatal disappointment—you will lose heaven. God does not lightly regard a neglect of the faithful performance of the work which He has left His servants to do. Enduring energy and a constant reliance upon God are lacking in many who are laboring in the ministry. The result of this lack brings great burdens upon the few who possess these qualities, and they are necessitated to make up the deficiencies so apparent in those who might be able workmen if they would become so. There are a few who are working day and night, depriving themselves of rest and social enjoyments, taxing the brain to the utmost, each performing the labor of three men, wearing away their valuable lives to do the work that others might do, but neglect. Some are too lazy to perform their part; many ministers are

[503]

carefully preserving themselves by shunning burdens, remaining in a state of inefficiency, and accomplishing next to nothing. Therefore those who realize the worth of souls, who appreciate the sacredness of the work and feel that it must go forward, are doing extra labor, making superhuman efforts, and using up their brain power to keep the work moving. Were the interest in the work and the devotion to it equally divided, were all who profess to be ministers diligently devoting their interest wholly to the cause, not saving themselves, the few earnest, God-fearing workmen who are fast wearing away their lives would be relieved of this high pressure upon them, and their strength might be preserved so that, when actually required, it would tell with double power, and produce far greater results than can now be seen while under the pressure of overwhelming care and anxiety. The Lord is not pleased with this inequality.

[504] Many who profess to be called of God to minister in word and doctrine do not feel that they have no right to claim to be teachers unless they are thoroughly furnished by earnest, diligent study of the word of God. Some have neglected to obtain a knowledge of the simple branches of education. Some cannot even read correctly; some misquote the Scriptures; and some, by their apparent lack of qualification for the work they are trying to do, injure the cause of God and bring the truth into disrepute. These do not see the necessity of cultivating the intellect, of especially encouraging refinement without affectation, and of seeking to attain to the true elevation of Christian character. The certain and effectual means of attaining this is the surrender of the soul to God. He will direct the intellect and affections so that they will center upon the divine and eternal, and then will they possess energy without rashness, for all the powers of the mind and of the whole being will be elevated, refined, and directed in the loftiest, holiest channel. From the lips of the heavenly Teacher were heard the words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." When this submission to God is made, true humility will grace every action, while at the same time those who are thus allied to God and His heavenly angels will possess a becoming dignity savoring of heaven.

The Lord requires His servants to be energetic. It is not pleasing to Him to see them listless and indolent. They profess to have the

evidence that God has especially selected them to teach the people the way to life; yet frequently their conversation is not profitable, and they show that they have not the burden of the work upon them. Their own souls are not energized by the mighty truths which they present to others. Some preach these truths, of such weighty importance, in so listless a manner that they cannot affect the people. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Men whom God has called must be trained to put forth effort, to work earnestly and with untiring zeal for Him, to pull souls out of the fire. When ministers feel the power of the truth in their own souls, thrilling their own being, then will they possess power to affect hearts, and show that they firmly believe the truths they preach to others. They should keep before the mind the worth of souls, and the matchless depths of a Saviour's love. This will awaken the soul so that with David they may say: "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned."

Paul exhorted Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." What a weight of importance is here attached to the Christian life of the minister of God! What a necessity for his faithful study of the word, that he himself may be sanctified by the truth and may be qualified to teach others.

[505]

Brethren, you are required to exemplify the truth in your life. But those who think that they have a work to do to teach others the truth are not all converted, and sanctified by the truth. Some have erroneous ideas of what constitutes a Christian and of the means through which a firm religious experience is obtained; much less do they understand the qualifications that God requires His ministers to possess. These men are unsanctified. They have occasionally a flight of feeling, which gives them the impression that they are indeed children of God. This dependence upon impressions is one of the special deceptions of Satan. Those who are thus exercised make their religion a matter of circumstance. Firm principle is wanting.

None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until he attains to perfection of Christian character, a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality.

[506] God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditating upon Him and pleading with Him, elevate the soul and quicken the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness. Religion is not merely an emotion, a feeling. It is a principle which is interwoven with all the daily duties and transactions of life. Nothing will be entertained, no business engaged in, which will prevent the accompaniment of this principle. To retain pure and undefiled religion, it is necessary to be workers, persevering in effort. We must do something ourselves. No one else can do our work. None but ourselves can work out our salvation with fear and trembling. This is the very work which the Lord has left for us to do.

Some ministers who profess to be called of God have the blood of souls on their garments. They are surrounded with backsliders and sinners, and yet feel no burden for their souls; they manifest an indifference in regard to their salvation. Some are so nearly asleep that they seem to have no sense of the work of a gospel minister. They do not consider that as spiritual physicians they are required to have skill in administering to souls diseased with sin. The work of warning sinners, of weeping over them and pleading with them, has been neglected until many souls are past all cure. Some have died in their sins, and will in the judgment confront with reproaches of their guilt those who might have saved them, but who did not. Unfaithful ministers, what a retribution awaits you!

The ministers of Christ need a new anointing, that they may more clearly discern sacred things, and have clear conceptions of the holy, blameless character which they themselves must form in order to be ensamples to the flock. Nothing that we can do of ourselves will bring us up to the high standard where God can accept us as His ambassadors. Only a firm reliance upon God, and a strong and active

faith, will accomplish the work that He requires to be wrought in us. God calls for working men. It is continuance in well-doing that will form characters for heaven. In plainness, in faithfulness and love, we must appeal to the people to prepare for the day of God. Some will need to be entreated with earnestness before they will be moved. Let the labor be characterized by meekness and humility, yet by an earnestness that will make them understand that these things are a reality, and that life and death are for them to choose. The salvation of the soul is not a matter to be trifled with. The deportment of the laborer for God should be serious and characterized by simplicity and true Christian politeness, yet he should be fearfully in earnest in the work which the Master has left him to do. Decided perseverance in a course of righteousness, disciplining the mind by religious exercises to love devotion and heavenly things, will bring the greatest amount of happiness.

[507]

If we make God our trust, we have it in our power to control the mind in these things. Through continued exercise it will become strong to battle with internal foes and to subdue self, until there is a complete transformation, and the passions, appetites, and will are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be daily piety at home and abroad, and when we engage in labor for souls, a power will attend our efforts. The humble Christian will have seasons of devotion which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is a perfect surrender to God.

The reason why ministers of Christ are no more successful in their labors is that they are not unselfishly devoted to the work. The interest of some is divided; they are double-minded. The cares of this life engage their attention, and they do not realize how sacred is the work of the minister. Such may complain of darkness, of great unbelief, of infidelity. The reason for this is, they are not right with God; they do not see the importance of making a full and entire consecration to Him. They serve God a little, but themselves more. They pray but little.

[508]

The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His earthly ministry, prayed much to His Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirit was often sorrowful as He felt the powers

of the darkness of this world, and He left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place to make His intercessions. The Mount of Olives was the favorite resort of the Son of God for His devotions. Frequently after the multitude had left Him for the retirement of the night, He rested not, though weary with the labors of the day. In the Gospel of John we read: "And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." While the city was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to His Father from the Mount of Olives that His disciples might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that His own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while His followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. The dew and frost of night fell upon His head bowed in prayer. His example is left for His followers.

The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His mission, was often in earnest prayer. He did not always visit Olivet, for His disciples had learned His favorite retreat, and often followed Him. He chose the stillness of night, when there would be no interruption. Jesus could heal the sick and raise the dead. He was Himself a source of blessing and strength. He commanded even the tempests, and they obeyed Him. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.

[509]

Christ is our example. Are the ministers of Christ tempted and fiercely buffeted by Satan? so also was He who knew no sin. He turned to His Father in these hours of distress. He came to earth that He might provide a way whereby we could find grace and strength to help in every time of need, by following His example in frequent, earnest prayer. If the ministers of Christ will imitate this pattern, they will be imbued with His spirit, and angels will minister unto them.

Angels ministered to Jesus, yet their presence did not make His life one of ease and freedom from severe conflict and fierce temptations. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. If ministers, while engaged in the work which the Master has appointed them to do, have trials and perplexities and temptations, should they be discouraged, when they know that there is One who has endured all these before them? Should they cast away their confidence because they do not realize all that they expect from their labors? Christ labored earnestly for His own nation; but His efforts were despised by the very ones He came to save, and they put to death Him who came to give them life.

There is a sufficient number of ministers, but a great lack of laborers. Laborers, co-workers with God, have a sense of the sacredness of the work and of the severe conflicts they must meet in order to carry it forward successfully. Laborers will not faint and despond in view of the labor, arduous though it may be. In the Epistle to the Romans Paul says: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." In Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We are without excuse if we fail to avail ourselves of the ample provisions made for us that we might be wanting in nothing. Shrinking from hardships, complaining under tribulation, makes the servants of God weak and inefficient in bearing responsibilities and burdens. [510]

All who stand unshrinkingly in the forefront of the battle must feel the special warfare of Satan against them. As they realize his attacks, they will flee to the Stronghold. They feel their need of special strength from God, and they labor in His strength; therefore the victories they gain do not exalt them, but lead them in faith to lean more securely upon the Mighty One. Deep and fervent gratitude to God is awakened in their hearts, and they are joyful in the tribulation which they experience while pressed by the enemy. These willing

servants are gaining an experience and forming a character which will do honor to the cause of God.

[511] The present is a season of solemn privilege and sacred trust to the servants of God. If these trusts are faithfully kept, great will be the reward of the faithful servant when the Master shall say: "Give an account of thy stewardship." The earnest toil, the unselfish work, the patient, persevering effort, will be rewarded abundantly; Jesus will say: Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends, guests. The approval of the Master is not given because of the greatness of the work performed, because many things have been gained, but because of the fidelity in even a few things. It is not the great results we attain, but the motives from which we act, that weigh with God. He prizes goodness and faithfulness more than the greatness of the work accomplished.

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

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

Even some ministers who are advocating the law of God have but little knowledge of themselves. They do not meditate, and investigate their motives. They do not see their errors and sins, because they do not, in sincerity and earnestness, take a view of their life, their acts, and their character, separate and as a whole, and compare them with the sacred and holy law of God. The claims of God's law are not really understood by them, and they are daily living in transgression of the spirit of that law which they profess to revere. "By the law," says Paul, "is the knowledge of sin." "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Some who labor in word and doctrine have not a practical understanding of the law of God and its holy claims, or of the atonement of Christ. They themselves need to be converted before they can convert sinners.

The faithful mirror which would reveal the defects in the character is neglected; therefore deformity and sin exist, and are apparent to others, if not understood by those who are in fault. The hateful sin of selfishness exists to a great degree, even in some who [513]

profess to be devoted to the work of God. If they would compare their character with His requirements, especially with the great standard, His holy, just, and good law, they would ascertain, if earnest, honest searchers, that they are fearfully wanting. But some are not willing to look far enough or deep enough to see the depravity of their own hearts. They are wanting in very many respects; yet they remain in willing ignorance of their guilt, and are so intent upon caring for their own interests that God has no care for them.

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

[514] But what is the reason of these doubts, this darkness and unbelief? I answer: These men are not right with God. They are not dealing honestly and truly with their own souls. They have neglected to cultivate personal piety. They have not separated themselves from all selfishness and from sin and sinners. They have failed to study the self-denying, self-sacrificing life of our Lord and have failed to imitate His example of purity, devotion, and self-sacrifice. The sin which easily besets has been strengthened by indulgence. By their own negligence and sin they have separated themselves from the company of the divine Teacher, and He is a day's journey in advance of them. They have for their company, the indolent, slothful, backsliding, unbelieving, irreverent, unthankful, unholy, and their

attendants, the evil angels. What marvel that such are in darkness, or that they have doubts of doctrine? "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." He shall know of a certainty in regard to this matter. This promise should put to flight all doubts and questionings. It is separation from Christ that brings doubts. He is followed by the earnest, honest, true, faithful, humble, meek, and pure, whom holy angels, clothed with the panoply of heaven, are sanctifying, enlightening, purifying, and guarding; for they are heaven bound.

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

[515]

If apostasy arises, and rebellion is manifested, you do not hear them say, in words of encouragement and lofty cheer: Brethren, faint not; be of good courage. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." Men who are thus affected by circumstances should remain at their homes and employ their physical and mental strength in a less responsible position where they will not be liable to meet such strong opposition. If everything moves smoothly, they may pass for very good, devotional men. But these are not the ones whom the Master will send to do His work, for this is opposed by those who

are emissaries of Satan. Satan also, and his host of evil angels, will be arrayed against them. God has made provision for the men whom He has called to do His work, that they may come off conquerors in every contest. Those who follow His directions will never meet with defeat.

The Lord, speaking through Paul, [Ephesians 6:10-18](#), tells us how to fortify ourselves against Satan and his emissaries: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

[516] Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

We are engaged in an exalted, sacred work. Those who profess to be called to teach the truth to those who sit in darkness should not be bodies of unbelief and darkness themselves. They should live near to God, where they can be all light in the Lord. The reason why they are not so is that they are not obeying the word of God themselves; therefore doubts and discouragements are expressed, when only words of faith and holy cheer should be heard.

It is religion that ministers need; a daily conversion to God, an undivided, unselfish interest in His cause and work. There should be self-abasement, and a putting away of all jealousy, evil surmising, envy, hatred, malice, and unbelief. An entire transformation is needed. Some have lost sight of our pattern, the suffering Man of Calvary. In His service we need not expect ease, honor, and greatness in this life; for He, the Majesty of heaven, did not receive it. “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for

our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.” With this example before us, will we choose to shun the cross, and to be swayed by circumstances? Shall our zeal, our fervor, be kindled only when we are surrounded by those who are awake and zealous in the work and cause of God?

Can we not stand in God, let our surroundings be ever so unpleasant and discouraging? “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

[517]

Many ministers have not an undivided interest in the work of God. They have invested but little in His cause, and because they have taken so little stock in the advancement of the truth they are easily tempted in regard to it and moved from it. They are not established, strengthened, settled. He who understands well his own character, who is acquainted with the sin which most easily besets him, and the temptations that will be most likely to overcome him, should not expose himself needlessly and invite temptation by placing himself upon the enemy’s ground. If duty calls him where circumstances are not favorable, he will have special help from God, and thus go fully girded for a conflict with the enemy. Self-knowledge will save many from falling into grievous temptations, and prevent many an inglorious defeat. In order to become acquainted with ourselves, it is essential that we faithfully investigate the motives and principles of our conduct, comparing our actions with the

[518]

standard of duty revealed in God's word. Ministers should encourage and cultivate benevolence.

I was shown that some who have been engaged in our office of publication, in our Health Institute, and in the ministry have labored simply for wages. There are exceptions; not all are guilty in this respect, but few have seemed to realize that they must give an account of their stewardship. Means that had been consecrated to God to advance His cause has been squandered. Families in poverty, who had experienced the sanctifying influences of the truth and who therefore prized it and felt grateful to God for it, have thought that they could and should deprive themselves of even the necessities of life in order to bring in their offerings to the treasury of the Lord. Some have deprived themselves of articles of clothing which they really needed to make them comfortable. Others have sold their only cow and have dedicated to God the means thus received. In the sincerity of their souls, with many tears of gratitude because it was their privilege to do this for the cause of God, they have bowed before the Lord with their offering and have invoked His blessing upon it as they sent it forth, praying that it might be the means of bringing the knowledge of the truth to souls in darkness. The means thus dedicated has not always been appropriated as the self-sacrificing donors designed. Covetous, selfish men, having no spirit of self-denial or self-sacrifice themselves, have handled unfaithfully means thus brought into the treasury; and they have robbed the treasury of God by receiving means which they had not justly earned. Their unconsecrated, reckless management has squandered and scattered means that had been consecrated to God with prayers and tears.

[519] I was shown that the recording angel makes a faithful record of every offering dedicated to God and put into the treasury, and also of the final result of the means thus bestowed. The eye of God takes cognizance of every farthing devoted to His cause, and of the willingness or reluctance of the giver. The motive in giving is also chronicled. Those self-sacrificing, consecrated ones who render back to God the things that are His, as He requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view,—the glory of God and the salvation of

souls,—those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward.

Those who have made a wrong use of means dedicated to God will be required to give an account of their stewardship. Some have selfishly grasped means because of their love of gain. Others have not a tender conscience; it has become seared through long-cherished selfishness. They view sacred and eternal things from a low standpoint. Through their long continuance in a wrong course their moral sensibilities seem paralyzed. It seems impossible to elevate their views and feelings to the exalted standard clearly brought to view in the word of God. Unless there is a thorough transformation by the renewing of the mind, this class will find no place in heaven. Those who have pursued a course of selfishness and wrong, not regarding even the treasury of God as sacred, could not appreciate the purity and holiness of the sanctified in the kingdom of heaven, or the value of the rich glory, the eternal reward, reserved for the faithful overcomers. Their minds have so long run in a low, selfish channel that they cannot appreciate eternal things. They do not value salvation. It seems impossible to elevate their minds to rightly estimate the plan of salvation or the value of the atonement. Selfish interests have engrossed the entire being; like a loadstone they hold the mind and affections, binding them down to a low level. Some of these persons will never attain to perfection of Christian character [520] because they do not see the value and necessity of such a character. Their minds cannot be elevated so that they will be charmed with holiness. Self-love and selfish interests have so warped the character that they cannot be made to distinguish the sacred and eternal from the common. God's cause and His treasury are no more sacred to them than common business or means devoted to worldly purposes.

Duties in this direction are binding upon all who profess to be followers of Christ. God's law specifies their duty to their fellow men: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." By a disregard of justice, mercy, and benevolence to their neighbor, some have so hardened the heart that they can go still further, and even rob God without compunctions of conscience. Do such close their eyes and their understanding to the fact that God knows, that He reads their every action and the motive which impelled them to it? His reward is with Him, and His work before Him, to give to every man

according as his work shall be. Every good and every wrong act, and its influence upon others, is traced out by the Searcher of hearts, to whom every secret is revealed. And the reward will be according to the motives which prompted the action.

[521] Notwithstanding the repeated warnings and reproofs which the Lord has sent them, those who have occupied responsible positions have followed their own ways and been guided by their own unsanctified judgment, and, in consequence, the cause of God has suffered, and souls have been turned from the truth. All who are thus guilty will have a fearful record to meet in the day of final retribution. If they are ever saved, it will be by no common effort on their part; their past life must be seen by them and redeemed. If this work be entered upon with sincerity, and followed with perseverance and untiring earnestness, it will be wholly successful; but many will not succeed because the earnestness with which they commence the work dies down to listlessness and carelessness. Their efforts are right at first, as they have some sense of their condition; but they seek to forget the past, and pass over it without taking up the stumbling blocks and making thorough work. Their repentance is not genuine sorrow that through their influence God has been dishonored and souls for whom Christ died have been lost. They make spasmodic efforts and show great feeling; but the fact that the efforts cease, that this feeling soon passes off and is succeeded by listless indifference, evinces that God was not fully in the work. The feelings were for a time wrought upon; but the work did not reach deep enough to change the principles which governed their actions. They are as liable to be led again into the same wrong course as they were at first; for they have not strength to withstand the wiles of Satan, but are subject to his devices.

The life of a true Christian is ever onward. There is no standing still nor going back. It is your privilege to be “filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

I entreat all, especially those who minister in word and doctrine, to make an unreserved surrender to God. Consecrate your lives to Him, and be indeed ensamples to the flock. Be no longer content to remain dwarfs in spiritual things. Let your aim be nothing short of perfection of Christian character. Let your lives be unselfish and blameless, that they may ever be a living rebuke to those who are selfish and whose affections seem to be upon their earthly treasure. God grant that you may be strengthened according to the riches of His glory, “with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.”

[522]

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Chapter 62—Exercise and Air

In the creation of man the Lord designed that he should be active and useful. Yet many live in this world as useless machines, as though they hardly existed. They brighten the path of none, they are a blessing to none. They live only to burden others. So far as their influence on the side of right is concerned, they are mere ciphers; but they tell with weight upon the wrong side. Search the lives of such closely, and scarcely an act of disinterested benevolence can be found. When they die, their memory dies with them. Their names soon perish; for they cannot live, even in the affections of their friends, by means of true goodness and virtuous acts. With such persons life has been a mistake. They have not been faithful stewards. They have forgotten that their Creator has claims upon them and that He designs them to be active in doing good and in blessing others with their influence. Selfish interests attract the mind and lead to forgetfulness of God and of the purpose of their Creator.

[523] All who profess to be followers of Jesus should feel that a duty rests upon them to preserve their bodies in the best condition of health, that their minds may be clear to comprehend heavenly things. The mind needs to be controlled, for it has a most powerful influence upon the health. The imagination often misleads, and when indulged, brings severe forms of disease upon the afflicted. Many die of diseases which are mostly imaginary. I am acquainted with several who have brought upon themselves actual disease by the influence of the imagination.

One sister was carried by her husband from chair to bed, and from room to room, because she thought that she was too feeble to walk. But as the case was afterward presented to me, she could have walked as well as myself if she had thought so. Had an accident occurred,—had the house taken fire, or one of her children been in imminent danger of losing life by a fall,—this woman would have been aroused by the force of circumstances, and would have walked quite readily and briskly. She could walk, so far as physical strength

was concerned; but diseased imagination led her to conclude that she could not, and she did not arouse the power of the will to resist this deception. The imagination said: You cannot walk, and you had better not try. Sit still; your limbs are so weak that you cannot stand. Had this sister exerted her will power and aroused her benumbed and dormant energies, this deception would have been exposed. In consequence of yielding to the imagination, she probably thinks, to this day, that when she was so helpless she was so of necessity; but this was purely a freak of the imagination, which sometimes plays strange tricks upon diseased mortals.

Some are so afraid of air that they will muffle up their heads and bodies until they look like mummies. They sit in the house, generally inactive, fearing they shall weary themselves and get sick if they exercise either indoors or out in the open air. They could take habitual exercise in the open air every pleasant day, if they only thought so. Continued inactivity is one of the greatest causes of debility of body and feebleness of mind. Many are sick who ought to be in very good health and thus in possession of one of the richest blessings they could enjoy. [524]

I have been shown that many who are apparently feeble, and are ever complaining, are not so badly off as they imagine themselves to be. Some of these have a powerful will, which, exercised in the right direction, would be a potent means of controlling the imagination and thus resisting disease. But it is too frequently the case that the will is exercised in a wrong direction and stubbornly refuses to yield to reason. That will has settled the matter; invalids they are, and the attention due to invalids they will have, irrespective of the judgment of others.

I have been shown mothers who are governed by a diseased imagination, the influence of which is felt upon husband and children. The windows must be kept closed because the mother feels the air. If she is at all chilly, and a change is made in her clothing, she thinks her children must be treated in the same manner, and thus the entire family are robbed of physical stamina. All are affected by one mind, physically and mentally injured through the diseased imagination of one woman, who considers herself a criterion for the whole family. The body is clothed in accordance with the caprices of a diseased imagination and smothered under an amount of wrappings

which debilitates the system. The skin cannot perform its office; the studied habit of shunning the air and avoiding exercise, closes the pores,—the little mouths through which the body breathes,—making it impossible to throw off impurities through that channel. The burden of labor is thrown upon the liver, lungs, kidneys, etc., and these internal organs are compelled to do the work of the skin. Thus persons bring disease upon themselves by their wrong habits; yet, in [525] the face of light and knowledge, they will adhere to their own course. They reason thus: “Have we not tried the matter? and do we not understand it by experience?” But the experience of a person whose imagination is at fault should not have much weight with anyone.

The season most to be dreaded by one going among these invalids is winter. It is winter indeed, not only outdoors, but in, to those who are compelled to live in the same house and sleep in the same room. These victims of a diseased imagination shut themselves indoors and close the windows, for the air affects their lungs and their heads. Imagination is active; they expect to take cold, and they will have it. No amount of reasoning can make them believe that they do not understand the philosophy of the whole matter. Have they not proved it? they will argue. It is true that they have proved one side of the question,—by persisting in their own course,—and yet they do take cold if in the least exposed. Tender as babies, they cannot endure anything; yet they live on, and continue to close the windows and doors, and hover over the stove, and enjoy their misery. They have surely proved that their course has not made them well, but has increased their difficulties. Why will not such allow reason to influence the judgment and control the imagination? Why not now try an opposite course, and in a judicious manner obtain exercise and air out of doors, instead of remaining in the house from day to day, more like a bundle of drygoods than an active being?

The chief if not the only reason why many become invalids is that the blood does not circulate freely, and the changes in the vital fluid, which are necessary to life and health, do not take place. They have not given their bodies exercise nor their lungs food, which is pure, fresh air; therefore it is impossible for the blood to be vitalized, and it pursues its course sluggishly through the system. The more we exercise, the better will be the circulation of the blood. [526] More people die for want of exercise than through overfatigue; very

many more rust out than wear out. Those who accustom themselves to proper exercise in the open air will generally have a good and vigorous circulation. We are more dependent upon the air we breathe than upon the food we eat. Men and women, young and old, who desire health, and who would enjoy active life, should remember that they cannot have these without a good circulation. Whatever their business and inclinations, they should make up their minds to exercise in the open air as much as they can. They should feel it a religious duty to overcome the conditions of health which have kept them confined indoors, deprived of exercise in the open air.

Some invalids become willful in the matter and refuse to be convinced of the great importance of daily outdoor exercise, whereby they may obtain a supply of pure air. For fear of taking cold, they persist, from year to year, in having their own way and living in an atmosphere almost destitute of vitality. It is impossible for this class to have a healthy circulation. The entire system suffers for want of exercise and pure air. The skin becomes debilitated and more sensitive to any change in the atmosphere. Additional clothing is put on, and the heat of the room increased. The next day they require a little more heat and a little more clothing in order to feel perfectly warm, and thus they humor every changing feeling until they have but little vitality to endure any cold. Some may inquire: "What shall we do? Would you have us remain cold?" If you add clothing, let it be but little, and exercise, if possible, to regain the heat you need. If you positively cannot engage in active exercise, warm yourselves by the fire; but as soon as you are warm, lay off your extra clothing and remove from the fire. If those who can, would engage in some active employment to take the mind from themselves, they would generally forget that they were chilly and would not receive harm. You should lower the temperature of your room as soon as you have regained your natural warmth. For invalids who have feeble lungs, nothing can be worse than an overheated atmosphere. [527]

Invalids too often deprive themselves of sunlight. This is one of nature's most healing agents. It is a very simple, therefore not a fashionable remedy, to enjoy the rays of God's sunlight and beautify our homes with its presence. Fashion takes the greatest care to exclude the light of the sun from parlors and sleeping rooms by dropping curtains and closing shutters, as though its rays were ruinous to life

and health. It is not God who has brought upon us the many woes to which mortals are heirs. Our own folly has led us to deprive ourselves of things that are precious, of blessings which God has provided and which, if properly used, are of inestimable value for the recovery of health. If you would have your homes sweet and inviting, make them bright with air and sunshine. Remove your heavy curtains, open the windows, throw back the blinds, and enjoy the rich sunlight, even if it be at the expense of the colors of your carpets. The precious sunlight may fade your carpets, but it will give a healthful color to the cheeks of your children. If you have God's presence and possess earnest, loving hearts, a humble home made bright with air and sunlight, and cheerful with the welcome of unselfish hospitality, will be to your family, and to the weary traveler, a heaven below.

Many have been taught from childhood that night air is positively injurious to health and therefore must be excluded from their rooms. To their own injury they close the windows and doors of their sleeping apartments to protect themselves from the night air which they say is so dangerous to health. In this they are deceived. In the cool of the evening it may be necessary to guard from chilliness by extra clothing, but they should give their lungs air.

[528] On an autumn evening we were once traveling in a crowded car, where the atmosphere was rendered very impure by the mingling of so many breaths. The exhalations from lungs and bodies caused a most sickening sensation to come over me. I raised my window and was enjoying the fresh air, when a lady, in earnest, imploring tones, cried out: "Do put down that window. You will take cold and be sick, for the night air is so unhealthy." I replied: "Madam, we have no other air, in this car or out of it, but night air. If you refuse to breathe night air, then you must stop breathing. God has provided for His creatures air to breathe for the day, and the same, made a little cooler, for the night. In the night it is not possible for you to breathe anything but night air. The question is: Shall the night air we breathe be pure, or is it improved after it has been breathed over and over? Is it for our health to breathe the polluted night air of this car? The exhalations thrown off by the lungs and bodies of men steeped in tobacco and alcohol, pollute the air and endanger health; and yet nearly all the passengers sit as indifferent as though inhaling

the purest atmosphere. God has wisely provided for us, that in the night we should breathe night air, and in the day, the air of the day. If we fail to answer the plan of God, and the blood becomes impure, our wrong habits have made it thus. But the air of night, breathed in the night, will not of itself poison the current of human life." Many are suffering from disease because they refuse to receive into their rooms at night the pure night air. The free, pure air of heaven is one of the richest blessings we can enjoy.

Another precious blessing is proper exercise. There are many indolent, inactive ones who are disinclined to physical labor or exercise because it wearies them. What if it does weary them? The reason why they become weary is that they do not strengthen their muscles by exercise, therefore they feel the least exertion. Invalid women and girls are better pleased to busy themselves with light employment, as crocheting, or embroidering, or making tatting, than to engage in physical labor. If invalids would recover health, they should not discontinue physical exercise; for they will thus increase muscular weakness and general debility. Bind up the arm and permit it to remain useless, even for a few weeks, then free it from its bondage, and you will discover that it is weaker than the one you have been using moderately during the same time. Inactivity produces the same effect upon the whole muscular system. The blood is not enabled to expel the impurities as it would if active circulation were induced by exercise.

[529]

When the weather will permit, all who can possibly do so ought to walk in the open air every day, summer and winter. But the clothing should be suitable for the exercise, and the feet should be well protected. A walk, even in winter, would be more beneficial to the health than all the medicine the doctors may prescribe. For those who can walk, walking is preferable to riding. The muscles and veins are enabled better to perform their work. There will be increased vitality, which is so necessary to health. The lungs will have needful action, for it is impossible to go out in the bracing air of a winter's morning without inflating the lungs.

Riches and idleness are thought by some to be blessings indeed. But when some persons have acquired wealth, or inherited it unexpectedly, their active habits have been broken up, their time is unemployed, they live at ease, and their usefulness seems at an end;

[530] they become restless, anxious, and unhappy, and their lives soon close. Those who are always busy, and go cheerfully about the performance of their daily tasks, are the most happy and healthy. The rest and composure of night brings to their wearied frames unbroken slumber. The Lord knew what was for man's happiness when He gave him work to do. The sentence that man must toil for his bread, and the promise of future happiness and glory, came from the same throne. Both are blessings. Women of fashion are worthless for all the good ends of human life. They possess but little force of character, have but little moral will or physical energy. Their highest aim is to be admired. They die prematurely and are not missed, for they have blessed no one.

Exercise will aid the work of digestion. To walk out after a meal, hold the head erect, put back the shoulders, and exercise moderately, will be a great benefit. The mind will be diverted from self to the beauties of nature. The less the attention is called to the stomach after a meal, the better. If you are in constant fear that your food will hurt you, it most assuredly will. Forget self, and think of something cheerful.

Many labor under the mistaken idea that if they have taken cold, they must carefully exclude the outside air and increase the temperature of their room until it is excessively hot. The system may be deranged, the pores closed by waste matter, and the internal organs suffering more or less inflammation, because the blood has been chilled back from the surface and thrown upon them. At this time, of all others, the lungs should not be deprived of pure, fresh air. If pure air is ever necessary, it is when any part of the system, as the lungs or stomach, is diseased. Judicious exercise would induce the blood to the surface, and thus relieve the internal organs. Brisk, yet not violent exercise in the open air, with cheerfulness of spirits, will promote the circulation, giving a healthful glow to the skin, and sending the blood, vitalized by the pure air, to the extremities. The diseased stomach will find relief by exercise. Physicians frequently advise invalids to visit foreign countries, to go to the springs, or to ride upon the ocean, in order to regain health; when, in nine cases out of ten, if they would eat temperately and engage in healthful exercise with a cheerful spirit, they would regain health and save time and money. Exercise, and a free and abundant use of the air

[531]

and sunlight,—blessings which Heaven has freely bestowed upon all,—would give life and strength to the emaciated invalid.

A large class of women are content to hover over the stove, breathing impure air for one half or three fourths of the time, until the brain is heated and half benumbed. They should go out and exercise every day, even though some things indoors have to be neglected. They need the cool air to quiet their distracted brains. They need not go to their neighbors to gossip, but should make it their object to do some good, working to the end of benefiting others. Then they will be an example to others and receive real benefit themselves.

Perfect health depends upon perfect circulation. Special attention should be given to the extremities, that they may be as thoroughly clothed as the chest and the region over the heart, where is the greatest amount of heat. Parents who dress their children with the extremities naked, or nearly so, are sacrificing the health and lives of their children to fashion. If these parts are not so warm as the body, the circulation is not equalized. When the extremities, which are remote from the vital organs, are not properly clad, the blood is driven to the head, causing headache or nosebleed; or there is a sense of fullness about the chest, producing cough or palpitation of the heart, on account of too much blood in that locality; or the stomach has too much blood, causing indigestion.

In order to follow the fashions, mothers dress their children with limbs nearly naked; and the blood is chilled back from its natural course and thrown upon the internal organs, breaking up the circulation and producing disease. The limbs were not formed by our Creator to endure exposure, as was the face. The Lord provided the face with an immense circulation, because it must be exposed. He provided, also, large veins and nerves for the limbs and feet, to contain a large amount of the current of human life, that the limbs might be uniformly as warm as the body. They should be so thoroughly clothed as to induce the blood to the extremities. Satan invented the fashions which leave the limbs exposed, chilling back the life current from its original course. And parents bow at the shrine of fashion and so clothe their children that the nerves and veins become contracted and do not answer the purpose that God designed they should. The result is, habitually cold feet and hands.

[532]

Those parents who follow fashion instead of reason will have an account to render to God for thus robbing their children of health. Even life itself is frequently sacrificed to the God of fashion.

Children who are clothed according to fashion cannot endure exposure in the open air unless the weather is mild. Therefore parents and children remain in ill-ventilated rooms, fearing the atmosphere out of doors; and well they may, with their fashionable style of clothing. If they would clothe themselves sensibly, and have moral courage to take their position on the side of right, they would not endanger health by going out summer and winter, and exercising freely in the open air. But if left undisturbed to their own course, many would soon complete the sacrifice of their own lives and those of their children. And those who are compelled to have the care of them become sufferers. The invalid who is controlled by imagination is to be dreaded. All who live in the house with her become enfeebled. The husband loses his nervous energy, and becomes diseased because, a considerable part of the time, he is robbed by his wife of the vital air of heaven. But the poor children, who think that mother knows best what is right, are the greatest sufferers. The mother's wrong course has enfeebled herself, and, if chilly, she bundles up in more wrappings, and provides the same for the children, thinking that they also must be chilly. The doors and windows are closed, and the temperature of the room increased. The children are frequently puny and weakly, and do not possess a high degree of moral worth. Husband and children are thus shut up for the winter, slaves to the notions of a woman controlled by imagination, and sometimes having a set will. The members of such a family are daily martyrs. They are sacrificing health to the caprice of an imaginative, complaining, murmuring woman. They are deprived, in a great measure, of air, which will invigorate them and give them energy and vitality.

Those who do not use their limbs every day will realize a weakness when they do attempt to exercise. The veins and muscles are not in a condition to perform their work and keep all the living machinery in healthful action, each organ in the system doing its part. The limbs will strengthen with use. Moderate exercise every day will impart strength to the muscles, which without exercise become flabby and enfeebled. By active exercise in the open air every day,

the liver, kidneys, and lungs also will be strengthened to perform their work. Bring to your aid the power of the will, which will resist cold and will give energy to the nervous system. In a short time you will so realize the benefit of exercise and pure air that you would not live without these blessings. Your lungs, deprived of air, will be like a hungry person deprived of food. Indeed, we can live longer without food than without air, which is the food that God has provided for the lungs. Therefore do not regard it as an enemy, but as a precious blessing from God.

If invalids allow themselves to encourage a diseased imagination, they will not only waste their own energies, but the vitality of those who have the care of them. I advise invalid sisters who have accustomed themselves to a great amount of clothing, to lay it off gradually. Some of you live merely to eat and breathe, and fail to answer the purpose for which you were created. You should have an exalted aim in life and seek to be useful and efficient in your own families and to become useful members of society. You should not require the attention of the family to be centered upon you, nor should you draw largely upon the sympathies of others. Do your part in giving love and sympathy to the unfortunate, remembering that they have woes and trials peculiar to themselves. See if you cannot, by words of sympathy and love, lighten their burdens. In blessing others, you will realize a blessing yourselves. [534]

Those who, so far as it is possible, engage in the work of doing good to others by giving practical demonstration of their interest in them are not only relieving the ills of human life in helping them bear their burdens, but are at the same time contributing largely to their own health of soul and body. Doing good is a work that benefits both giver and receiver. If you forget self in your interest for others, you gain a victory over your infirmities. The satisfaction you will realize in doing good will aid you greatly in the recovery of the healthy tone of the imagination. The pleasure of doing good animates the mind and vibrates through the whole body. While the faces of benevolent men are lighted up with cheerfulness, and their countenances express the moral elevation of the mind, those of selfish, stingy men are dejected, cast down, and gloomy. Their moral defects are seen in their countenances. Selfishness and self-love stamp their own image upon the outward man. That person

who is actuated by true disinterested benevolence is a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; while the selfish and avaricious have cherished their selfishness until it has withered their social sympathies, and their countenances reflect the image of the fallen foe, rather than that of purity and holiness.

[535]

Invalids, I advise you to venture something. Arouse your will power, and at least make a trial of this matter. Withdraw your thoughts and affections from yourselves. Walk out by faith. Are you inclined to center your thoughts upon yourselves, fearing to exercise, and fearing that if you expose yourself to the air you will lose your life; resist these thoughts and feelings. Do not yield to your diseased imagination. If you fail in the trial, you can but die. And what if you do die? One life might better be lost than many sacrificed. The whims and notions which you cherish are not only destroying your own life, but injuring those whose lives are more valuable than yours. But the course we recommend will not deprive you of life or injure you. You will derive benefit from it. You need not be rash or reckless; commence moderately at first to have more air and exercise, and continue your reform until you become useful, a blessing to your families and to all around you. Let your judgment be convinced that exercise, sunlight, and air are the blessings which Heaven has provided to make the sick well and to keep in health those who are not sick. God does not deprive you of these free, Heaven-bestowed blessings, but you have punished yourselves by closing your doors against them. Properly used, these simple yet powerful agents will assist nature to overcome real difficulties, if such exist, and will give healthy tone to the mind and vigor to the body.

In this age of the world, when vice and fashion control men and women, Christians should possess virtuous characters and a large share of good common sense. If this were the case, countenances which are now clouded, bearing the marks of disease and depravity, would be hopeful and cheerful, lighted up by true goodness and a clear conscience.

The do-nothing system is the greatest curse that has befallen our race. Children so unfortunate as to be brought up and educated by mothers who do not possess true moral worth, but who have diseased

imaginations and suffer imaginary ailments, need the sympathy, patient instruction, and tender care of all who can help them. The wants of these children are not met, and their education is such as to unfit them for useful members of society while they live, and to bring them to an untimely grave. If their lives are protracted, they will never forget the lessons taught them by the mother. The errors of her life have been impressed upon them by her words and her actions, and in many cases they will follow in her footsteps. Her mantle falls like a dark pall upon her poor children. Her inconsistent course has given the stamp of her character to their lives, and they cannot readily overcome the education of their childhood.

[536]

The tenderest earthly tie is that between the mother and her child. The child is more readily impressed by the life and example of the mother than by that of the father; for a stronger and more tender bond of union unites them. Mothers have a heavy responsibility. If I could impress upon them the work which they can do in molding the minds of their children I should be happy.

If parents themselves would obtain knowledge, and feel the importance of putting it to a practical use in the education of their dear children, we should see a different order of things among youth and children. The children need to be instructed in regard to their own bodies. There are but few youth who have any definite knowledge of the mysteries of human life. They know but little about the living machinery. Says David: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Teach your children to study from cause to effect; show them that if they violate the laws of their being they must pay the penalty by suffering disease. If in your effort you can see no special improvement, be not discouraged; patiently instruct, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. If by this means you have succeeded in forgetting yourself, you have taken one step in the right direction. Press on until the victory is gained. Continue to teach your children in regard to their own bodies and how to take care of them. Recklessness in regard to bodily health tends to recklessness in moral character.

[537]

Do not neglect to teach your children how to cook. In so doing, you impart to them principles which they must have in their religious education. In giving your children lessons in physiology, and teaching them how to cook with simplicity and yet with skill,

you are laying the foundation for the most useful branches of education. Skill is required to make good light bread. There is religion in good cooking, and I question the religion of that class who are too ignorant and too careless to learn to cook.

We see sallow complexions and groaning dyspeptics wherever we go. When we sit at the tables, and eat the food cooked in the same manner as it has been for months, and perhaps years, I wonder that these persons are alive. Bread and biscuit are yellow with saleratus. This resort to saleratus was to save a little care; in consequence of forgetfulness, the bread is often allowed to become sour before baking, and to remedy the evil a large portion of saleratus is added, which only makes it totally unfit for the human stomach. Saleratus in any form should not be introduced into the stomach, for the effect is fearful. It eats the coatings of the stomach, causes inflammation, and frequently poisons the entire system. Some plead: "I cannot make good bread or gems unless I use soda, or saleratus." You surely can if you become a scholar, and will learn. Is not the health of your family of sufficient value to inspire you with ambition to learn how to cook and how to eat?

[538] That which we eat cannot be converted into good blood unless it is of a proper quality, simple and nutritious. The stomach can never convert sour bread into sweet. Food poorly prepared is not nutritious and cannot make good blood. These things which fret and derange the stomach will have a benumbing influence upon the finer feelings of the heart. Many who adopt the health reform complain that it does not agree with them; but, after sitting at their tables, I come to the decision that it is not the health reform that is at fault, but the poorly prepared food. Health reformers, above all others, should be careful to shun extremes. The body must have sufficient nourishment. We cannot subsist upon air merely; neither can we retain health unless we have nourishing food. Food should be prepared in good order so that it is palatable. Mothers should be practical physiologists, that they may teach their children to know themselves and to possess moral courage to carry out correct principles in defiance of the health-and-life-destroying fashions. To needlessly transgress the laws of our being is a violation of the law of God.

Poor cookery is slowly wearing away the life energies of thousands. It is dangerous to health and life to eat at some tables the

heavy, sour bread and the other food prepared in keeping with it. Mothers, instead of seeking to give your daughters a musical education, instruct them in these useful branches which have the closest connection with life and health. Teach them all the mysteries of cooking. Show them that this is a part of their education and essential for them in order to become Christians. Unless the food is prepared in a wholesome, palatable manner, it cannot be converted into good blood to build up the wasting tissues. Your daughters may love music, and this may be all right; it may add to the happiness of the family; but the knowledge of music without the knowledge of cookery is not worth much. When your daughters have families of their own, an understanding of music and fancy work will not provide for the table a well-cooked dinner, prepared with nicety, so that they will not blush to place it before their most-esteemed friends. Mothers, yours is a sacred work. May God help you to take it up with His glory in view and work earnestly, patiently, and lovingly for the present and future good of your children, having an eye single to the glory of God.

[539]

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Chapter 63—Selfishness Rebuked

Dear Brother A,

Since the Illinois camp meeting, your case has pressed with weight upon my mind. As I recall some things shown me in regard to ministers, especially yourself, I am exceedingly distressed. At the meeting in Illinois I spoke especially upon the qualifications of a gospel minister. When I presented before the people the qualifications of a minister bearing the solemn message for these last days, much that I said applied to you, and I expected to hear some acknowledgment from you. Previous to my speaking, your wife talked with Sister Hall in regard to your discouragements. She said you did not know as it was your duty to preach; you had been unsettled in regard to your duty, and were discouraged, and did not enter into the work as you would if you felt settled. Sister Hall intimated to me that if I had a word of encouragement for you, your wife would be glad to have me say it. I told Sister Hall that I had not a word of encouragement to speak, and that if you were unsettled you would better wait until you knew your duty for yourself. I then spoke upon the qualifications of a minister of Christ; and, if I had fully performed my duty, I should have spoken definitely to you while in the stand. The presence of unbelievers was the only reason which deterred me.

[540] In Minnesota I was again burdened in regard to the course of our ministers, by seeing Brother B and talking with him in regard to his defects which stood right in the way of his work for the salvation of souls. His course in caring for the things of this life again brought your case so distinctly before me that, had I been as well as usual, I should have written to you before I left the campground. We had no period of rest, but came directly to Wisconsin. I was sick, yet God strengthened me to do my duty before the people. As I stood before the public I recognized countenances that I had no knowledge of ever having seen before. Again your case, in connection with others, came distinctly before me. This was the vicinity where your

influence had been a blighting curse rather than a blessing. It was also a place where much good might have been accomplished, even by you. Had you been consecrated to God, and unselfishly working for the salvation of souls for whom Christ died, your labors would have been wholly successful. You understood the arguments of our position. The reasons of our faith, brought before the minds of those who have not been enlightened in regard to them, make a decided impression if minds are not filled with prejudice so that they will not receive the evidences given. I saw some of the very best material to make excellent Sabbathkeeping Christians in the vicinity of ----- and -----; but while some were charmed with the beautiful chain of truth, and were about ready to decide upon it, you left the field without completing the work you had undertaken. This was worse than if you had never entered it. That interest can never be raised again.

For years light has been given upon this point, showing the necessity of following up an interest that has been raised, and in no case leaving it until all have decided that lean toward the truth and have experienced the conversion necessary for baptism and united with some church or formed one themselves. There are no circumstances of sufficient importance to call a minister from an interest created by the presentation of truth. Even sickness and death are of less consequence than the salvation of souls for whom Christ made so immense a sacrifice. Those who feel the importance of the truth, and the value of souls for whom Christ died, will not leave an interest among the people for any consideration. They will say: Let the dead bury their dead. Home interests, lands and houses, should not have the least power to attract from the field of labor. If ministers allow these temporal things to divert them from the work, the only course for them to pursue is to leave all, possess no lands or temporal interests which will have an influence to draw them from the solemn work of these last days. One soul is of more value than the entire world. How can men who profess to have given themselves to the sacred work of saving souls, allow their small temporal possessions to engross their minds and hearts, and keep them from the high calling they profess to have received from God?

[541]

I saw, Brother A, that your influence in the vicinity of ----- and ----- has done great injury to the cause of God. I knew what that influence was while you were at Battle Creek last. As I have

been writing out important matter for ministers, your case has been brought before me, and I intended ere this to have written you; but it was impossible. For three nights I have slept but little. Your case has been upon my mind almost constantly. I was mentally writing to you in my sleep, and also when awake. When I recognized in the congregation the very individuals that had been injured by your influence, I should have brought the matter out, had you been present. Not one word from any mortal was intimated to me in regard to your course. I felt compelled to speak to one or two in reference to the matter, stating to them that I recollected their countenances in connection with some things shown me in regard to you. Then, very reluctantly, facts were related to me confirming all I had stated to them. I have said only what I believed I should say in the fear of God, discharging my duty as His servant.

[542] Two years ago I saw that you and your wife were both very selfish, grasping persons. Your own selfish interests were dearer to you than souls for whom Christ died. I was shown that you were not generally successful in your labors. You have the ability to present the truth; you have an investigating mind; and if it were not for the many defects in your Christian character, you could accomplish good. But, for many reasons, you have not made the preaching of the truth a success. One of the greatest curses of your life, Brother A, has been your supreme selfishness. You have been figuring for your own advantage. You both have made yourselves the center of sympathy and attention. When you go to a place and enter a family, you throw your whole weight upon them, let them cook for you and wait upon you; and neither of you seeks to do as much work as you make. The family may be toiling hard, bearing their own burdens and yours; but you are both so selfish that you cannot see that they are worn and that you are both physically better able than they to perform the labor which they do for you. Brother A, you are too indolent to please God. When wood or water is needed, you do not know it, and you let these be brought by those who are already overworked, and frequently by females, when these little errands, these courtesies of life, are what you need to perform for the benefit of your health. You are full of flesh and blood, and do not exercise half enough for your own good. The indolence you manifest, and the

disposition to grasp everything whereby you may be advantaged, has been a reproach to the truth and a stumbling block to unbelievers.

Your wife, as well as you, loves her ease. Your time has been spent in bed when you were able to be up actively showing a special interest in the family you were burdening. You have thought that, because you were a minister, they should consider your presence a favor, and should wait upon you, and favor you, while you had nothing to do but to care for your own selfish interests. The impressions which you have given have been very bad. You both have been considered representatives of ministers and their wives who are engaged in presenting to the world the Sabbath and the soon coming of our Lord.

[543]

Those who are acquainted with your course will say that your profession, your teachings, and your life do not agree. They see that your fruits are not good, and decide that you do not believe the things you teach to others. They conclude that all ministers are like yourself, and that sacred and eternal truths are, after all, a deception. Who will be responsible for such impressions and such deplorable results? May you see the heavy weight that rests upon you in consequence of your selfishness, which is a curse to yourself and to all around you.

Again, Brother A, you are troubled with feelings and impressions which are the natural fruit of selfishness. You imagine that others do not appreciate your labors. You think yourself capable of accomplishing a large work, but excuse your failure to do it, because others do not give you room and credit according to your ability. You are jealous of others and have hindered the progress of the cause in Illinois and Wisconsin, doing but little yourself, and hindering those who would work if you were out of their way. Your sensitiveness and jealousy have weakened the hands of those who would set things in order and bring up these conferences. If any improvement is seen in these states, you incline to think that it is attributable in a great measure to yourself, when it is a fact that if things were left to your dictation, they would speedily go into the ground. In your preaching you are generally too dry and formal. You do not weave in the practical with the doctrinal. You talk too long and weary the people. Instead of dwelling only upon that portion of your subject that you can fully make plain to the understanding of all, you go

[544] way around and come down to minute particulars that do not help the subject and might as well be passed over. When so much matter not really necessary is brought in, the hearer loses the chain of the argument and cannot keep the subject in mind. When a minister gets the ears of the people, he should go from point to point, as far as possible leaving these points unincumbered with a mass of words and petty details. He should leave his ideas before the people as distinct as mileposts. To cover over the important, vital points with an array of words, dragging in everything which has some distant relationship to the subject, destroys the force of it and obscures the beautiful, connected chain of truth. You are slow and tedious in your preaching, as well as in everything else you undertake. You need, if ever a man did, to be energized by the Spirit of truth. You need Christ formed within you the hope of glory. You need religion, the genuine article.

I was referred to the following words of inspiration: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Men whom God has called to the work of saving souls will feel a burden for the people. Selfish interests will be swallowed up in their deep concern for the salvation of souls for whom Christ died. They will feel the force of the exhortation of Peter: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

[545]

You are naturally stubborn. Jealousy and stubbornness are the natural fruits of selfishness. You have made some improvement; but I saw so much yet to be done, I saw so clearly the wretched influence of your selfish, unconsecrated life, that I fear you will never see just how hateful these traits of character are before God.

I fear that you will not realize this sufficiently to put them away and become like your self-denying Redeemer, pure and unselfish, your life characterized by disinterested benevolence. Your influence and example are such as to cause some who love the truth and work of God, and who value our faith, to lose their spirit of self-sacrifice and their interest in the cause of present truth. Your selfish, covetous course begets the same spirit in them; and your disposition to grasp and advantage yourself, while professing to be a minister of righteousness, has closed the hearts of very many against giving of their means to advance the cause of truth. If ministers set the people an example of selfishness, that example will tell upon the cause of God with tenfold greater power than all their preaching can.

God has been dishonored by your littleness. Your deal has savored of dishonesty. You have not made a clean track behind you, and until there is an entire transformation in your life, you will be a living curse to any church where you reside. You work for wages, and would not kindle a fire upon the altar of God, or shut the doors, for nought. When you set the people an example of self-sacrifice and of devotion to the cause of God, making the truth and the salvation of the soul primary, then your influence will bring others into the same position of self-sacrifice and devotion, to make the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness of Christ first. You feel authorized to advantage yourself from the cause. Your brethren, from the liberality of their souls, favor and help you in various ways, and you receive it as a matter of course, as your due. And if any are not perfectly free with you, and do not favor you, you are jealous, and do not scruple to let them understand that you are not appreciated, and that they are selfish. You frequently refer to others who have done thus and so by you, as examples that they should imitate. These who have especially favored you have gone beyond their duty. You have not earned their confidence or their liberalities. You have had no heavy burdens to bear in this cause, and you have cast on others many more burdens than you have lifted; yet you have been gaining in property, and obtaining the good things of this life, and you regard it all as your right. Though you have received your weekly wages, you have not always been satisfied. Notwithstanding the pay you received, you have been managing continually to advantage yourself. The

[546]

cause of God has paid you, whether you had much or little to show for your labor. You have not earned the means you have received.

Your wife has been petted by her parents and by her husband until she is of but very little use. You have both seen others burdened with care and have not lifted the burdens with them. Your wife has lain as a helpless weight upon families, greatly to her own injury and to theirs, when, in point of health, she was better able to do than some who were bearing her burdens and yours. Yet she did not think of this. Neither of you could see the facts in the case and feel for others. Some from whom you have received help in care for yourselves and your child were not able, financially, to do what they did; but they thought they were ministering to self-sacrificing servants of Christ; therefore they denied themselves and endured inconvenience and trouble, to bear burdens that you were better able to bear for yourselves than they were to bear them for you.

[547] Your wife has been reluctant to take up her life burdens. She wants a higher calling, and neglects the duties of today. Neither of you obeys the commandment of God: Love thy neighbor as thyself. Self and selfishness shut out the needs of your neighbors from you. Your small, mercenary spirit is contagious. Your example has done more to encourage love of the world, and a close, penurious spirit, than anything else which has occurred in Wisconsin and Illinois. Had you done nothing but attend to your temporal interests, the cause of God in these two states would have been in a far better condition than it is in today. The success you have had does not come up to the injury you have done. The cause of God is prostrated. Your sensitiveness and jealousy have been an example for others. We met this spirit in Illinois and in Wisconsin. The state of the churches in ----- and vicinity has been deplorable. The lack of love and union, the surmising, jealousy, and stubbornness, apparent in these churches, have been shaped very much by your traits of character. The position which you occupied after the fanaticism at -----, standing back upon your dignity, splitting hairs, dividing the matter with the fanatical and with those whom God had sent with a special message, stood directly in the way of others' seeing and correcting their wrongs. Your course at that time, in failing to take hold and work on the right side to correct that blasting fanaticism, gave shape to the discouraging state of things which has grown out

of that dark reign of fanaticism. Brethren C and D, and the entire church at -----, and the people at -----, were not brought out upon correct positions, as they might have been had you been humble and teachable, working in union with the servants of God.

When a man who professes to be a teacher, a leader, ventures in the course which you have pursued because of your stubbornness, he will have a heavy weight of responsibility to bear for the souls who have stumbled over him to perdition. A minister cannot be too careful of his influence. Stubbornness, jealousy, and selfishness should have no part in his being; for if they are indulged, he will ruin more souls than he can save. If he does not overcome these dangerous elements in his character, it would be better for him to have nothing to do with the cause of God. The indulgence of these traits, which may not appear very bad to him, will place souls beyond his reach and beyond the reach of others. If such ministers would let things entirely alone, the souls susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God might be reached by those who can give them an example worthy of imitation, in accordance with the truth they teach. By a consistent life the minister will retain the confidence of the seekers after truth, until he can help them to fasten their grasp firmly upon the Rock of Ages; and afterward, if they are tempted, that influence will enable him to warn, exhort, reprove, and counsel them with success.

[548]

Above all other men, ministers of Christ, bearing the solemn truth for these last days, should be free from selfishness. Benevolence should dwell naturally with them. They should be ashamed of acts toward their brethren which bear the marks of selfishness. They should be patterns of piety, living epistles, known and read of all men. Their fruits should be unto holiness. The spirit which they possess should be the opposite of that manifested by worldlings. By accepting divine truth they become servants of God, and are no more children of darkness and servants of the world. Christ has chosen them out of the world. The worldling understands not the mystery of godliness, therefore he is unacquainted with the motives which actuate them. Yet the spirit and life which is in them, which is manifested in their heavenly conversation, their self-denying, self-sacrificing, blameless life, has a convincing power that will lead unbelievers into all truth, lead them to obedience to Christ. They

[549] are living examples because they are like Christ. They are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, and their influence upon others is saving. They are Christ's representatives upon the earth. Their objects and desires are not inspired by earthly things, neither can they labor for gain nor enjoy a selfish love for it. Eternal considerations are sufficient to overbalance every earthly attraction. A genuine Christian will labor only to please God, having an eye single to His glory and enjoying the reward of doing His will.

Ministers especially should know the character and works of Christ, that they may imitate Him; for the character and works of a true Christian are like His. He laid aside His glory, His dominion, His riches, and sought after those who were perishing in sin. He humbled Himself to our necessities, that He might exalt us to heaven. Sacrifice, self-denial, and disinterested benevolence characterized His life. He is our pattern. Have you, Brother A, imitated the Pattern? I answer: No. He is a perfect and holy example, given for us to imitate. We cannot equal the pattern; but we shall not be approved of God if we do not copy it and, according to the ability which God has given, resemble it. Love for souls for whom Christ died will lead to a denial of self and a willingness to make any sacrifice in order to be co-workers with Christ in the salvation of souls.

[550] The work of God's chosen servants will be fruitful if wrought in Him. Their words and works are the channels through which the pure principles of truth and holiness are conveyed to the world. Their exemplary lives make them the light of the world and the salt of the earth. The servants of God should, with the hand of faith, lay hold of the mighty arm and gather the divine rays of light from above, while, with the hand of love, they reach after perishing souls. Diligence is necessary for this work. Indolence will permit souls who might be saved, to drift beyond reach. God wants in His service ministers who are awake, who are energetic and persevering, who are faithful watchmen upon Zion's walls, listening to hear the words from the divine Teacher and faithfully proclaiming the same to the people.

You are very much like Meroz. You are quite diligent when that which you do will bring some advantage to yourself, but there is no motive for special diligence unless you are to be benefited. You

are decidedly a lazy man. You can eat your rations regularly, but you have no special love for physical labor. No man can fill his position as a minister unless he is industrious, diligent in business, and faithful in the performance of all the social and public duties of life. God has chosen us, as His servants, to His work, which requires persevering energy. We are not to become pets and shun toil, hardship, and conflicts.

I was referred to the following words of inspiration: “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.” The sufficiency of the apostle was not in himself, but in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influences filled his soul, bringing every thought into subjection and obedience to Christ. His ministry was fruitful.

The first great commandment is: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.” “And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” On these two commandments the whole interest and duty of moral beings hang. Those who do their duty to others as they would that others should do to them are brought into a position where God can reveal Himself to them. They will be approved of Him. They are made perfect in love, and their labors and prayers will not be in vain. They are continually receiving grace and truth from the Fountainhead, and as freely transmitting to others the divine light and salvation they receive. In them is fulfilled the language of the Scripture: “Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

[551]

Selfishness is abomination in the sight of God and holy angels. Because of this sin many fail to attain the good which they are capable of enjoying. They look with selfish eyes on their own things, and do not love and seek the interest of others as they do their own. They reverse God’s order. Instead of doing for others what

they wish others to do for them, they do for themselves what they desire others to do for them, and do to others what they are most unwilling to have returned to them. Here is where you need to learn. Love is of God. You have not the love which dwelt in the bosom of Christ. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate, or produce, this plant of heavenly origin, which, in order to flourish, must be watered constantly with the dew of heaven. It can flourish only in the heart where Christ reigns. This love cannot live and flourish without action; and it cannot act without increasing in fervency, and extending and diffusing its nature to others. This principle you have greatly lacked, and thus all has been dark where its presence would have made all light.

[552] My brother, you need an entire transformation, a thorough conversion. Without this you are only a blind leader. Your influence does not increase the love and union of those with whom you are. Instead of building up, you have a scattering influence. You have cursed the West with your deficiencies. While you are so deficient in the grace of God, and so given to selfishness, you cannot bring up the church to the position which God requires them to occupy. "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily."

God's ministers must have the truth in their hearts in order to successfully present it to others. They must be sanctified by the truths they preach or they will be only stumbling blocks to sinners. Those who are called of God to minister in holy things are called to be pure in heart and holy in life. "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." If God pronounces a woe upon those who are called to preach the truth and refuse to obey, a heavier woe rests upon those who take upon them this sacred work without clean hands and pure hearts. As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those

who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill. If the Spirit of God has not sanctified and made pure and clean the hands and heart of those who minister in sacred things, they will speak according to their own imperfect, deficient experience, and their counsels will lead astray from God those who look to them and trust in their judgment and experience. May God help ministers to heed the exhortation of Paul to the Corinthians: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" There is a work for you to do, my brother, if you gain eternal life. May God help you to do this work thoroughly, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. [553]

Chicago, Illinois, Massasoit House,

July 6, 1870.

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Chapter 64—Fanaticism and Ignorance

Brother E,

While in Rochester, New York, December 25, 1865, before visiting the State of Maine, I saw some things in relation to the perplexing and discouraging conditions of the cause in that state. I was shown that quite a number who were thinking it their duty to teach the word of God publicly had mistaken their work. They had no call to devote themselves to this solemn, responsible work. They were not qualified for the work of the ministry, for they could not instruct others properly.

The experience of some had been obtained among a class of religious fanatics who had no true sense of the exalted character of the work. The religious experience of this class of professed Seventh-day Adventists was not reliable. They had not firm principles underlying all their actions. They were self-confident, and boastful. Their religion did not consist in righteous acts, true humility of soul, and sincere devotion to God, but in impulse, in noise and confusion, spiced with eccentricities and oddities. They had not felt, neither could they feel, the necessity of being clothed with Christ's righteousness. They had a righteousness of their own, which was as filthy rags, and which God can in no case accept. These persons had no love for union and harmony of action. They delighted in disorder. Confusion, distraction, and diversity of opinion were their choice. They were ungovernable, unsubdued, unregenerated, and unconsecrated, and this element of confusion suited their undisciplined minds. They were a curse to the cause of God and brought the name of Seventh-day Adventists into disrepute.

These persons had not experienced the work of reformation, or sanctification through the truth. They were coarse and uncultivated. They had never tasted of the sweet, pure refinement of the world to come. They had never experienced, neither had their hearts been awed by, the mystery of godliness. They placed divine and eternal things upon a level with common things, and would talk of heaven

and the coming of Jesus as they would of a horse. They had a superficial knowledge or theory of the truth, but further than this they were ignorant. Its principles had not taken hold of their lives and led them to an abhorrence of self. They had never viewed themselves in the light in which Paul viewed himself, which led him to see the moral defects in his character. They had never been slain by the law of God, and had not separated themselves from their impurities and defilement. It is the favorite occupation of some of this class to engage in trifling conversation and levity. This habit they contracted, and indulged upon occasions which should have been characterized by solemn meditation and devotion. In doing this, they manifested a lack of true dignity and refinement, and forfeited the esteem of sensible persons who had no knowledge of the truth. This class threw themselves into a current of temptation and kept where the enemy led them successfully, and he has so easily controlled their minds and corrupted their entire experience that in all probability they will be unable to recover themselves out of his snare and obtain a healthful experience.

The fires of the day of God will consume the stubble and chaff, and there will be nothing left of any who continue in the ungodly course which they have so long loved. This class have a disrelish for the society of those whom God is truly with. Their religious experience is of so low an order that they have no part nor lot in a rational, intelligent religious experience; therefore they have despised the society of those whom God leads and is teaching. Sarcasm and irony is the stronghold of some peculiar minds of this class. They are bold and insolent, and do not regard good manners. They have no care to discriminate and render honor to whom honor is due. They manifest a proud, rebellious, defiant spirit against those who differ from their opinions. Their boisterous manners and wrong course lead the true servant of God to feel that they have resisted the efforts made for them, and he becomes disheartened in reference to laboring any further in their behalf. They engage in a contemptible triumph of exactly the same nature as that which Satan and evil angels engage in over the souls whom they secure. They have Satan and evil angels on their side to exult with them. The cases of the persons in whom this cast of character is peculiarly and strikingly developed are hopeless. They are incased in self-righteousness, and everything like

[555]

refinement and elevation of character with which they are brought in contact is termed by them pride and lack of humility. Coarseness and ignorance are regarded as humility.

With this class you have obtained a large share of your religious experience; therefore you are not qualified for the work of teaching the most solemn, refined, elevating, and withal the most testing message to mortals. You may reach a class of minds, but the more intelligent portion of the community will be driven further off by your labors. You have not a sufficient knowledge of even the common branches of education to be an instructor of men and women who have a wily devil on the other hand to suggest and devise ways and means to lead them from the truth.

[556] The teachers of the common schools are required to be masters of their business. They are closely examined to ascertain if children can properly be trusted to their care. By investigation the thoroughness of their qualifications is tested according to the importance of the position which they are required to occupy. I saw that God's work is of as much more exalted character, and of as much higher interest, as the eternal is above the temporal. A mistake made here cannot be repaired. It is of infinite importance that all who go forth to teach the truth should be qualified for their work. No less strict investigation should be instituted in reference to their ability to teach the truth than in the case of those who teach our schools. God's work has been belittled by the slack, loose course pursued by professed ministers of Christ.

I was shown that ministers must be sanctified and holy, and must have a knowledge of the word of God. They should be familiar with Bible arguments and prepared to give a reason of their hope, or they should cease their labors and engage in a calling where deficiency will not involve such tremendous consequences. Ministers of the popular denominations of the day are acceptable preachers if they can speak upon a few simple points of the Bible; but the ministers who are spreading unpopular truth for these last days, who have to meet men of learning, men of strong minds, and opposers of every type, should know what they are about. They should not take upon themselves the responsibility of teaching the truth unless they are qualified for the work. Before engaging in, or devoting themselves to, the work they should become Bible students. If they have not an

education so that they can speak in public with acceptance, and do justice to the truth, and honor the Lord whom they profess to serve, they should wait till they are fitted for the position.

Brother E, you cannot fill the position of a minister of Christ. I saw that you lacked a correct religious experience. You have not a knowledge of yourself. You cannot even read correctly, or use language which would commend the truth to the understanding of an intelligent community. You lack discrimination. You would not know when it was proper to speak or wise to keep silent. You have so long thought, with the peculiar class I have mentioned, that you knew it all, that you will not see your deficiencies when they are presented before you. You possess a large share of self-esteem, and your experience has been characterized by self-confidence and boastfulness. [557]

You are not teachable, therefore the cause of God would not prosper in your hands. You would fail to recognize a defeat when you met with one. The cause of God would be brought into disrepute and dishonor by your labors, and you would fail to discover the fact. A certain class may be convinced by you of the truth; but more would be turned away and placed where they could not be reached by proper, judicious labor. Interwoven with your experience are things that will prove detrimental to the truth. God cannot accept you as a representative of the truth.

Your manners have not been refined and elevated. Your deportment has not been pleasing to God. Your words have been careless. You lack piety and devotion. You have not obtained an experience in the spiritual life. You fail to understand how to rightly divide the word of life, giving to each his portion of meat in due season. You have preferred to contend and contest points when you were entirely out of your place and could but meet with defeat. This is the spirit of the class in Maine whom I have mentioned. It is their delight to engage in contest and brave it through. You would not manifest meekness in instructing those who oppose themselves. You will ever be crippled, in a degree, by your unfortunate experience. You lack self-culture and meekness. You have important lessons to learn before you can become an unassuming, acceptable follower of Christ, even in a private capacity.

Chapter 65—An Indulged Daughter

Dear Friend F,

I was shown that you were in danger of being under the full control of the great adversary of souls. Your experience at ----- was not good for you. Your stay at ----- hurt you; you became proud and vain. Persons were not wanting who unwisely petted and praised you until you became vain, pert, and saucy. You have been opposed to restraint, have been headstrong, willful, and stubborn, and have made your parents much trouble. They have erred. Your father has unwisely petted you. You have taken advantage of this and have become deceptive. You have received approbation which you did not deserve.

You had your own head very much at ----- and took liberties that should not have been allowed for a moment. When you or your sisters were reprov'd you felt insulted and reported the matter to your mother as though you had been abused. You exaggerated, and she was nervous and easily excited and irritated if she thought her position and dignity were not respected. She was displeas'd that anyone should dictate to her children, and she did not conceal her displeasur. She spok'e improperly to those who should have command'd her respect. Your mother show'd great lack of wisdom in taking your part and censuring those whom she should have thank'd rather than blam'd. She hurt you and did a work for you that she can never fully repair. You triumphed because you thought yourself secure from censur, thought that you could do as you pleas'd. Your mother's eye was not always upon you; and if it had been, she could not have discern'd your evil tendencies.

At school you had a good and noble teacher, yet you felt indignant because you were restrain'd. You thought that because you were the daughter of G your teacher should show a preferenc for you and should not take the liberty to correct and reprov'e you. Your sisters also partook of the same spirit. You carried your complaints to your parents; they heard your version of matters and sympathiz'd

with you more or less, and their feelings were stirred by your exaggerated reports. They injured you. You had not been as strictly disciplined as you should have been. Yet you were offended because you could not have your own way, but were compelled to yield to the decided, thorough manner of Brother H's instructions. While in school, you were sometimes troublesome, impudent, and defiant, and greatly lacked modesty and decorum. You were bold, selfish, and self-exalted, and needed firm discipline at home as well as at school.

Your mind is impure. You were relieved from care and labor altogether too long. Household duties would have been one of the richest blessings that you could have had. Weariness would not have injured you one tenth as much as have your lascivious thoughts and conduct. You have received incorrect ideas in regard to girls' and boys' associating together, and it has been very congenial to your mind to be in the company of the boys. You are not pure in heart and mind. You have been injured by reading love stories and romances, and your mind has been fascinated by impure thoughts. Your imagination has become corrupt, until you seem to have no power to control your thoughts. Satan leads you captive as he pleases. You are not happy. You do not love God or His people. You have a bitter spirit toward those who see your true character. You seem to blame them for the view they take of your case, but you are the one to blame. Your conduct has been such as to call forth cautions and warnings. You have only yourself to censure in this.

You are a dangerous associate, and have done much harm by your influence in -----. You have led instead of being led. You have dishonored God and are accountable to Him for the work of evil which you have wrought by your influence. Your conduct has not been chaste, modest, or becoming. You have not had the fear of God before your eyes. You have so often dissembled in order to accomplish your plans that you bear a violated conscience. My dear girl, unless you stop just where you are, ruin is surely before you. Cease your daydreaming, your castle-building. Stop your thoughts from running in the channel of folly and corruption. You cannot safely associate with the boys. A tide of temptation is roused and surges in your breast, having a tendency to uproot principle, female

[560]

virtue, and true modesty. If you go on in your willful, headstrong course, what will be your fate?

A new year has dawned upon us. What have you determined to do? What have you resolved shall be the record borne up to God by the ministering angels of your work from day to day? What words that you have uttered will appear in the page of the book of records? What thoughts will the Searcher of hearts find cherished by you? He is a discerner of the thoughts, of the intents and purposes of the heart. You have a fearful record of the past year, which is laid open to the view of the Majesty of heaven and the myriads of pure, sinless angels. Your thoughts and acts, your desperate and unsanctified feelings, may have been concealed from mortals; but remember, the most trivial acts of your life are open to the view of God. You have a spotted record in heaven. The sins you have committed are all registered there.

[561] God's frown is upon you, and yet you appear destitute of feeling; you do not realize your lost and undone condition. At times you do have feelings of remorse; but your proud, independent spirit soon rises above this, and you stifle the voice of conscience. You are not happy, yet you imagine that if you could have your own way unrestrained you would be happy. Poor child! you occupy a position similar to that of Eve in Eden. She imagined that she would be highly exalted if she could only eat of the fruit of the tree which God had forbidden her even to touch, lest she die. She ate, and lost all the glories of Eden.

You should control your thoughts. This will not be an easy task; you cannot accomplish it without close and even severe effort. Yet God requires this of you; it is a duty resting upon every accountable being. You are responsible to God for your thoughts. If you indulge in vain imaginations, permitting your mind to dwell upon impure subjects, you are, in a degree, as guilty before God as if your thoughts were carried into action. All that prevents the action is the lack of opportunity. Day and night dreaming and castle-building are bad and exceedingly dangerous habits. When once established, it is next to impossible to break up such habits, and direct the thoughts to pure, holy, elevated themes. You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul.

The power of grace alone can accomplish this most desirable work. You are weak in this direction.

You have become wayward, bold, and daring. The grace of God has no place in your heart. In the strength of God alone can you bring yourself where you can be a recipient of His grace, an instrument of righteousness. Not only does God require you to control your thoughts, but also your passions and affections. Your salvation depends upon your governing yourself in these things. Passion and affection are powerful agents. If misapplied, if set in operation through wrong motives, if misplaced, they are powerful to accomplish your ruin and leave you a miserable wreck, without God and without hope.

The imagination must be positively and persistently controlled if the passions and affections are made subject to reason, conscience, and character. You are in danger, for you are just upon the point of sacrificing your eternal interests at the altar of passion. Passion is obtaining positive control of your entire being—passion of what quality? of a base, destructive nature. By yielding to it, you will embitter the lives of your parents, bring sadness and shame to your sisters, sacrifice your own character, and forfeit heaven and a glorious immortal life. Are you ready to do this? I appeal to you to stop where you are. Advance not another step in your headstrong, wanton course; for before you are misery and death. Unless you exercise self-control in regard to your passions and affections, you will surely bring yourself into disrepute with all around you, and will bring upon your character disgrace which will last while you live. [562]

You are disobedient to your parents, pert, unthankful, and unholy. These miserable traits are the fruits of a corrupt tree. You are forward. You love the boys, and love to make them the theme of your conversation. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Habits have become powerful to control you; and you have learned to deceive in order to carry out your purposes and accomplish your desires.

I do not consider your case hopeless; if I did, my pen would not be tracing these lines. In the strength of God you can redeem the past. Your name is already a byword in -----; but you can change this by using the powers which God has given you. You may even

[563]

now gain a moral excellence so that your name may be associated with things pure and holy. You can be elevated. God has provided for you the necessary helps. He has invited you to come to Him, and has promised to bear your burdens and give you rest of soul. “Learn of Me,” says the divine Teacher, “for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” You have long been above this lowliness and meekness. You will have to learn this important lesson of the divine Teacher before you can find the rest promised. You have thought so much of yourself, of your own smartness, that it has led you to such affectation and vanity as to make you almost a fool. You have a deceitful tongue, which has indulged in misrepresentation and falsehood. Oh, my dear girl, if you could only arouse, if your slumbering, deadened conscience could be awakened, and you could cherish a habitual impression of the presence of God, and keep yourself subject to the control of an enlightened, wakeful conscience, you would be happy yourself and a blessing to your parents, whose hearts you now wound. You could be an instrument of righteousness to your associates. You need a thorough conversion, and without it you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. You may imagine yourself free when following the lead of your own wayward, pernicious mind; but you are in the most degrading bondage. Without the principles of religion, you may consider yourself an object of envy; but all who are good and virtuous will regard your character with pity and your course with abhorrence. You can become a partaker of the divine nature if you will escape the corruption that is in the world through lust; or by being a partaker of it, you may sink down in this corruption and bear the impress of the satanic.

You have younger sisters whom you can bless with your influence. You can reflect a sweet, precious light in your father’s family and make his heart glad; or you can be a dark shadow, a cloud, a storm which shall desolate. Your passion for reading is of such a character that if indulged it will pervert the imagination and will prove your ruin. Unless you restrain your thoughts, your reading, and your words, your imagination will become hopelessly diseased. Read your Bible attentively, prayerfully, and be guided by its teachings. This is your safety.

[564]

Keep clear of the boys. In their society your temptations become

earnest and powerful. Put marriage out of your girl's head. You are in no sense fit for this. You need years of experience before you can be qualified to understand the duties, and take up the burdens, of married life. Positively guard your thoughts, your passions, and your affections. Do not degrade these to minister to lust. Elevate them to purity, devote them to God.

You may become a prudent, modest, virtuous girl, but not without earnest effort. You must watch, you must pray, you must meditate, you must investigate your motives and your actions. Closely analyze your feelings and your acts. Would you, in the presence of your father, perform an impure action? No, indeed. But you do this in the presence of your heavenly Father, who is so much more exalted, so holy, so pure. Yes; you corrupt your own body in the presence of the pure, sinless angels, and in the presence of Christ; and you continue to do this irrespective of conscience, irrespective of the light and warnings given you.

Remember, a record is made of all your acts. You must meet again the most secret things of your life. You will be judged according to the deeds done in the body. Are you prepared for this? You are injuring yourself physically and morally. God has enjoined upon you to preserve your body holy. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, ... and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Will not God judge you for debasing to lust the passions and affections when He claims the wealth of your affections and your entire being to be devoted to His service?

Again I warn you as one who must meet these lines in that day when the case of everyone shall be decided. Yield yourself to Christ without delay; He alone, by the power of His grace, can redeem you from ruin. He alone can bring your moral and mental powers into a state of health. Your heart may be warm with the love of God; your understanding, clear and mature; your conscience, illuminated, quick, and pure; your will, upright and sanctified, subject to the control of the Spirit of God. You can make yourself what you choose. If you will now face rightabout, cease to do evil and learn to do well, then you will be happy indeed; you will be successful in the battles of life, and rise to glory and honor in the better life than this. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

[565]

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Chapter 66—To a Minister's Wife

Dear Sister I,

Yesterday I had some time for reflection, and now have a few thoughts that I wish to present to you. I could not readily answer your question concerning your duty to travel with your husband. I had not yet learned the result of your accompanying him; therefore I could not speak as understandingly as if I had been acquainted with the influence you had exerted. I cannot give counsel in the dark. I must know that my counsel is correct in the light. Great advantage is taken of my words, therefore I must move very cautiously. After careful reflection, seeking to call up things which have been shown me in your case, I am prepared to write to you.

From the letters you have written to me in regard to Brother J, I fear that you are prejudiced and have some jealousy. I hope this is not the case, but fear that it is. You and your husband are very sensitive and naturally jealous, therefore you need to guard yourselves in this direction. We do not feel that Brother J sees all things clearly. We think his wife is far from right and has great influence over him; yet we hope that if all move in wisdom toward him, he will recover himself from the snare of Satan and see all things clearly. [566]

Dear sister, we are determined to be impartial and not have our words or acts in any way influenced by hearsay. We have no pets. May the Lord give us heavenly wisdom, that we may deal righteously and impartially, and thus meet the mind of His Spirit. We do not want our works wrought in self. We do not want personal feelings. If we think we are not specially considered, or if we see, or imagine that we see, positive neglect, we want the spirit of our forgiving Master. The people who professed to be His followers received Him not, because His face was toward Jerusalem, and He gave no special indication that He was to tarry with them. They did not open their doors to the heavenly Guest, and did not urge His abiding with them, although they beheld Him weary with His journey, and the night

was drawing on. They gave no sign that they really desired Jesus. The disciples knew that He designed to tarry there that night, and they felt so keenly the slight thus given to their Lord that they were angry, and prayed Jesus to show proper resentment and call down fire from heaven to consume those who had thus abused Him. But He rebuked their indignation and zeal for His honor, and told them that He came, not to visit with judgment, but to show mercy.

This lesson of our Saviour's is for you and for me. No resentment must come into our hearts. When reviled, we must not revile again. O jealousy and evil surmising, what mischief have ye wrought! how have ye turned friendship and love into bitterness and hatred! We must be less proud, less sensitive, have less self-love, and be dead to self-interest. Our interest must be submerged in Christ and we be able to say: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Christ has [567] told us how to make everything easy and happy as we pass along: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The great difficulty is, there is so little meekness and lowliness that the yoke galls and the burden is heavy. When we possess true meekness and lowliness we are so lost in Christ that we do not take neglect or slights to heart; we are deaf to reproach and blind to scorn and insult.

Sister I, as the peculiarities of your case come clearly before me, I see a serious objection to your traveling. You do not take upon yourself the burdens that you should. You call forth sympathy from others, but do not give in return. You lay your whole weight where you are, and too frequently are waited upon when those who bear their own burden and yours also are no more able to do this than yourself. You are too helpless for your own good, and the influence is not such as that of a minister's wife should be. You need more physical labor than you have; and from what has been shown me, I think that you would be more in the line of your duty engaging cheerfully in the work of educating your daughter and encouraging a love of domestic duties. You did not receive the education in this direction that you should have had in your girlhood, and this has made your life more unhappy than it would otherwise have been. You do not love physical labor; and when journeying, you fill the bill

of an invalid, and fail to be helpful and do what you can to lighten the burdens you make. You fail to realize that frequently the very ones who wait on you are no more able to perform the extra task than you are. You lean on others, and lay your whole weight upon them. I have no evidence that God has called you to do a special work in traveling.

You have an education to obtain that you do not yet possess. Who can so well instruct the child as the mother? Who can so well learn the defects in her own organization and in her child's as the mother while in the performance of the duties which Heaven has allotted her? The fact that you do not love this work is no evidence that it is not the work which the Lord has assigned you. You have not sufficient physical or mental strength to make it an object for you to travel. You wish to be ministered unto, instead of ministering to others. You are not helpful enough to offset the burden you are to your husband and to those around you. [568]

Those who cannot wisely manage their own child or children are not qualified to act wisely in church matters or to deal with wiry minds subject to Satan's special temptations. If they can cheerfully and lovingly perform the part required of them as parents, then they can better understand how to bear burdens in the church. Dear sister, I advise you to make a good wife to your husband and a good home for him. Rely upon your own resources, and lean less heavily upon him. Arouse yourself to do the very work which the Lord would have you do. You are inclined to be anxious to do some great work, to fill some large mission, and neglect the small duties right in your path, which are just as necessary to be accomplished as the larger. You walk over these and aspire to a larger work. Let your ambition be aroused to be useful, to be a workman in the world instead of a spectator.

My dear sister, I speak plainly; for I dare not do otherwise. I plead with you to take up life's burdens instead of shunning them. Help your husband by helping yourself. The ideas which you both hold of the dignity to be maintained by the minister are not in accordance with the example of our Lord. The minister of Christ should possess sobriety, meekness, love, long-suffering, forbearance, pity, and courtesy. He should be circumspect, elevated in thought and conversation, and of blameless deportment. This is gospel dignity. [569]

But if a minister comes to a family where he can wait on himself, he should do so by all means; and he should by his example encourage industry by engaging in physical labor when he has not a multiplicity of other duties and burdens. He will not detract from his dignity, and will better relate himself to health and life, by engaging in useful labor. The circulation of the blood will be better equalized. Physical labor, a diversion from mental, will draw the blood from the brain. It is essential for your husband to have more physical labor in order to relieve the brain. Digestion will be promoted by physical exercise. If he would spend a part of every day in physical exercise, when not positively urged by a protracted effort in a course of meetings, it would be an advantage to him, and would not detract from ministerial dignity. The example would be in accordance with that of our divine Master.

We love you, and want you to be successful in your efforts in striving for the better life.

Steamer "Keokuk," Mississippi River,

September 30, 1869.

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Chapter 67—Unfaithfulness in Stewardship

Dear Brother K,

A few things which are pressing upon my mind I feel a duty to write to Brother L and you. I have related the substance of the matter before you; but as my mind is still burdened, I will write.

I was shown that with you, *I* and *mine* have come to be first. You have had so great a care for yourself that the Lord has had no room to work for you. You have given Him no chance. He has, in a great measure, given Brother L and yourself up to work according to your own judgment, that you might be convinced that your wisdom is foolishness. You have not worked for the interest of the widow and fatherless, as the Lord has especially enjoined upon His followers; neither have you made the cases of the Lord's poor your own, by taking a special interest in them, nor have you sought to glorify God and magnify His name; therefore the Lord has suffered you and Brother L to pursue a course of your own choosing. He has permitted you to look out for yourselves. Your own selfish interests have been the foundation of your actions, and you will reap the harvest which you yourselves have sown. I saw that you would verily receive the reward that sooner or later follows the serving of your own selfish interest. "Give an account of thy stewardship," must be heard by you. You are accountable to God for the work entrusted to you, which you have shamefully neglected in order to serve yourselves. [570]

Had you been seeking to show yourselves approved unto God, seeking the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness of Christ, you would have been doing the works of Christ. The poor, the widows, the fatherless, would have called forth from you the tenderest pity and sympathy; you would have been interested in them and treated them as you would wish your wife and children treated were they left dependent and afflicted to the cold mercies of the world or of unfeeling, heartless professed Christians. There has been on your part a sad, unfeeling, heartless neglect of the unfortunate. You have

served your own interest, irrespective of their great need. God cannot bless you until you see your sin in regard to these things.

I saw that the Lord's work has not been more sacred in your eyes than your own business. Eternal things have not been discerned. The Lord has sent warnings and reproofs to arouse you to a sense of your duty by letting you know what is expected of you, but you have not regarded these warnings. You have not realized that you were dealing with God. You have robbed God and served yourselves.

[571] There are many who in good faith have sent in to the office means which they had to make a sacrifice to obtain. Some, both men and women, have worked very hard, and consecrated to the Lord the means obtained by hard labor and the closest economy, and have sent it to the office to advance the cause. Poor widows have sent nearly their whole dependence, trusting in God to take care of them, and the means has been consecrated with prayers and tears, yet sent with joyfulness, they feeling that they were aiding in the great work of saving souls. Poor families have sold their only cow, denying themselves and their little children of milk, feeling that they were making a sacrifice for God. They have put their means into the office in good faith. Selfishness and mismanagement have helped to squander this means. God holds those accountable who have had the handling of it. "Give an account of thy stewardship," will soon be heard. May the Lord help you to free yourselves from every blemish.

Battle Creek, Michigan,

January 17, 1870.

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Chapter 68—Mistaken Sensitiveness

Dear Sister M,

Your case is upon my mind, and I cannot forbear to commit to writing my convictions from what I have seen in regard to you. I am satisfied that you are wandering in mist and darkness. You do not see things in the right light. You blind your eyes in regard to your own case by excusing yourself thus: “I would not have done this or that if it had not been for certain influences of others which led me to that course of action.”

You are continually finding fault with circumstances, which is nothing less than finding fault with providences. You are continually casting about for somebody or something to answer the place of a scapegoat, upon which you can lay the blame of having brought you into a position to feel and speak unworthy of a Christian. Instead of simply censuring yourself for your defects, you censure the circumstances and occasions which led you to develop the traits in your character which lie dormant or hid beneath the surface unless something arises to disturb and arouse them to life and action. Then they appear in all their deformity and strength.

[572]

You deceive yourself with the idea that these unamiable traits do not exist, until you are brought into positions which make you act and speak in a manner that reveals them to all. You are not willing to see and confess that it is your carnal nature which has not yet been transformed and brought into subjection to Christ. You have not yet crucified self.

You sometimes pass along days and weeks without developing the spirit of evil which I have named impatience, and a dictatorial spirit, a desire to control your husband. Your loving to rule and to bring others to your ideas has nearly ruined yourself and him. You love to suggest and to dictate to others. You love to have them feel and see that you have the very best light, and are especially led of God. If they do not, you begin to surmise, to become jealous, to feel a spirit of unrest; you are dissatisfied and exceedingly unhappy.

[573]

Nothing so readily arouses the evil traits in your character as to dispute your wisdom and judgment in exercising your authority. Your strong, overbearing spirit, which has appeared to slumber, is roused to its fullest energy. Self then controls you, and you are no more governed by candid reason and calm judgment than is an insane person. Self in all its strength wrestles for the mastery, and it will take the firmest mind to hold you in restraint. After your fit of insanity has gone by, then you can bear to have your course questioned. But you stand ready to justify yourself by the plea that you are so sensitive; you feel so deeply; you suffer so much. I saw that all this will not excuse you in the sight of God. You mistake pride for sensitiveness. Self is prominent. When self is crucified, then this sensitiveness, or pride, will die; until then you are not a Christian. To be a Christian is to be Christlike, to possess humility and a meek and quiet spirit that will bear contradiction without being enraged or becoming insane. If the deceptive covering which is about you could be rent asunder, so that you could see yourself as God sees you, you would no longer seek to justify self, but would fall all broken upon Christ, the only One who can remove the defects in your character and then bind you up.

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Chapter 69—Convocations

God gave direction to the Israelites to assemble before Him at set periods, in the place which He should choose, and observe special days wherein no unnecessary work was to be done, but the time was to be devoted to a consideration of the blessings which He had bestowed upon them. At these special seasons they were to bring gifts, freewill offerings, and thank offerings unto the Lord, according as He had blessed them. The manservant and maidservant, the stranger, the fatherless and widow, were directed to rejoice that God had by His own wonderful power brought them from servile bondage to the enjoyment of freedom. And they were commanded not to appear before the Lord empty. They were to bring tokens of their gratitude to God for His continual mercies and blessings bestowed upon them. These offerings were varied according to the estimate which the donors placed upon the blessings they were privileged to enjoy. Thus the characters of the people were plainly developed. Those who placed a high value upon the blessings which God bestowed upon them brought offerings in accordance with their appreciation of these blessings. Those whose moral powers were stupefied and benumbed by selfishness and idolatrous love of the favors received, rather than inspired by fervent love for their bountiful Benefactor, brought meager offerings. Thus their hearts were revealed. Besides these special religious feast days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly Passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. The Lord covenanted that if they were faithful in the observance of His requirements, He would bless them in all their increase and in all the work of their hands. [574]

God requires no less of His people in these last days, in sacrifices and offerings, than He did of the Jewish nation. Those whom He has blessed with a competency, and even the widow and the fatherless, should not be unmindful of His blessings. Especially should those whom God has prospered render to Him the things that are His. They should appear before Him with a spirit of self-sacrifice and

bring their offerings in accordance with the blessings which He has bestowed upon them. But many whom God prospers manifest base ingratitude to Him. If His blessings rest upon them, and He increases their substance, they make these bounties as cords to bind them to the love of their possessions; they allow worldly business to take possession of their affections and their entire being, and neglect devotion and religious privileges. They cannot afford to leave their business cares and come before God even once a year. They turn the blessings of God into a curse. They serve their own temporal interests to the neglect of God's requirements.

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

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

Let all who possibly can, attend these yearly gatherings. All should feel that God requires this of them. If they do not avail themselves of the privileges which He has provided that they may become strong in Him and in the power of His grace, they will grow

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

[576]

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

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

**Number Twenty—Testimony for the
Church**

[577]

Chapter 70—Social Meetings

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

From the light I have had upon the subject I have decided that God does not require us, as we assemble for His worship, to make these seasons tedious and wearisome by remaining bowed quite a length of time, listening to several long prayers. Those in feeble health cannot endure this taxation without extreme weariness and exhaustion. The body becomes weary by remaining bowed down so long; and what is worse still, the mind becomes so wearied by the continuous exercise of prayer that no spiritual refreshment is realized, and the meeting is to them worse than a loss. They have become wearied mentally and physically, and they have obtained no spiritual strength.

[578] Meetings for conference and prayer should not be made tedious. If possible, all should be prompt to the hour appointed; and if there are dilatory ones, who are half an hour or even fifteen minutes behind the time, there should be no waiting. If there are but two present, they can claim the promise. The meeting should open at the appointed hour if possible, be there few or many present. Formality and cold stiffness should be laid aside, and all should be prompt to duty. Upon common occasions there should not be prayer of more than ten minutes' duration. After there has been a change of position, and the exercise of singing or exhortation has relieved the sameness, then, if any feel the burden of prayer, let them pray.

All should feel it a Christian duty to pray short. Tell the Lord just what you want, without going all over the world. In private prayer all have the privilege of praying as long as they desire and of being as explicit as they please. They can pray for all their relatives and friends. The closet is the place to tell all their private difficulties,

and trials, and temptations. A common meeting to worship God is not the place to open the privacies of the heart.

What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God, to instruct Him by telling Him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another's hopes and aspirations; and by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons and should be made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things.

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

[579]

“Ye are the light of the world,” says the heavenly Teacher. All have not the same experience in their religious life. But those of diverse exercises come together and with simplicity and humbleness of mind talk out their experience. All who are pursuing the onward Christian course should have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts, and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gained through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences gives light, strength, and knowledge that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life. The worship of God should be both interesting and instructive to those who have any love for divine and heavenly things.

[580]

Jesus, the heavenly Teacher, did not hold Himself aloof from the children of men; but in order to benefit them He came from heaven to earth, where they were, that the purity and holiness of His life might shine upon the pathway of all and light the way to heaven. The Redeemer of the world sought to make His lessons of instruction plain and simple, that all might comprehend them. He generally chose the open air for His discourses. No walls could enclose the multitude which followed Him; but He had special reasons for resorting to the groves and the seaside to give His lessons of instruction. He could there have a commanding view of the landscape and make use of objects and scenes with which those in humble life were familiar, to illustrate the important truths He made known to them. With His lessons of instruction He associated the works of God in nature. The birds which were caroling forth their songs without a care, the flowers of the valley glowing in their beauty, the lily that reposed in its purity upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated land, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun, tinting and gilding the heavens—all these He employed to impress His hearers with divine truth. He connected the works of God's finger in the heavens and upon the earth with the words of life He wished to impress upon their minds, that, as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, His lessons might be fresh in their memories.

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

Thus the landscape, the trees, the birds, the flowers of the valley, the hills, the lake, and the beautiful heavens were associated in their minds with sacred truths which would make them hallowed in

memory as they should look upon them after Christ's ascension to heaven.

When Christ taught the people, He did not devote the time to prayer. He did not enforce upon them, as did the Pharisees, long, tedious ceremonies and prayers. He taught His disciples how to pray: [581] "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. After this manner therefore pray ye."

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

But many offer prayer in a dry, sermonizing manner. These pray to men, not to God. If they were praying to God, and really understood what they were doing, they would be alarmed at their audacity; for they deliver a discourse to the Lord in the mode of prayer, as though the Creator of the universe needed special information upon general questions in relation to things transpiring in the world. All such prayers are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. They are made no account of in heaven. Angels of God are wearied with them, as well as mortals who are compelled to listen to them. [582]

Jesus was often found in prayer. He resorted to the lonely groves or to the mountains to make His requests known to His Father.

When the business and cares of the day were ended, and the weary were seeking rest, Jesus devoted the time to prayer. We would not discourage prayer, for there is far too little praying and watching thereunto. And there is still less praying with the Spirit and the understanding also. Fervent and effectual prayer is always in place, and will never weary. Such prayer interests and refreshes all who have a love for devotion.

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

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Chapter 71—How Shall We keep the Sabbath?

God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of His character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. After God had made the world in six days, He rested and sanctified and blessed the day upon which He rested from all His work which He had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, that, as he should look upon the earth beneath and the heavens above, he might reflect that God made all these in six days and rested upon the seventh; and that, as he should behold the tangible proofs of God's infinite wisdom, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker. [583]

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

[584]

During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors. How can children receive a more correct knowledge of God, and their minds be better impressed, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors, not in play, but in company with their parents? Let their young minds be associated with God in the beautiful scenery of nature, let their attention be called to the tokens of His love to man in His created works, and they will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe; but as they view the beautiful things which He has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard Him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that His prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show His power and authority, but that He has the happiness of His children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attraction, they are drawn to love Him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, to the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air. All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God.

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

[585]

All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. Yet they can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interesting our children. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can walk out with them in the open air; we can sit with them in the groves and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of

God, and can inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature.

The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than by devising means to impart proper instruction to their families and interesting them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God and what He requires of us in order to perfect Christian characters and attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children may look forward to it and have a welcome in their hearts for it.

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Chapter 72—Christian Recreation

[Reported as spoken before a company of about two hundred who were enjoying a season of recreation at Goguac Lake, near Battle Creek, Michigan, May, 1870.]

I have been thinking what a contrast would be seen between our gathering here today and such gatherings as they are generally conducted by unbelievers. Instead of prayer, and the mention of Christ and religious things, would be heard silly laughter and trifling conversation. Their object would be to have a general high time. It would commence in folly and end in vanity. We want to have these gatherings so conducted, and to so conduct ourselves, that we can return to our homes with a conscience void of offense toward God and man; a consciousness that we have not wounded nor injured in any manner those with whom we have associated, or had an injurious influence over them.

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

The occasion we are enjoying today is just according to my ideas of recreation. I have tried to give my *views* upon this subject, but they are better illustrated than expressed. I was on this ground about one year ago when there was a gathering similar to this. Nearly everything passed off very pleasantly then, but still some things were objectionable. Considerable jesting and joking were indulged

in by some. All were not Sabbathkeepers, and an influence was manifest that was not as pleasant as we could wish.

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

We believe that it is our privilege every day of our lives to glorify God upon the earth; that we are not to live in this world merely for our own amusement, merely to please ourselves. We are here to benefit humanity, to be a blessing to society. And if we should let our minds run in that low channel in which many who are seeking only vanity and folly permit their minds to run, how could we be a blessing to society, a benefit to our race and generation? We cannot innocently indulge in any amusement which will unfit us for the more faithful discharge of ordinary life duties. [587]

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

[588]

For this very reason Christ humbled Himself to take upon Him our nature, that by His own humiliation and suffering and sacrifice He might become a steppingstone to fallen men, that they might climb up upon His merits, and that through His excellence and virtue their efforts to keep God's law might be accepted of Him. There is no such thing here as coming down upon a level. We are seeking to plant our feet upon the elevated and exalted platform of eternal truth. We are seeking to become more like the heavenly angels, more pure in heart, more sinless, harmless, and undefiled.

We are seeking for purity and holiness of life, that we may at last be fitted for the heavenly society in the kingdom of glory; and the only means to attain this elevation of Christian character is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way for the exaltation of the human family. Some talk of the humiliation they endure and the sacrifice they make, because they adopt the truth of heavenly origin! It is true that the world do not accept the truth; unbelievers do not receive it. They may talk of those that have embraced the truth and sought the Saviour, and represent them as leaving everything, giving up everything, and making a sacrifice of everything that is worth retaining. But do not tell me this. I know better. My experience proves it to be otherwise. You need not tell me that we have to give up our dearest treasures and receive no equivalent. No, indeed! That Creator who planted the beautiful Eden for our first parents, and who has planted for us the lovely trees and flowers, and provided everything that is beautiful and glorious in nature for the human race to enjoy, designed that they should enjoy it. Then do not think that God wishes us to yield up everything which it is for our happiness here to retain. He requires us to give up only that which it would not be for our good and happiness to retain.

That God who has planted these noble trees and clothed them with their rich foliage, who has given us the brilliant and beautiful shades of the flowers, and whose lovely handiwork we see in all the realm of nature, does not design to make us unhappy; He does not design that we shall have no taste for, and take no pleasure in, these things. It is His design that we shall enjoy them and be happy in the charms of nature, which are of His own creating.

[589]

It is right that we should choose such places as this grove for seasons of relaxation and recreation. But while we are here it is not

to devote our attention to ourselves merely, and fritter away precious time in amusements which will encourage a disrelish for sacred things. We have not come here to indulge in jesting and joking, in foolish talk and senseless laughter. We here behold the beauties of nature. And what then? Shall we fall down and worship them? No, indeed. But as we behold these works of nature we should let the mind be carried up higher, to nature's God; let it be elevated to the Creator of the universe, and then adore the Creator who has made all these beautiful things for our benefit and happiness.

Many delight in lovely paintings and are ready to worship the talent which can produce a beautiful drawing, but where do those who devote their lives to this work obtain their designs? where do the artists get their ideas of things to put upon canvass? From nature's beautiful scenery—from nature, only from nature. Individuals devote the entire strength of their being, and bestow all their affections, upon their tastes in this direction. Many withdraw their minds from the beauties and glories of nature that our Creator has prepared for them to enjoy, and devote all the powers of their being to perfection of art; yet all these things are only imperfect copies from nature. Art can never attain the perfection seen in nature.

The Maker of all the beautiful things of nature is forgotten. I have seen many who would go into ecstasies over a picture of a sunset, while at the same time they could have the privilege of seeing an actual and glorious sunset almost every evening in the year. They can see the beautiful tints in which nature's invisible Master Artist has with divine skill painted glorious scenes on the shifting canvass of the heavens, and yet they carelessly turn from the Heaven-wrought picture to paintings of art, traced by imperfect fingers, and almost fall down and worship them. What is the reason of this? It is because the enemy is almost constantly seeking to divert the mind from God. When we present God and the religion of Christ, will they receive them? No, indeed. They cannot accept of Christ. What! they make the sacrifice they would have to make to receive Him? Not at all! But what is required? Simply the heart's best and holiest affections for Him who left the glory of the Father and came down to die for a race of rebels. He left His riches, His majesty, and His high command, and took upon Himself our nature, that He might make a way of escape—to do what? to humiliate you?

[590]

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

[591] Of what good would He deprive us? He would deprive us of the privilege of giving up to the natural passions of the carnal heart. We cannot get angry just when we please, and retain a clear conscience and the approval of God. But are we not willing to give this up? Will the indulgence of corrupt passions make us any happier? It is because it will not that restrictions are laid upon us in this respect. It will not add to our enjoyment to get angry and cultivate a perverse temper. It is not for our happiness to follow the leadings of the natural heart. And shall we be made better by indulging them? No; they will cast a shadow in our households and throw a pall over our happiness. Giving way to the natural appetites will only injure the constitution and tear the system to pieces. Therefore God would have us restrict the appetite, control the passions, and hold in subjection the entire man. And He has promised to give us strength if we will engage in this work.

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

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

Be not discouraged; be not fainthearted. Although you may have temptations, although you may be beset by the wily foe, yet if you have the fear of God before you, angels that excel in strength will be sent to your help, and you can be more than a match for the powers of darkness. Jesus lives. He died to make a way of escape for the fallen race, and He lives today to make intercession for us, that we may be exalted to His own right hand. Hope in God. The world is traveling the broad way; and as you travel in the narrow way, and have to contend with principalities and powers, and to meet the opposition of foes, remember that provision has been made for you. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty, and through Him you can conquer.

[592]

Come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you, and ye shall be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. What a promise is this! It is a pledge to you that you shall become members of the royal family, heirs of the heavenly kingdom. If a person is honored by, or becomes connected with, any of the monarchs of earth, how it goes the rounds of the periodicals of the day and excites the envy of those who think themselves less fortunate. But here is One who is King over all, the monarch of the universe, the Originator of every good thing; and He says to us: I will make you My sons and daughters; I will unite you to Myself; you shall become members of the royal family and children of the heavenly King.

Says Paul: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Why should we not do this, when we have such an inducement, the privilege of becoming children of the Most High, the privilege of calling the God of heaven our Father? Is not that enough? And do you call this depriving you of everything that is worth having? Is this giving up everything that

[593] is worth possessing? Let me be united to God and holy angels, for this is my highest ambition. You may have all the possessions of this world; but I must have Jesus; I must have a right to the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance. Let me enjoy the beauties of the kingdom of God. Let me delight in the paintings which His own fingers have colored. I may enjoy them. You may enjoy them. We may not worship them, but through them we may be directed to Him and behold His glory who made all these things for our enjoyment.

Again I say: Be of good courage. Trust in the Lord. Let not the enemy rob you of the promises. If you have separated yourselves from the world, God has said that He will be your Father, and you shall be His sons and daughters. Is not that enough? What greater inducement could be presented before you? Is there any great object in being a butterfly and having no substance or aim in life? Oh! let me stand on the platform of eternal truth. Give me immortal worth. Let me grasp the golden chain that is let down from heaven to earth, and let it draw me up to God and glory. This is my ambition; this is my aim. If others have no higher object than dress, if they can delight in outward display and satisfy their souls with bows and ribbons and fantastic things, let them enjoy these. But let me have the inward adorning. Let me be clothed with that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. And I recommend it to you, young gentlemen and ladies, for it is more precious in His sight than the gold of Ophir. It is this which makes a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. My sisters, and you young people, it will make you more precious in the sight of Heaven than fine gold, yea, than the golden wedge of Ophir. I recommend to you Jesus, my blessed Saviour. I adore Him; I magnify Him. Oh, that I had an immortal tongue, that I could praise Him as I desire! that I could stand before the assembled universe and speak in praise of His matchless charms!

[594] And while I adore and magnify Him, I want you to magnify Him with me. Praise the Lord even when you fall into darkness. Praise Him even in temptation. "Rejoice in the Lord always," says the apostle; "and again I say, Rejoice." Will that bring gloom and darkness into your families? No, indeed; it will bring a sunbeam. You will thus gather rays of eternal light from the throne of glory and scatter them around you. Let me exhort you to engage in this

work, scatter this light and life around you, not only in your own path, but in the paths of those with whom you associate. Let it be your object to make those around you better, to elevate them, to point them to heaven and glory, and lead them to seek, above all earthly things, the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, the riches which are imperishable.

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Chapter 73—An Impressive Dream

While at Battle Creek in August, 1868, I dreamed of being with a large body of people. A portion of this assembly started out prepared to journey. We had heavily loaded wagons. As we journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice; on the other was a high, smooth, white wall, like the hard finish upon plastered rooms.

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

[595] As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road down the steep precipice. As we did this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we should fall and be dashed in pieces on the rocks. We then cut the luggage from the horses, and it fell over the precipice. We continued on horseback, greatly fearing, as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance and fall. At such times a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way.

As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could no longer go with safety on horseback, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of another. At this point small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall; these we eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes, so we slipped them from our feet and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.

We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end.

Our danger of falling from the pathway increased. We pressed close to the white wall, yet could not place our feet fully upon the path, for it was too narrow. We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, exclaiming: "We have hold from above! We have hold from above!" The same words were uttered by all the company in the narrow pathway. As we heard the sounds of mirth and revelry that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war song and the dance song. We heard instrumental music and loud laughter, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway. Much of the time we were compelled to suspend our whole weight upon the cords, which increased in size as we progressed.

[596]

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

At length we came to a large chasm, at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size until they were as large as our bodies. Here we were for a time thrown into perplexity and distress. We inquired in fearful whispers: "To what is the cord attached?" My husband was just before me. Large drops of sweat were falling from his brow, the veins in his neck and temples were increased to double their usual size, and suppressed, agonizing groans came from his lips.

The sweat was dropping from my face, and I felt such anguish as I had never felt before. A fearful struggle was before us. Should we fail here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for nought.

[597] Before us, on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass, about six inches high. I could not see the sun; but bright, soft beams of light, resembling fine gold and silver, were resting upon this field. Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field. But could we succeed in reaching it? was the anxious inquiry. Should the cord break, we must perish. Again, in whispered anguish, the words were breathed: "What holds the cord?" For a moment we hesitated to venture. Then we exclaimed: "Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now." Still we were hesitating and distressed. The words were then spoken: "God holds the cord. We need not fear." These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with: "He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety."

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

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

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Chapter 74—Our Camp Meetings

There can be no influence so detrimental to a camp meeting, or any other gathering for religious worship, as much visiting and careless conversation. Frequently men and women assemble in companies, and engage in conversation upon common subjects which do not relate to the meeting. Some have brought their farms with them, others have brought their houses, and are laying their plans for building. Some are dissecting the characters of others and have no time or disposition to search their own hearts, to discover the defects in their own characters, that they may correct their wrongs and perfect holiness in the fear of God. If all who profess to be followers of Christ would improve the time out of meeting in conversing upon the truth, in dwelling upon the Christian's hope, in searching their own hearts, and in earnest prayer before God, pleading for His blessing, a much greater work would be accomplished than we have yet seen. Unbelievers, who falsely accuse those who believe the truth, would be convinced because of their "good conversation in Christ." Our words and actions are the fruit we bear; "wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." [598]

God gave direction to the Israelites to assemble before Him at set periods in the place which He should choose, and observe special days, wherein no unnecessary work was to be done, but the time was to be devoted to a consideration of the blessings which He had bestowed upon them. At these special seasons the manservant and maidservant, the stranger, the fatherless and widow—all were directed to rejoice that God had by His own wonderful power brought them from servile bondage to the enjoyment of freedom. And they were commanded not to appear before the Lord empty-handed. They were to bring tokens of their gratitude to God for His continual mercies and blessings bestowed upon them; they were to bring gifts, freewill offerings and thank offerings unto the Lord, as He had blessed them. These offerings were varied according to the donor's estimate of the blessings which he was privileged to enjoy.

Thus the characters of the people were plainly developed. Those who placed a high value upon the blessings which God bestowed upon them brought offerings in accordance with this appreciation of His blessings. Those whose moral powers were stupefied and benumbed by selfishness and idolatrous love of the favors received, rather than inspired by fervent love for their bountiful Benefactor, brought meager offerings. Thus their hearts were revealed. Besides these special religious feast days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly Passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. The Lord covenanted that, if they were faithful in the observance of His requirements, He would bless them in all their increase, and in all the works of their hands.

God requires no less of His people in these last days, in sacrifices and offerings, than He did of the Jewish nation. Those whom He has blessed with a competency, and even the widow and the fatherless, should not be unmindful of His blessings. Especially should those whom He has prospered render to Him the things that are His. They should appear before Him with a spirit of self-sacrifice and bring their offerings in accordance with the blessings He has bestowed upon them. But many whom God prospers manifest base ingratitude to Him. If His blessings rest upon them, and He increases their substance, they use these bounties as cords to bind them to the love of their possessions; they allow worldly business to take possession of their affections and of their entire being, and neglect devotion and religious privileges. They cannot afford to leave their business cares and come before God even once a year. They turn the blessings of God into a curse by serving their own temporal interests to the neglect of His requirements.

Men who possess thousands remain at home year after year, engrossed in their worldly cares and interests, and feel that they cannot afford to make the small sacrifice of attending the yearly gatherings to worship God. He has blessed them in basket and in store, and surrounded them with His benefits on the right hand and on the left; yet they withhold from Him the small offerings which He requires of them. They love to serve themselves. Their souls will be like the unrefreshed desert, without the dew or rain of heaven. The Lord has brought to them the precious blessing of His grace; He has delivered them from the slavery of sin and the bondage of

error, and has opened to their darkened understandings the glorious light of present truth. And shall these evidences of His love and mercy call forth no gratitude in return? Will those who profess to believe that the end of all things is at hand be blind to their own spiritual interests, and live for this world and this life alone? Do they expect their eternal interest to take care of itself? They cannot obtain spiritual strength without an effort on their part.

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

Let all who possibly can, attend these yearly gatherings. All should feel that God requires this of them. If they do not avail themselves of the privileges which He has provided for them to become strong in Him and in the power of His grace, they will grow weaker and weaker, and have less and less desire to consecrate all to Him. Come, brethren and sisters, to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus. He will come up to the feast; He will be present, and will do for you that which you need most to have done. Your farms should not be considered of greater value than the higher interests of the soul. All the treasures you possess, be they ever so valuable, would not be rich enough to buy you peace and hope, which would be infinite gain at the cost of all you have and the toils and sufferings of a lifetime. A strong, clear sense of eternal things, and a heart willing to yield all to Christ, are blessings of more value than all the riches and pleasures and glories of this world.

These camp meetings are of importance. They cost something. [601] The servants of God are wearing out their lives to help the people, while many of them appear as if they did not want help. For fear of losing a little of this world's gain, some let these precious privileges come and go as though they were of but very little importance. Let all who profess to believe the truth respect every privilege that God offers them to obtain clearer views of His truth and His requirements, and the necessary preparation for His coming. A calm, cheerful, and obedient trust in God is what He requires.

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

The object of a camp meeting is to lead all to separate from business cares and burdens, and devote a few days exclusively to seeking the Lord. We should occupy the time in self-examination, close searching of heart, penitential confession of sins, and renewing our vows to the Most High. If any come to these meetings for less worthy objects, we hope the character of the meetings will be such as to bring their minds to the proper objects.

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

I am convinced that none need to make themselves sick preparing for camp meeting, if they observe the laws of health in their cooking. If they make no cake or pies, but cook simple graham bread, and depend on fruit, canned or dried, they need not get sick in preparing for the meeting, and they need not be sick while at the meeting. None should go through the entire meeting without some warm

food. There are always cookstoves upon the ground, where this may be obtained.

Brethren and sisters must not be sick upon the encampment. If they clothe themselves properly in the chill of morning and night, and are particular to vary their clothing according to the changing weather, so as to preserve proper circulation, and strictly observe regularity in sleeping and in eating of simple food, taking nothing between meals, they need not be sick. They may be well during the meeting, their minds may be clear and able to appreciate the truth, and they may return to their homes refreshed in body and spirit. Those who have been engaged in hard labor from day to day now cease their exercise; therefore they should not eat their average amount of food. If they do, their stomachs will be overtaxed. We wish to have the brain power especially vigorous at these meetings and in the most healthy condition to hear the truth, appreciate it, and retain it, that all may practice it after their return from the meeting. If the stomach is burdened with too much food, even of a simple character, the brain force is called to the aid of the digestive organs. There is a benumbed sensation upon the brain. It is almost impossible to keep the eyes open. The very truths which should be heard, understood, and practiced are entirely lost through indisposition, or because the brain is almost paralyzed in consequence of the amount of food eaten.

[603]

I would advise all to take something warm into the stomach every morning at least. You can do this without much labor. You can make graham gruel. If the graham flour is too coarse, sift it, and while the gruel is hot, add milk. This will make a most palatable and healthful dish for the campground. And if your bread is dry, crumb it into the gruel, and it will be enjoyed. I do not approve of eating much cold food, for the reason that the vitality must be drawn from the system to warm the food until it becomes of the same temperature as the stomach before the work of digestion can be carried on. Another very simple yet wholesome dish is beans boiled or baked. Dilute a portion of them with water, add milk or cream, and make a broth; the bread can be used as in graham gruel.

I am gratified to see the progress that many have made in the health reform, yet am sorry to see so many behind. If any become sick upon our encampments, inquiry should be made as to the cause,

and note should be taken of the case. I am not willing that the reputation of our camp meetings should suffer by their being reported as the cause of making people sick. If a proper course be pursued at these important gatherings, they can be made a blessing to the bodily health as well as to the health of the soul.

Chapter 75—A Solemn Dream

[604]

On the night of April 30, 1871, I retired to rest much depressed in spirits. For three months I had been in a state of great discouragement. I had frequently prayed in anguish of spirit for relief. I had implored help and strength from God, that I might rise above the heavy discouragements that were paralyzing my faith and hope, and unfitting me for usefulness. That night I had a dream which made a very happy impression upon my mind. I dreamed that I was attending an important meeting at which a large company were assembled. Many were bowed before God in earnest prayer, and they seemed to be burdened. They were importuning the Lord for special light. A few seemed to be in agony of spirit; their feelings were intense; with tears they were crying aloud for help and light. Our most prominent brethren were engaged in this most impressive scene. Brother A was prostrated upon the floor, apparently in deep distress. His wife was sitting among a company of indifferent scorers. She looked as though she desired all to understand that she scorned those who were thus humiliating themselves.

I dreamed that the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose amid cries and prayers, and said: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. I feel urged to say to you that you must commence to work individually for yourselves. You are looking to God and desiring Him to do the work for you which He has left for you to do. If you will do the work for yourselves which you know that you ought to do, then God will help you when you need help. You have left undone the very things which God has left for you to do. You have been calling upon God to do your work. Had you followed the light which He has given you, then He would cause more light to shine upon you; but while you neglect the counsels, warnings, and reproofs that have been given, how can you expect God to give you more light and blessings to neglect and despise? God is not as man; He will not be trifled with.

[605]

I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the *Testimonies*. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the *Testimonies*. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.

The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the *Testimonies* simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse.

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

I said further: As the word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements. Here you are crying before God, in the anguish of your souls, for more light. I am authorized from God to tell you that not another ray of light through the *Testimonies* will

shine upon your pathway until you make a practical use of the light already given. The Lord has walled you about with light; but you have not appreciated the light; you have trampled upon it. While some have despised the light, others have neglected it, or followed it but indifferently. A few have set their hearts to obey the light which God has been pleased to give them.

Some that have received special warnings through testimony have forgotten in a few weeks the reproof given. The testimonies to some have been several times repeated, but they have not thought them of sufficient importance to be carefully heeded. They have been to them like idle tales. Had they regarded the light given they would have avoided losses and trials which they think are hard and severe. They have only themselves to censure. They have placed upon their own necks a yoke which they find grievous to be borne. It is not the yoke which Christ has bound upon them. God's care and love were exercised in their behalf; but their selfish, evil, unbelieving souls could not discern His goodness and mercy. They rush on in their own wisdom until, overwhelmed with trials and confused with perplexity, they are ensnared by Satan. When you gather up the rays of light which God has given in the past, then will He give an increase of light.

[607]

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

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

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

[608] I dreamed that quite a number instantly sprang to their feet and responded to the call. Others sat sullen, some manifested scorn and derision, and a few seemed wholly unmoved. One stood by my side and said: "God has raised you up and has given you words to speak to the people and to reach hearts as He has given to no other one. He has shaped your testimonies to meet cases that are in need of help. You must be unmoved by scorn, derision, reproach, and censure. In order to be God's special instrument, you should lean to no one, but hang upon Him alone, and, like the clinging vine, let your tendrils entwine about Him. He will make you a means through which to communicate His light to the people. You must daily gather strength from God in order to be fortified, that your surroundings may not dim or eclipse the light that He has permitted to shine upon His people through you. It is Satan's special object to prevent this light from coming to the people of God, who so greatly need it amid the perils of these last days.

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

"God has given you your testimony, to set before the backslider and the sinner his true condition and the immense loss he is sustaining by continuing a life of sin. God has impressed this upon you by opening it before your vision as He has to no other one now living, and according to the light He has given you will He hold you responsible. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith

the Lord of hosts.’ Lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins.”

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

[609]

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Chapter 76—Manners and Dress of Ministers

[Reported as spoken before the General Conference of 1871.]

[Ephesians 3:6, 7](#) : “That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.”

“Whereof I was made a minister,” not merely to present the truth to the people, but to carry it out in the life.

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.” [Verse 9](#). This does not refer merely to the words that roll off the tongue; it is not merely to be eloquent in speaking and praying; but it is to make known Christ, to have Christ in us, and make Him known to those that hear.

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

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

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

Black or dark material is more becoming to a minister in the desk and will make a better impression upon the people than would be made by a combination of two or three different colors in his apparel.

I was pointed back to the children of Israel anciently, and was shown that God had given specific directions in regard to the material and style of dress to be worn by those who ministered before Him. The God of heaven, whose arm moves the world, who sustains us and gives us life and health, has given us evidence that He may be honored or dishonored by the apparel of those who officiate before Him. He gave special directions to Moses in regard to everything connected with His service. He gave instruction even in regard to the arrangement of their houses and specified the dress which those should wear who were to minister in His service. They were to maintain order in everything and especially to preserve cleanliness.

[611]

Read the directions that were given to Moses to be made known to the children of Israel as God was about to come down upon the mount to speak in their hearing His holy law. What did He command Moses to have the people do? To be ready against the third day; for on the third day, said He, the Lord will come down upon the mount in the sight of all the people. They were to set bounds about the mount. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes." That great and mighty God who created the beautiful Eden and everything lovely in it is a God of order, and He wants order

and cleanliness with His people. That mighty God directed Moses to tell the people to wash their clothes lest there should be impurity in their clothing and about their persons as they came up before the Lord. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and they washed their clothes, according to the command of God.

And to show how careful they were to be in regard to cleanliness, Moses was to put a laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, "and put water there, to wash withal." And Moses and Aaron, and Aaron's sons that ministered before the Lord, were to wash their hands and their feet thereat when they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they went in before the Lord.

[612] This was the commandment of the great and mighty God. There was to be nothing slack and untidy about those who appeared before Him when they came into His holy presence. And why was this? What was the object of all this carefulness? Was it merely to recommend the people to God? Was it merely to gain His approbation? The reason that was given me was this, that a right impression might be made upon the people. If those who ministered in sacred office should fail to manifest care, and reverence for God, in their apparel and their deportment, the people would lose their awe and their reverence for God and His sacred service. If the priests showed great reverence for God by being very careful and very particular as they came into His presence, it gave the people an exalted idea of God and His requirements. It showed them that God was holy, that His work was sacred, and that everything in connection with His work must be holy; that it must be free from everything like impurity and uncleanness; and that all defilement must be put away from those who approach nigh to God.

From the light that has been given me, there has been a carelessness in this respect. I might speak of it as Paul presents it. It is carried out in will-worship and neglecting of the body. But this voluntary humility, this will-worship and neglecting of the body, is not the humility that savors of heaven. That humility will be particular to have the person and actions and apparel of all who preach the holy truth of God, right and perfectly proper, so that every item connected with us will recommend our holy religion. The very dress will be a recommendation of the truth to unbelievers. It will be a sermon in itself.

But things that are wrong often transpire in the sacred desk. One minister conversing with another in the desk before the congregation, laughing and appearing to have no burden of the work, or lacking a solemn sense of his sacred calling, dishonors the truth and brings the sacred down upon the low level of common things. The example tends to remove the fear of God from the people and to detract from the sacred dignity of the gospel which Christ died to magnify. According to the light that has been given me, it would be pleasing to God for ministers to bow down as soon as they step into the pulpit, and solemnly ask help from God. What impression would that make? There would be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon the people, and angels of God are brought very near. Ministers should look to God the first thing as they come into the desk, thus saying to all: God is the source of my strength. [613]

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

Here, according to the light that has been given me, there has been a manifest neglect among our people. Ministers sometimes stand in the desk with their hair in disorder, looking as if it had been untouched by comb and brush for a week. God is dishonored when those who engage in His sacred service are so neglectful of their appearance. Anciently the priests were required to have their garments in a particular style to do service in the holy place and minister in the priest's office. They were to have garments in accordance with their work, and God distinctly specified what these should be. The laver was placed between the altar and the congregation, that before they came into the presence of God, in the sight of the congregation, they might wash their hands and their feet. [614]

What impression was this to make upon the people? It was to show them that every particle of dust must be put away before they could go into the presence of God; for He was so high and holy that unless they did comply with these conditions, death would follow.

But look at the style of dress worn by some of our ministers at the present day. Some who minister in sacred things so arrange their dress upon their persons that, to some extent at least, it destroys the influence of their labor. There is an apparent lack of taste in color and neatness of fit. What is the impression given by such a manner of dress? It is that the work in which they are engaged is considered no more sacred or elevated than common labor, as plowing in the field. The minister by his example brings down sacred things upon a level with common things.

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

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

From the light I have had, the ministry is a sacred and exalted office, and those who accept this position should have Christ in their hearts and manifest an earnest desire to represent Him worthily before the people in all their acts, in their dress, in their speaking, and even in their manner of speaking. They should speak with reverence. Some destroy the solemn impression they may have made upon the people, by raising their voices to a very high pitch and hallooing and screaming out the truth. When presented in this manner, truth loses much of its sweetness, its force and solemnity. But if the voice is

toned right, if it has solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will produce a much better impression. This was the tone in which Christ taught His disciples. He impressed them with solemnity; He spoke in a pathetic manner. But this loud hallooing—what does it do? It does not give the people any more exalted views of the truth and does not impress them any more deeply. It only causes a disagreeable sensation to the hearers and wears out the vocal organs of the speaker. The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear.

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

[616]

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

Some of our preachers are killing themselves by long, tedious praying and loud speaking, when a lower tone would make a better impression and save their own strength. Now, while you go on regardless of the laws of life and health, and follow the impulse of the moment, do not charge it upon God if you break down. Many of you waste time and strength in long preliminaries and excuses

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

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

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

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

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

[618]

I never realized more than I do today the exalted character of the work, its sacredness and holiness, and the importance of our being fitted for it. I see the need in myself. I must have a new fitting up, a holy unction, or I cannot go any further to instruct others. I must know that I am walking with God. I must know that I understand the mystery of godliness. I must know that the grace of God is in my own heart, that my own life is in accordance with His will, that I am walking in His footsteps. Then my words will be true and my actions right.

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

[619]

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

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

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Chapter 77—Love of Gain

Dear Brother B,

I have twice commenced a testimony to you, but have been unable to complete it for want of time. I must delay no longer, for I feel sadly burdened over your case. I have written a testimony for several of the ministers, and as their cases recur to my mind, I fully realize that their condition is deplorable. Your case is not an exception. The love of gain, the love of money, is becoming prominent with many of our ministers who profess to be representatives of Christ. The example of some of these is such that the people are becoming discouraged. [620]

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

Brother B, your life has been almost a failure. You had talents of influence, but you have not improved them to the best account. You have failed in your family; you have let things go at loose ends there, and the same deficiencies are felt in the church. The Lord has given you light in regard to your neglect of duty in your family and the course which you should pursue to redeem the past. Your deficiencies were pointed out, but you did not feel the sinfulness of bringing children into the world to come up without proper training. You have excused their errors, their sins, and their wayward, reckless course, and have flattered yourself that they would come out right by and by.

Eli exactly represents your case. You have occasionally remonstrated with your children, saying: Why do ye so wickedly? but

you have not exercised your authority as a father, as a priest of the household, to command and have your words as law in your family. Your own, and also your wife's, mistaken fondness for your children has led you to neglect the solemn obligation devolving upon you as parents.

[621] A double obligation rested upon you, Brother B, as a minister of God, to rule well your own house and bring your children into subjection. But you have been pleased with their aptness and have excused their faults. Sin in them did not appear very sinful. You have displeased God and nearly ruined your children by your neglect of duty, and you have continued this neglect after the Lord had reproved and counseled you. The injury done to the cause of God by your influence as a family in the different places where you have lived has been greater than the good that you have accomplished. You have been blinded and deceived by Satan in regard to your family. You and your wife have made your children your equals. They have done about as they pleased. This has been a sad drawback to you in your work as a minister of Christ, and the neglect of your duty to bring your children into subjection has led to a still greater evil, which threatens to destroy your usefulness. You have been apparently serving the cause of God, while you have been serving yourself more. The cause of God has languished; but you have been earnestly figuring and planning how to advantage yourself, and souls have been lost through your neglect of duty. Had you, during your ministry, occupied a position to build up this work, had you set an example by serving the cause of God irrespective of your own interest, and become worn through your devotion to it, your course would be more excusable, though even then it would not be approved of God. But when your deficiencies have been so apparent in some things, and the cause of God has suffered greatly because of the example you have given by your neglect of duty in your family, it is grievous in the sight of God for you to be professedly serving the cause, yet making your own selfish interests prominent.

[622] In your labors you have frequently aroused an interest, and at the very point when you could work to the best advantage have allowed home interests to draw you away from the work of God. In many cases you have not perseveringly continued your efforts until you were satisfied that all had decided for or against the truth. It is not

wise generalship to commence a warfare against the power of Satan and ingloriously leave the field at the height of the conflict, thus giving the enemy opportunity to bind more securely those who were upon the point of leaving his ranks and taking their position on the side of Christ. That interest, once broken, can never again be raised. A few may be reached, but the greater portion can never be affected and their hearts softened by the presentation of the truth.

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

Some have really deprived themselves of means necessary for the comfort of their families, and some of even the necessaries of life, to help you, and you have received it. Paul writes to his Philippian brethren: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." He also writes to his Corinthian brethren: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Again, he mournfully says: "For all seek their own, not the things which are [623] Jesus Christ's."

The spirit which you cherish, of looking out for your selfish interest, is increasing upon you, and your conversation has been with covetousness. Paul admonishes his Hebrew brethren: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." You are sacrificing your reputation and your influence to an avaricious spirit. God's precious cause is reproached because

of this spirit that has taken hold of its ministers. You are blinded and do not see how peculiarly offensive to God these things are. If you have decided to go in and get all of the world you can, do so; but do not do it under cover of preaching Christ. Your time is either devoted to the cause of God or it is not. Your own interest has been paramount. The time that you should devote to the cause of God is devoted too much to your own personal concerns, and you receive, from the treasury of God, means that you do not earn. You are willing to receive means from those who are not as comfortable as yourself. You do not look on their side and have bowels of sympathy and compassion. You do not closely investigate to see whether those who help you can afford to do so. Frequently it would be more in place for you to help those from whom you receive help. You need to be a transformed man before the work of God can prosper in your hands. Your home and farm cares have occupied your mind. You have not given yourself to the work. As an excuse for being so much at home, you have said that your children needed your presence and care, and that you must be with them in order to carry out the light given you in vision. But, Brother B, have you done this? You excuse yourself by saying that your children are now beyond your control, too old for you to command. In this you mistake. None of your children are too old to respect your authority and obey your commands while they have the shelter of your roof. How old were Eli's sons? They were married men; and Eli, as a father and a priest of God, was required to restrain them.

[624]

But allowing that the two eldest are now beyond your control, they were not when God sent you the light that you were indulging them to their ruin; that you should discipline them. But you have three younger children who are walking in the way of sinners, disobedient, unthankful, unholy, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Your youngest son is following in the footsteps of his brother. What course are you pursuing toward him? Do you train him to habits of industry and usefulness? Are you taking up your fearfully neglected work and redeeming the past? Do you tremble at the word of God?

Your neglect at home is wonderful in one that has God's written word and also testimonies borne especially to you, showing your neglect. Your boy does as he pleases. You do not restrain him. You

have not educated and trained him to bear his share of the burdens of life. He is a bad boy because of your neglect. His life is a reproach to his father. You knew your duty, but you did it not. He has no convictions of the truth. He knows he can have his own way, and Satan controls his mind. You have made your children an excuse to keep you at home; but, Brother B, the things of this world have come first

The cause of God does not lie near your soul, and the example you have given the people of God is not worthy of imitation. In Minnesota they need laborers, not merely ministers who go from place to place when it is convenient. God's cause must have minutemen who will not be hindered from the work of God or the call of duty by any selfish or worldly interest. Minnesota is a large field, and many there are susceptible to the influence of the truth. Could the churches be brought into working order, thoroughly disciplined, a light would shine forth from them that would tell all through the state. You might have done tenfold more in Minnesota than you have done. But the world has come in between you and the work of God, and divided your interest. Selfish interest has come into your heart, and the power of the truth has been going out. There is need of a great change in you, that you may be brought into working order. You have accomplished but little real, earnest labor. Yet you have been in earnest to obtain all the means you could as your right. You have overreached; you have looked out for your own interest, and have advantaged yourself at the disadvantage of others. You have for some time been going in this direction; and unless you are checked, your influence is at an end. Moses Hull went in this direction. His conversation was with covetousness, and he gathered all the means that he could obtain. His hold of the truth was not strong enough to overcome his selfishness.

[625]

When B. F. Snook embraced the truth, he was very destitute. Liberal souls deprived themselves of conveniences, and even of some of the necessaries of life, to help this minister, whom they believed to be a faithful servant of Christ. They did all this in good faith, helping him as they would have helped their Saviour. But it was the means of ruining the man. His heart was not right with God; he lacked principle. He was not a truly converted man. The more he received, the greater was his desire for means. He gathered all

[626]

he could from his brethren, until he had been helped, through their liberalities, to a valuable home; then he apostatized, and became the bitterest enemy of the very ones who had been most liberal to him. This man will have to render an account for the means that he has taken from truehearted believers in the truth. He did not rob them, but the treasury of God. We wish him no evil; for “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” He has walked in the ways of his heart and in the sight of his eyes, but for all these things God will bring him into judgment. All the hidden things of darkness will then be brought to light, and the secret counsels of the heart shall be made manifest.

Brother B, you are not as these men. We would not compare you to them, but we would say: Beware of walking in their footsteps and of having your conversation with covetousness. This desire on the part of ministers to obtain means for selfish purposes is a snare to them, which, if they continue in, will prove their overthrow. As they get their eyes upon self, their interest in the prosperity of God’s cause, and their love for poor souls, become less and less. They do not lose their love for, and interest in, the truth at once. Their departure from the cause of right is so gradual and imperceptible that it is frequently difficult to tell the time when the change in them took place.

[627]

I think your course highly dangerous. You have not felt the necessity of heeding the light which God has given you, and arousing yourself to save your family, acquitting yourself as a father and priest of your household. You did not deny the light given, you did not rise up against it; but you neglected to carry it out because it was not convenient and agreeable to your feelings to do this. Therefore you were like Meroz. You came not up to the help of the Lord, although the matter was of so vital consequence as to affect the eternal interests of your children. You neglected your duty. In this respect you were a slothful servant. You have but little sense of how God regards the neglect of parents to discipline their children. Had you reformed here, you would have seen the necessity of the same effort to maintain discipline and order in the church. Your slackness in your family has been seen also in your labors in the church. You cannot build up the church until you are a transformed man.

The neglect of the light that God has given you has, in a degree, made you captive, subject to Satan's devices; therefore a door has been left open for him to gain access to you in other directions and make you a weak man. He sees that he has succeeded in blinding your eyes to the interests of your family by leading you to neglect the light which the Lord has given. Then Satan has beset you in another direction. He has excited your love of traffic, your love of gain; and thus your interest has been divided from the cause and work of God. The love of God and the truth is gradually becoming of less importance. Souls for whom Christ died are of less value to you than your temporal interests. If you continue to pursue this course, you will soon become jealous, sensitive, and envious, and will go away from the truth, as others have gone.

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

God calls for earnest, unselfish, disinterested laborers in His cause who will keep up the various branches of the work, such as obtaining subscribers for the periodicals, teaching them promptness in paying their dues, and encouraging brethren to keep up their systematic benevolence. Sacrifice, self-denial, toil, and disinterested benevolence characterized the life of Christ, who is our example in all things. The work and character of a true minister will be in accordance with the life of Christ. He laid aside His glory, His high command, His honor, and His riches, and humbled Himself to our

[628]

necessities. We cannot equal the example, but we should copy it. Love for souls for whom Christ made this great sacrifice should stimulate His ministers to exertion, to self-denial and persevering effort, that they may be co-workers with Him in the salvation of souls. Then will the works of God's servants be fruitful, for they will indeed be His instruments. The power of God will be seen upon them in the gracious influences of His Spirit. God would have you arouse and possess strength to surmount obstacles; be not easily discouraged; if need be, labor, as did the apostle Paul, in weariness, in painfulness, in watching, forgetting infirmities in the deep interest felt for souls for whom Christ died.

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

[629]

In their disappointment some of the brethren give up to a feeling of impatience and desperation, as they see the selfishness and covetousness manifested by their teachers. The people are in advance of many of their ministers. If the ministers manifest a spirit of self-sacrifice and a love for souls, means will not be withheld from the cause. Let the ministers come up to the exalted standard as representatives of Christ and we shall see the glory of God attending the presentation of truth, and souls will be constrained to acknowledge its clearness and power. The cause of God must be made primary.

My brother, you could do a good work. You have a knowledge of the truth and could be a great blessing to the cause of present truth if you were consecrated and sanctified to the work, having no selfish interest aside from it. God has committed to you a sacred trust, precious talents; and if you are found true to your trust, faithfully

improving your talents, you will not be ashamed when the Master shall come, requiring both principal and interest. It is not safe to slight, or in any sense disregard, the light which God has been pleased to give. You have something to do to bring yourself into a position where God can especially work for you.

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

[630]

God loves Sister Pierce. She is one of the timid, fearing ones, conscientious in the performance of her duty; and she will receive a reward when Jesus comes if she is faithful to the end. She has not made a display of her virtues, she has been retiring, one of the more silent ones; yet her life has been useful; she has blessed many by her influence. Sister Pierce has not much self-esteem and self-confidence. She has many fears, yet does not come under the head of the fearful and unbelieving, who will find no place in the kingdom of God. Those outside of the city are among the most confident, boastful, and apparently zealous ones who love in word, but not in deed and in truth. Their hearts are not right with God. His fear is not before them. The fearful and unbelieving, who are punished with the second death, are of that class who are ashamed of Christ

in this world. They are afraid to do right and follow Christ, lest they should meet with pecuniary loss. They neglect their duty, to avoid reproach and trials, and to escape dangers. Those who dare not do right because they will thus expose themselves to trials, persecution, loss, and suffering are cowards, and, with idolaters, liars, and all sinners, they are ripening for the second death.

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

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Chapter 78—The Cause in Vermont

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

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

[632]

In order to increase the numbers at Bordoville, brethren have moved there, leaving the places from which they came destitute of strength and influence to sustain meetings. This has pleased the enemies of God and the truth. Those brethren should have remained as faithful witnesses, their good works testifying to the genuineness

of their faith by exemplifying in their lives the purity and power of the truth. Their influence would convict and convert, or condemn.

[633] Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives. All who are consecrated to God are channels of light. God makes them instruments of righteousness to communicate to others the light of truth, the riches of His grace. Unbelievers may appear indifferent and careless; yet God is impressing and convicting their hearts that there is a reality in the truth. But when our brethren leave the field, give up the contest, and allow the cause of God to languish, before God says, "Let them alone," they will be only a burden to any church where they may move. Those whom they leave, who were convicted, frequently quiet their consciences with thinking that, after all, they were needlessly anxious; they decide that there is no reality in the profession made by Seventh-day Adventists. Satan triumphs to see the vine of God's planting either entirely uprooted or left to languish. It is not the purpose of God that His people should cluster together and concentrate their influence in a special locality.

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

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

The followers of Christ scattered throughout the world do not have a high sense of their responsibility and the obligation resting upon them to let their light shine forth to others. If there are but

one or two in a place, they can, although few in number, so conduct themselves before the world as to have an influence which will impress the unbeliever with the sincerity of their faith. The followers of Jesus are not meeting the mind and will of God if they are content to remain in ignorance of His word. All should become Bible students. Christ commanded His followers: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." Peter exhorts us: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

[634]

Many who profess to believe the truth for these last days will be found wanting. They have neglected the weightier matters. Their conversion is superficial, not deep, earnest, and thorough. They do not know why they believe the truth, only because others have believed it, and they take it for granted that it is the truth. They can give no intelligent reason why they believe. Many have allowed their minds to be filled with things of minor importance, and their eternal interest is made secondary. Their own souls are dwarfed and crippled in spiritual growth. Others are not enlightened or edified by their experience or by the knowledge which it was their privilege and duty to obtain. Strength and stability are with truehearted professors.

Christ and His crucifixion should become the theme of our thoughts and stir the deepest emotions of our souls. The true followers of Christ will appreciate the great salvation which He has wrought for them; and wherever He leads the way, they will follow. They will consider it a privilege to bear whatever burdens Christ may lay upon them. It is through the cross alone that we can estimate the worth of the human soul. Such is the value of men for whom Christ died that the Father is satisfied with the infinite price which He pays for the salvation of man in yielding up His own Son to die for their redemption. What wisdom, mercy, and love in its fullness are here manifested! The worth of man is known only by going to Calvary. In the mystery of the cross of Christ we can place an estimate upon man.

[635]

What a responsible position, to unite with the Redeemer of the world in the salvation of men! This work calls for self-denial, sacrifice, and benevolence, for perseverance, courage, and faith. But

those who minister in word and doctrine have not the fruit of the grace of God in their hearts and lives; they have not faith. This is why there are so small results from their labor. Many who profess to be ministers of Christ manifest a wonderful submission as they see the unconverted all around them going to perdition. A minister of Christ has no right to be at ease and sit down submissively in view of the fact that his presentation of the truth is powerless and souls are not stirred by it. He should resort to prayer, and should work and pray without ceasing. Those who submit to remain destitute of spiritual blessings, without earnest wrestling for those blessings, consent to have Satan triumph. Persistent, prevailing faith is necessary. God's ministers must come into closer companionship with Christ and follow His example in all things, in purity of life, in self-denial, in benevolence, in diligence, in perseverance. They should remember that a record will one day appear in evidence against them for the least omission of duty.

Brother D did not discern that in thus encouraging brethren to move to his place he was bringing burdens upon himself and into the church; he did not see that it would require much time and labor to keep them in a condition where they could be a help instead of a hindrance. He thought that if he could collect families at his place they would help compose a church and relieve him of care and burdens. But it has proved at Bordoville as at Battle Creek; the more the brethren moved there, the heavier were the burdens which fell upon the laborers who had the cause of God at heart.

[636] Men and women of varied minds and different organizations could cluster together and live in sweet harmony, if they would esteem others better than themselves, if they would love their neighbors as themselves, as Christ enjoined upon them.

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

Those whom Brother D really desired to have come to Bordoville were those whom he considered the best of society, capable of exerting a good influence. Just such men and women are wanted to

be stationed over the world as faithful sentinels, that those who are without God may be convinced that there is a power in the religion of Christ. Such men of influence are in truth the salt of the earth. God would not be pleased to have them congregate together and narrow down their sphere of usefulness. Reliable men are very scarce for the reason that the hearts of men are so devoted to their own selfish interests that they know no other.

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

[637]

Churches are not wholly composed of pure, sincere Christians. Not all the names that stand registered upon the church books are worthy to be there. The life and character of some as compared with others is as gold with worthless dross. It need not be so. Those who are valuable in life and influence have felt the importance of following Jesus closely, of making the life of Christ their study and example. This will require effort, meditation, and earnest prayer. It requires exertion to obtain the victory over selfishness and to make the interest of God's cause primary. Some have made the effort

and practiced close discipline of self, and they have gained precious victories. Those who consider their own interest primary, live for self. Their character in the sight of God is as worthless dross.

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

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

Some were ever jealous. Brother E was of this class. He has a peculiar stubbornness in his organization that leads him to persist in a wrong course because he thinks it would gratify his brethren for him to change and take an opposite course. At times, when he feels just like it, he is ready to do anything in his power to advance the cause of God. But he loves so well to have his own way that he will let the precious cause of God suffer rather than give up his will and his way. Brother E is not a man who can be depended upon. He is subject to the temptations of Satan and is frequently under his control. He has a selfish, unsubdued heart. He is fitful, impulsive, now hating, then loving. At times he is kind, at other times jealous, envious, and very selfish. He cannot perfect Christian character until he resists temptation, subdues his own stubborn will, and cherishes a spirit of humility, a willingness to see and confess his errors. He has been, at times, true and earnest. Then a wave would carry him in an opposite direction, and he would cherish jealousy, envy, and distrust.

Self and selfish interest were paramount, he was full of faultfinding, and suspicious that others did not appreciate him, but wished to injure him. Brother E needs a thorough conversion. It is not enough for men to profess the truth. They may acknowledge the whole truth, and yet know nothing—have no experimental knowledge in their daily life—of the sanctifying influence of the truth upon the heart and life, or of the power of true godliness.

[639]

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

Brother F can be more useful in his life than he now is or has ever been. God has not called him especially to minister in word and doctrine. He is not qualified for this position, yet he can do errands for the Lord and be a help in the meetings. If he lives in the light himself he can reflect light to others. He can be a blessing to others; he can speak words of comfort and encouragement to the desponding. But in order to do this, he should encourage a more hopeful, cheerful spirit himself, refusing to look upon the dark side or to talk unbelief. He should express cheerfulness, hope, and courage in his words and even in the tones of his voice.

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

[640]

The world is full of dissatisfied spirits who overlook the happiness and blessings within their reach, and are continually seeking for happiness and satisfaction that they do not realize. They are

constantly on the stretch for some expected, far-off good greater than they possess, and are ever in a state of disappointment. They cherish unbelief and ingratitude, in that they overlook the blessings right in their pathway. The common, everyday blessings of life are unwelcome to them, as was the manna to the children of Israel.

Sister G is addressed by Christ: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." The words, deportment, and general example of Sister G teach a lesson entirely different from that taught by our Lord. She loses much in overlooking the present blessings within her grasp and uneasily searching for happiness. Her efforts are unrewarded, and her fruitless search makes great unhappiness for herself and for all who associate with her. Her unrest, her anxious, troubled spirit, is expressed in her countenance and casts a shadow. This gloom, unbelief, and discontent encourages the temptations of the enemy. By her continual distrust, by borrowing trouble, she casts a shadow instead of shedding a sunbeam.

[641] Brother G should be patient and forbearing, and carefully shield her from unnecessary burdens; for she is not prepared to bear them. She, in her turn, should watch against the incoming foe, should take up her life burdens uncomplainingly and bear them with cheerfulness, sweetening them all with gratitude because they are no heavier. Brother G is prone to look upon the dark side. He should hold himself in readiness to do the will of God and use to the very best advantage the influence which God has given him. He should cheerfully perform the duties of today and not borrow tomorrow's trouble to make himself miserable over. He has not to perform the duties of next week, but the work and duties which the day brings.

Brother and Sister G should unite their influence in saying: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." It is a misfortune to borrow the trouble of next week to embitter the present week. When real trouble comes, God will fit every meek and lowly one to bear it. When His providence permits it to come, He will provide help to endure it. Fretting and murmuring cloud and stain the soul, and shut out the bright sunlight from the pathway of others.

Brother G might have pursued a course to help Brother H and at the same time help himself; but selfishness deprived Brother H of advantages, and Brother G himself was disadvantaged through fear that he would advantage others. Brother G has not loved his neighbor as himself, and his supreme selfishness in many things has deprived him of good and shut away from him the blessing of God. In the end, it does not profit any man to be selfish; for God marks it all and will render to every man according to his works. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly."

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

[642]

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

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

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

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

Brother J. N. Andrews has erred here. The time and strength which he has devoted to correspondence with his brethren, answering their private letters of inquiry, should have been given to the special interests of the work of God at large. But few realize the responsibilities resting upon the few ministers who bear the burdens in this cause. The brethren frequently call these men from the work to attend to their little matters, or to settle some church trial, which they can and should attend to themselves. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not;

and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.” [644]
He must be earnest and persevering. If he is irresolute, doubting continually whether the Lord will indeed do as He has promised, he will receive nothing.

Many look to their ministers to bring the light from God to them, seeming to think this a cheaper way than to be to the trouble of going to God for it themselves. Such lose much. If they would daily follow Christ and make Him their guide and counselor, they might obtain a clear knowledge of His will, and thus be gaining a valuable experience. For want of this very experience, brethren professing the truth walk in the sparks of others’ kindling; they are unacquainted with the Spirit of God and have not a knowledge of His will, and are therefore easily moved from their faith. They are unstable, because they trusted in others to obtain an experience for them. Ample provisions have been made for every son and daughter of Adam to obtain individually a knowledge of the divine will, to perfect Christian character, and to be purified through the truth. God is dishonored by that class who profess to be followers of Christ and yet have no experimental knowledge of the divine will or of the mystery of godliness.

Brother D has had a multiplicity of home cares. The increase of numbers in the church has not lessened his burdens. The increase of numbers in his family has been too heavy a tax upon himself and his family, and these things have been a hindrance to his becoming a successful laborer. He has become rusty in the work of God and needs burnishing. His testimony needs to be vitalized by the Spirit and power of God. His brethren in Bordoville, who have not a special work to do in laboring in word and doctrine, should be awake to see where others need help, and should help them. Many close their eyes to the good which they have opportunity to do for others, and by their neglect they lose the blessing which they might obtain. Brother D has been left to bear burdens that his brethren [645] should have considered it their duty and privilege to bear.

Our work in this world is to live for others’ good, to bless others, to be hospitable; and frequently it may be only at some inconvenience that we can entertain those who really need our care and the benefit of our society and our homes. Some avoid these necessary burdens. But someone must bear them; and because the brethren

in general are not lovers of hospitality, and do not share equally in these Christian duties, a few who have willing hearts, and who cheerfully make the cases of those who need help their own, are burdened. A church should take special care to relieve its ministers of extra burdens in this direction. The ministers who are actively engaged in the cause of God, laboring for the salvation of souls, have continual sacrifices to make.

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

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

Ministers should be examples to the flock. They should manifest an undying love for souls and the same devotion to the cause which they desire to see in the people. The ministers in Vermont have made a mistake in their labor. They have passed over the same ground again and again to help the churches, when frequently they needed labor bestowed upon themselves, to bring them into a position where God could bless their labors and make them fruitful. There has not

been one efficient, thorough laborer, fully qualified to keep up all parts of the work, in Vermont.

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

[647]

It is little things which test the character. It is the unpretending acts of daily self-denial, with cheerfulness and gentleness, that God smiles upon. We should not live for ourselves, but for others. We should be a blessing by our forgetfulness of self and our thoughtfulness of others. We should cherish love, forbearance, and fortitude.

Very few realize the benefits of the care, responsibility, and experience that children bring to the family. Many have large families coming up without discipline; the parents are neglecting a precious trust and sacred duty, which, if faithfully performed in the fear of God, would obtain, not only for their children, but for themselves, a fitness for the kingdom of heaven. But a childless house is a desolate place. The hearts of the inmates are in danger of becoming selfish, of cherishing a love for their own ease, and consulting their own desires and conveniences. They gather sympathy to themselves, but have little to bestow upon others. Care and affection for dependent children removes the roughness from our natures, makes us

tender and sympathetic, and has an influence to develop the nobler elements of our character. Many are diseased physically, mentally, and morally, because their attention is turned almost exclusively to themselves. They might be saved from stagnation by the healthy vitality of younger and varying minds, and the restless energy of children.

[648] Brother J is aged. No weighty responsibility should now rest upon him. He has displeased God in his misapplied love for his children. He has had too much anxiety to help them pecuniarily that he might not offend them. In order to please, he has injured them. They are not wise and faithful in the management of means, even from the worldling's standpoint. Viewed from a religious standpoint, they are very deficient. They have not conscientious scruples in regard to religious things. They do not adorn society by their position and influence in the world, nor do they adorn the cause of God by pure Christian morals and virtuous acts in the service of Christ. They have not been trained to habits of self-denial and self-reliance as their safeguards in life. Here is the great sin resting upon parents. They do not discipline their children and do not train them up for God. They do not teach them self-government, stability of character, and the necessity of a resolute, well-directed will. Most children, in this age, are left to come up. They are not taught the necessity of developing their physical and mental powers for some good purpose, to bless society with their influence, to be well qualified to adorn the Christian life, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

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

These errors upon the part of Brother J show a great lack of heavenly wisdom and have, in a great degree, disqualified him for the solemn work resting upon the faithful minister of Christ. What

can Brother J plead before God when the Master shall bid him give an account of his stewardship? He has been led by the unconsecrated minds of his children and has not felt the necessity of seeking counsel and advice from God's servants who were standing in the light. He has been led by a perverted sympathy and has failed in judgment. He has been moving like a blind man. His course has injured himself and the cause of God. [649]

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

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

Neither Brother nor Sister K has an experience in sacrificing for the truth, in being rich in good works, laying up their treasures in heaven. Their sympathy, care, and patience have not been called into exercise by dependent, loving children. They have consulted their own selfish convenience. Their hearts have not been a well-spring sending forth the living streams of tenderness and affection. In blessing others by kindly words of love and acts of mercy and benevolence, they would realize a blessing themselves. They have been too narrow in their sphere of usefulness. Unless such become [650]

transformed in mind and being, and are renewed by the spirit of Christ, they cannot become thorough, efficient workmen in the Redeemer's cause. His life is the example for Christians. Self-sacrifice and disinterested benevolence should characterize their lives. Self-interest is too prominent. Oh, how little does Brother K know of what it is to labor for God, to lift the cross of Christ and walk in the footsteps of the self-denying Redeemer!

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

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

These zealous searchers after truth risked their capital of strength and their all in the work of defending the truth and spreading the light. Link after link of the precious chain of truth has been searched out, until it stands forth in beautiful harmony, uniting in a perfect chain. These men of investigating minds have brought out arguments and made them so plain that a schoolboy may understand them. How easy now for men to become teachers of the truth, while they shun self-sacrifice and self-denial.

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

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

[652]

The earth is the Lord's, and all the treasures it contains. The cattle upon a thousand hills are His. All the gold and silver belongs

[653] to Him. He has entrusted His treasures to stewards, that with them they may advance His cause and glorify His name. He did not entrust these treasures to men that they might use them to exalt and glorify themselves, and have power to oppress those who were poor in this world's treasure. God does not receive the offerings of any because He needs them and cannot have glory and riches without them, but because it is for the interest of His servants to render to God the things which are His. The freewill offerings of the humble, contrite heart He will receive, and will reward the giver with the richest blessings. He receives them as the sacrifice of grateful obedience. He requires and accepts our gold and silver as an evidence that all we have and are belongs to Him. He claims and accepts the improvement of our time and of our talents as the fruit of His love existing in our hearts. To obey is better than sacrifice. Without pure love the most expensive offering is too poor for God to accept.

Many have their hearts so fixed upon their earthly treasure that they do not discern the advantage of laying up for themselves treasures in heaven. They do not realize that their freewill offerings to God are not enriching Him, but themselves. Christ counsels us to lay up treasures in heaven. For whom? For God, that He may be enriched? Oh, no! The treasures of the entire world are His, and the indescribable glory and priceless treasures of heaven are all His own, to give to whom He will. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Men whom God has made stewards are so infatuated by the riches of this world that they do not discern that by their selfishness and covetousness they are not only robbing the Lord in tithes and offerings, but robbing themselves of eternal riches. They could be daily adding to their heavenly treasure by doing the very work that the Lord has left them to do, and which He has entrusted them with means to carry out. The Master would have them watch for opportunities to do good and, while they live, apply their means themselves to aid in the salvation of their fellow men and in the advancement of His cause in its various branches. In so doing they only do that which God requires of them; they render to God the things that are His. Many willingly close their eyes and hearts, lest they should see and feel the wants of the Lord's cause, and by helping in its advancement should lessen their increase by detracting from the interest or the principal. Some feel that what they give to advance

[654]

the cause of God is really lost. They consider so many dollars gone and feel dissatisfied unless they can immediately replace them so that their earthly treasure may not decrease. They exercise closeness and even sharpness in dealing with their brethren and also with worldlings. They do not scruple to overreach in deal in order to advantage themselves and gain a few dollars.

Some, fearing they will suffer loss of earthly treasure, neglect prayer and the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God, that they may have more time to devote to their farms or their business. They show by their works which world they place the highest estimate upon. They sacrifice religious privileges, which are essential to their spiritual advancement, for the things of this life and fail to obtain a knowledge of the divine will. They come short of perfecting Christian character and do not meet the measurement of God. They make their temporal, worldly interests first, and rob God of the time which they should devote to His service. Such persons God marks, and they will receive a curse rather than a blessing. Some place their means beyond their control by putting it into the hands of their children. Their secret motive is to place themselves in a position where they will not feel responsible to give of their property to spread the truth. These love in word, but not in deed and in truth. They do not realize that it is the Lord's money they are handling, not their own.

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

Parents should have great fear in entrusting children with the talents of means that God has placed in their hands, unless they have the surest evidence that their children have greater interest in, love for, and devotion to, the cause of God than they themselves

possess, and that these children will be more earnest and zealous in forwarding the work of God, and more benevolent in carrying forward the various enterprises connected with it which call for means. But many place their means in the hands of their children, thus throwing upon them the responsibility of their own stewardship, because Satan prompts them to do it. In so doing they effectually place that means in the enemy's ranks. Satan works the matter to suit his own purpose and keeps from the cause of God the means which it needs, that it may be abundantly sustained. The efforts made to get the truth before the people are not half as thorough and extensive as they should be. Not a fiftieth part is now being done to extend the truth that might be done by scattering publications and bringing within the sound of the truth all that can be induced to come.

[656] The probation of many is closing. Satan is daily gathering his harvest of souls. Some are making final decisions against the truth, and many are dying without a knowledge of it. Their minds are unenlightened, and their sins unrepented of; and yet men professing godliness are hoarding up their earthly treasures and directing their efforts to gaining more. They are insensible to the condition of men and women who come within the sphere of their influence and who are perishing for want of knowledge. Well-directed labor, bestowed in love and humility, would do much to enlighten and convert their fellow men; but the example of many who might do great good is virtually saying: Your souls are of less value to me than my worldly interests.

Many love the truth a little, but they love this world more. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Spiritual things are sacrificed for temporal. The fruit that such bear is not unto holiness, and their example will not be such as to convict sinners and convert them from the error of their ways to the truth. They allow souls to go to perdition, when they might save them if they would make as earnest efforts in their behalf as they have made to secure the treasures of this life. To obtain more of the things of the world, which they do not really need and which only increase their responsibility and condemnation, many labor on the high-pressure plan, and peril health and spiritual enjoyment, and the peace, comfort, and happiness of their families. They let souls go to perdition around them because they fear that it will require a little of their time and means to save

them. Money is their god. They decide that it will not pay to sacrifice their means to save souls.

The one to whom is entrusted one talent is not responsible for five, or for two, but for the one. Many neglect to lay up for themselves a treasure in heaven by doing good with the means that God has lent them. They distrust God and have a thousand fears in regard to the future. Like the children of Israel they have evil hearts of unbelief. God provided this people with abundance, as their needs required; but they borrowed trouble for the future. They complained and murmured in their travels that Moses had led them out to kill them and their children with hunger. Imaginary want closed their eyes and hearts from seeing the goodness and mercies of God in their journeyings, and they were ungrateful for all His bounties. So also are the distrustful, professed people of God in this age of unbelief and degeneracy. They fear that they may come to want, or that their children may become needy, or that their grandchildren will be destitute. They dare not trust God. They have no genuine faith in Him who has entrusted them with the blessings and bounties of life, and who has given them talents to use to His glory in advancing His cause. [657]

Many have such a constant care for themselves that they give God no opportunity to care for them. If they should be a little short at times, and be brought into strait places, it would be the best thing for their faith. If they would calmly trust in God, and wait for Him to work for them, their necessity would be God's opportunity; and His blessing in their emergency would increase their love for Him and lead them to prize their temporal blessings in a higher sense than they have ever done before. Their faith would increase, their hope would brighten, and cheerfulness would take the place of gloom and doubts and murmuring. The faith of very many does not grow for want of exercise.

That which is eating out the vitals of God's people is the love of money and friendship with the world. It is the privilege of God's people to be bright and shining lights in the world, to increase in the knowledge of God, and to have a clear understanding of His will. But the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the seed sown in their hearts, and they bear no fruit to His glory. They profess faith, but it is not a living faith because it is not sustained

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

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

[659] They place in the hands of the unfaithful children the very things that will prove a snare to them and that will be obstacles in the way of their making a surrender to God. While they make large presents to the unbelieving children they make very stinted gifts to those who are of the same faith with themselves. This very fact should startle the men of means who have pursued this course. They should see that the deceitfulness of riches has perverted their judgment. If they could see the influence operating upon their minds they would understand that Satan had these matters very much according to his own purposes and plans. Instead of God's controlling the mind and sanctifying the judgment, it is controlled by exactly the opposite power. The ones who have been with them in the faith they sometimes even neglect, and are frequently very close and exacting in all their deal with them; while they have an open hand to the

unbelieving, world-loving children, who they know will not use the means they have placed in their hands, to advance the cause of God. The Lord requires that those to whom He has lent talents of means make a right use of them, having the advancement of His cause prominent. Every other consideration should be inferior to this.

The talents of means, be they five, two, or one, are to be improved. Those who have a large amount of means are responsible for a large number of talents. But the comparatively poor men are not released from responsibility. Those who have but little of this world are represented as having one talent. Yet they are in just as great danger of having too great love for that little, and of selfishly retaining it from the cause of God, as are the more wealthy. They do not sense their danger. They apply the stirring reproofs addressed in the word of God to the lovers of this world, to the rich alone, while they themselves may be in even greater danger than the more wealthy. Whether they have much or little, all are required to put their talents out to the exchangers, that when the Master comes He may receive His own with usury. They are also required to maintain a consecration to God and an unselfish interest in His cause and work. Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, they are to believe His promise that all things shall be added. In comparison with every other consideration the salvation of the souls of their fellow men should be primary, but this is not generally the case. If there is a neglect anywhere, it is the cause of God that must suffer. God has lent men talents, not to foster their pride, or to excite in them envy, but to be used by them to His glory. He has made these men agents to disperse the means with which to carry forward the work of the salvation of men. Christ has given them an example in His life. He left all His heavenly riches and splendor, and for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich. It is not the plan of God to rain down means from heaven in order that His cause may be sustained. He has entrusted, or deposited, ample means with men, that there shall be no lack in any department of His work. He proves those who profess to love Him by placing means in their hands, and then tries them to see if they love the gift better than the Giver. God will reveal, in time, the true feelings of the heart.

[660]

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

[661] In His word the Lord has plainly revealed His will to those who have riches. But because His direct commands have been slighted, He mercifully presents their dangers before them through the *Testimonies*. He does not give new light, but calls their attention to the light that has already been revealed in His word. If those who profess to love the truth are holding on to their riches and, failing to obey the word of God, do not seek opportunities to do good with that which He has entrusted to them, He will come closer and will scatter their means. He will come near to them with judgments. He will in various ways scatter their idols. Many losses will be sustained. The souls of the selfish shall be unblest. But “the liberal soul shall be made fat.” Those who honor God, He will honor.

The Lord made a covenant with Israel that, if they would obey His commandments, He would give them rain in due season, the land should yield her increase, and the trees of the field should yield their fruit. He promised that their threshing should reach unto the vintage and the vintage unto the sowingtime, and that they should eat their bread to the full and dwell in their land safely. He would make their enemies to perish. He would not abhor them, but would walk with them and would be their God, and they should be His people. But if they disregarded His requirements, He would deal

with them entirely contrary to all this. His curse should rest upon them in place of His blessing. He would break their pride of power and would make the heavens over them as iron and the earth as brass. “Your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. And if ye walk contrary unto Me,” “then will I also walk contrary unto you.”

Those who are selfishly withholding their means need not be surprised if God’s hand scatters. That which should have been devoted to the advancement of the work and cause of God, but which has been withheld, may be entrusted to a reckless son, and he may squander it. A fine horse, the pride of a vain heart, may be found dead in the stable. Occasionally a cow may die. Losses of fruit or other crops may come. God can scatter the means He has lent to His stewards, if they refuse to use it to His glory. Some, I saw, may have none of these losses to remind them of their remissness in duty, but their cases may be the more hopeless.

[662]

Jesus warned the people: “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” He then addressed His disciples: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.”

These warnings are given for the benefit of all. Will they improve the warnings given? Will they be benefited? Will they regard these striking illustrations of our Saviour and shun the example of the foolish rich man? He had an abundance; so have many who profess to believe the truth, and they are acting over the case of the poor,

foolish rich man. Oh, that they would be wise and feel the obligations resting upon them to use the blessings that God has given them in blessing others, instead of turning them into a curse. God will say to all such, as to the foolish rich man: "Thou fool."

[663] Men act as though they were bereft of their reason. They are buried up in the cares of this life. They have no time to devote to God, no time to serve Him. Work, work, work, is the order of the day. All about them are required to labor upon the high-pressure plan, to take care of large farms. To tear down and build greater is their ambition, that they may have wherewith to bestow their goods. Yet these very men who are weighed down with their riches pass for Christ's followers. They have the name of believing that Christ is soon to come, that the end of all things is at hand; yet they have no spirit of sacrifice. They are plunging deeper and deeper into the world. They allow themselves but little time to study the word of life and to meditate and pray. Neither do they give others in their family, or those who serve them, this privilege. Yet these men profess to believe that this world is not their home, that they are merely pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, preparing to move to a better country. The example and influence of all such is a curse to the cause of God. Hollow hypocrisy characterizes their professed Christian lives. They love God and the truth just as much as their works show, and no more. A man will act out all the faith he has. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The heart is where the treasure is. Their treasure is upon this earth, and their hearts and interests are also here.

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

[664] A consistent faith is rare among rich men. Genuine faith, sustained by works, is seldom found. But all who possess this faith will be men who will not lack influence. They will copy after Christ; they will possess that disinterested benevolence, that interest in the work of saving souls, that He had. The followers of Christ should value souls as He valued them. Their sympathies should be with

the work of their dear Redeemer, and they should labor to save the purchase of His blood, at any sacrifice. What are money, houses, and lands in comparison with even one soul?

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

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

A flattering prospect may be presented to invest in patent rights or some other supposed brilliant enterprise around which Satan throws a bewitching enchantment. The prospect of getting more money, fast and easily, allures them. They reason that, although they had resolved to put this money into the treasury of God, they will use it in this instance, and will greatly increase it, and will then give a larger sum to the cause. They can see no possibility of a failure. Away goes the means out of their hands, and they soon learn, to their regret, that they have made a mistake. The brilliant prospects have faded. Their expectations are not realized. They were deceived. Satan outgeneraled them. He was more shrewd than they, and he managed

[665]

to get their means into his ranks and thus deprive the cause of God of that which should have been used to sustain it in extending the truth and saving souls for whom Christ died. They lost all they had invested, and robbed God of that which they should have rendered to Him.

Some who have been entrusted with only one talent excuse themselves because they have not as large a number of talents as those to whom are entrusted many talents. Like the unfaithful steward they hide the one talent in the earth. They are afraid to render to God that which He has entrusted to them. They engage in worldly enterprises, but invest little, if anything, in the cause of God. They expect that those who have large talents will bear the burden of the work, while they feel that they are not responsible for its advancement and success.

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

Many who have but little of this world are represented by the man with one talent. They are afraid to trust God. They are afraid that He will require something which they claim to be their own. They hide their talent in the earth, fearing to invest it anywhere, lest they will be called to give back the improvements to God. Instead of putting the talent out to the exchangers, as God required, they bury it, or hide it, where neither God nor man can be benefited by it. Many who profess to love the truth are doing this very work.

They are deceiving their own souls, for Satan has blinded their eyes. In robbing God, they have robbed themselves more. Because of covetousness and an evil heart of unbelief, they have deprived themselves of the heavenly treasure. Because they have but one talent, they are afraid to trust it with God, and so hide it in the earth. They feel relieved of responsibility. They love to see the truth progress, but do not think that they are called upon to practice self-denial and aid the work by their own individual effort and by their means, although they have not a large amount.

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

[667]

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

God gives to every man his work, and He expects returns according to the various trusts bestowed. He does not require the increase of ten talents from the man to whom He has given only one talent. He does not expect the man of poverty to give alms as the man who

has riches. He does not expect of the feeble and suffering the activity and strength which the healthy man has. The one talent, used to the best account, God will accept, "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

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

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

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

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

who of us will have the inexpressible joy of seeing the sheaves we have gathered, as a recompense of our fidelity and our unselfish use of the talents the Lord has placed in our hands to use for His glory?

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

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

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

[670]

His mind was aroused in reference to the subject of his health. He concentrated the strength of his mind on this point. He and his symptoms were the principal subjects of conversation. He was particular to go through with the course he had established in his mind; and, when seeking his own accommodation, he failed to consider how inconvenient he made it for others. His mind has been,

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

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

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

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

It would be greatly for the interest of Brother D to cultivate simplicity and ease in his writings. He needs to avoid dwelling at length upon any point that is not of vital importance; and even the most essential, manifest truths, those which are of themselves clear and plain, may be so covered up with words as to be made cloudy and indistinct.

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

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

[672]

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

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

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

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

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

We are living in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and our nice and exact plans cannot always be carried out to the advantage of all. If we stand back upon our dignity we shall fail to help those who need help the most. The servants of Christ should accommodate themselves to the varied conditions of the people. They cannot carry out exact rules if they meet the cases of all. Labor will have to be varied to meet the people where they are. "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

[674] The apostle counsels his Corinthian brethren: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking

mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” [1 Corinthians 10:31-33](#). “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” [1 Corinthians 9:19](#). “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” [Verse 22](#). “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me.” [Romans 15:1-3](#).

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

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

[675]

Brother and Sister L should have confidence in the work for these last days and should be perfecting Christian character, that they may receive the eternal reward when Jesus comes. Brother L is failing in physical and mental vigor. He is becoming incapable of bearing

much responsibility. He should counsel with his brethren who are discreet and faithful.

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

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

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

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

for himself a good foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal life. It is not safe for him to follow his failing judgment. He should counsel with experienced brethren, and seek wisdom of God, that he may do up his work well. He should now be really in earnest, providing himself “bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.”

Brother M has made a mistake in his domestic life. He has not, in words, expressed that affection for his wife that it was his duty to express. He has failed to cultivate true Christian courtesy and politeness. He has failed to be at all times as kind and considerate of her wishes and comfort as was his duty. Her not uniting in faith with him has led to much unhappiness for both. Brother M has not respected his wife’s judgment and counsel as he should. In many respects her judgment and discernment are better than his. If consulted, she could, by her clearer perception and keener discernment, help him essentially in his business matters, in dealing with his neighbors. He should not stand back upon his dignity, feeling that he understands it all himself. If he would be advised by his wife, and by his kindly actions would show a regard for her, and a desire to please her, he would be doing nothing less than his duty. If her advice conflicts with his duty to God and His claims upon him, then he can choose to differ, and in the most quiet manner possible give as his reason that he cannot sacrifice his faith or his principles. It would be for Brother M’s interest in temporal matters to have his wife’s judgment and counsel. [677]

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

Brother M has chosen his own way, and has had a set will, savoring of stubbornness. He has frequently been unyielding. This should not be. He professes to believe a truth which has a sanctifying, softening, refining influence; his wife does not. He should show that

the truth is exerting a power over his perverse nature, that it makes him patient, kind, forbearing, tender, affectionate, forgiving. The best way for Brother M to be a living missionary in his family is for him to exemplify in his life the life of our dear Redeemer.

Chapter 79—Transferring Earthly Treasure

[678]

Dear Brother N,

I have felt very much burdened over your case since we met you at the Tipton camp meeting. I could scarcely refrain from addressing you personally while speaking to the people upon the words of Christ: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

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

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

You have but little sense of the exalted character of the work for these last days. You have not made sacrifices for the truth. You have a close, penurious spirit, and have closed your eyes to the wants of the distressed and needy. Your compassion has not been stirred to relieve the wants of the oppressed, neither have you had a heart to aid the cause of God with your means or to distribute to the necessities of the suffering. Your heart is on your earthly treasures. Unless you

[679]

overcome your love of the things of the world you will have no place in the kingdom of heaven.

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

Jesus calls the attention of this young man directly to the defect in his character. He cites His own self-denying, cross-bearing life. He had left everything for the salvation of man, and He entreated the young man to come and imitate His example, and assured him that he should have treasure in heaven. Did the heart of the young man leap with joy at this assurance that he should indeed have treasure in heaven? Oh, no! His earthly treasures were his idol; they eclipsed the value of the eternal inheritance. He turns from the cross, turns from the self-sacrificing life of the Redeemer, to this world. He has a lingering desire for the heavenly inheritance, yet he reluctantly turns from the prospect. It cost a struggle to decide which he should choose, but he finally decided to continue his love for his earthly treasures.

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

very sorrowful, for he wanted both worlds; but he sacrificed the heavenly for the earthly.

But few realize the strength of their love for riches until the test is brought to bear upon them. Many who profess to be Christ's followers then show that they are unprepared for heaven. Their works testify that they love riches more than their neighbor or their God. Like the rich young man, they inquire the way to life; but when the way is pointed out, and the cost is estimated, and they are convinced that they must sacrifice their earthly riches and become rich in good works, they decide that heaven costs too much. The greater the treasures laid up upon the earth, the more difficult it is for the possessor to realize that they are not his own, but lent him to use to God's glory.

Jesus here improves the opportunity to give His disciples an impressive lesson: "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

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

[681]

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

Christ points out the way in which those who have worldly riches and yet are not rich toward God may secure the true riches. He says:

Sell that ye have, and give alms, and lay up treasure in heaven. The remedy He proposes for the wealthy is a transfer of their affections from earthly riches to the eternal inheritance. By investing their means in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, and by blessing the needy with their means, they become rich in good works and are “laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” This will prove a safe investment. But many show by their works that they dare not trust in the bank of heaven. They choose to trust their means in the earth rather than send it before them to heaven, that their hearts may be upon their heavenly treasure.

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

Riches bring with them great responsibilities. To obtain wealth by unjust dealing, by overreaching in trade, by oppressing the widow and the fatherless, or by hoarding up riches and neglecting the wants of the needy, will eventually bring the just retribution described by the inspired apostle: “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.”

The humblest and poorest of the true disciples of Christ, who are rich in good works, are more blessed and more precious in the sight of God than the men who boast of their great riches. They are

more honorable in the courts of heaven than the most exalted kings and nobles who are not rich toward God.

The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to charge the rich: “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” This admonition is applicable to you, Brother N, and to very many who profess to believe the truth for these last days. [683]

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

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

Many to whom God has entrusted riches do not consider that they are working against their own eternal interest by selfishly retaining their riches. The apostle shows them that by becoming rich in good works they are working for themselves. They are laying up in store for themselves, providing in heaven an enduring treasure, that they may lay hold on eternal life. In distributing to the necessities of the cause, and helping the needy, they are faithfully doing the work that God has assigned them; and the memorial of their self-denial and generous, loving acts will be written in the book of heaven. Every deed of righteousness will be immortalized, although the doer may not feel that he has done anything worthy of notice. If the daily walk of those who profess the truth were a living example of the life of Christ, a light would shine forth from them which would lead others [684]

to the Redeemer. In heaven alone will be fully estimated the blessed results, in the salvation of others, of a consistent, harmonious, godly life.

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

The Lord has entrusted you with talents of means to use to advance His cause, to bless the needy, and to relieve the destitute. You can do a far greater amount of good with your means than you can do by preaching while you retain your means. Have you put your talents of means to the exchangers, that when the Master comes, and shall say, "Give an account of thy stewardship," you can, without confusion, present to Him the talents doubled, both principal and interest, because you have not hoarded them, have not buried them selfishly in the earth, but have put them to use? Look over the history of your past life. How many have you blessed with your means? How many hearts have you made grateful by your liberalities? Please read the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. Have you loosed the bands of wickedness? Have you sought to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Have you dealt your bread to the hungry, and brought the poor that were cast out to your house? Have you covered the naked?

[685] If you have been rich in these good works, you may claim the promises given in this chapter: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am." "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." But you are not now entitled to these promised blessings. You have not been engaged in

this work. Look back over your past life and consider how destitute it is of good, noble, generous actions. You have talked the truth, but you have not lived it. Your life has not been elevated and sanctified, but it has been characterized by selfishness and stinginess. You have served self faithfully. It is now high time that you were changing your course and working diligently to secure the heavenly treasure.

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

[686]

You have a very good estimate of yourself, but you have a work to do that no other man can do for you. Your nature must be changed, and there must be a transformation of the entire being. You love the truth in word, but not in deed. You love the Lord a little, but your riches more. Would the Master say to you, if He should find you as you are at the present time: "Well done, good and faithful servant; ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? What joy is here referred to? "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The joy that was set before Jesus was that of seeing souls redeemed by the sacrifice of His glory, His honor, His riches, and His own life. The salvation of man was His joy. When all the redeemed shall be gathered into the kingdom of God, He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Those who are co-workers with Christ, partakers with Him of His self-denial and His sacrifice, may be instrumental in bringing souls to Christ, and may see them saved, eternally saved, to praise God, and the Lamb who hath redeemed them.

Pleasanton, Kansas,

October 15, 1870.

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Chapter 80—No Probation After Christ Comes

Brother O,

While I am writing out the dangers of others, your case presses upon my mind. For several months I have been seeking an opportunity to write to you and to others; but constant labor has hindered me from writing out all the testimonies given me for individuals.

Your case has frequently burdened my mind, but I have not felt clear to write to you. I have written out very many testimonies which have been given for others, some of which, in many particulars, would apply to you. The object of publishing the testimonies is that those who are not singled out personally, yet who are as much in fault as those who are reproved, may be warned through the reproofs given to others. I thought it would not be my duty to address you personally. Yet, as I write out individual testimonies to those who are in danger of neglecting their duty to the cause of God, and thus of sustaining an injury, a loss, to their own souls, I do not feel clear to leave your case without writing to you. [687]

The last view given me was above two years ago. I was then directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing, and at the same time specify the dangers, errors, and sins of some individuals, that all might be warned, reproved, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely to see if they had not made the same mistakes for which others were corrected and if the warnings given for others did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that the counsel and reproofs were given especially for them and should make as practical an application of them as though they were especially addressed to themselves.

Those who have a natural love for the world and have been remiss in their duty can see their own faults specified in the cases of others who have been reproved. God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to

[688]

develop what is in their hearts. The conflict will be close between self and the grace of God. Self will strive for the mastery and will be opposed to the work of bringing the life and thoughts, the will and affections, into subjection to the will of Christ. Self-denial and the cross stand all along in the pathway to eternal life, and, because of this, “few there be that find it.”

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

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

I have been shown that, at the right time, God would press the burden upon me to say to individuals, as Nathan said to David: “Thou art the man.” Many apparently believe the testimonies borne to others and, like David, give judgment in reference to them, when they should be closely searching their own hearts, analyzing their own lives, and making a practical application of the close reproofs and warnings given to others.

[689]

Brother O, I have been shown that your affections are more upon your earthly treasure than you are sensible of. You have been confused in your perceptions of duty. And when the Spirit of God operates upon your mind and would lead you to do what is according to the will and requirements of God, other influences that are not in harmony with the work of God for this time hinder you from obeying the promptings of the divine will; the result is, your faith is not made perfect by works. Your affections should be withdrawn

from your earthly treasure. At times when, contrary to your wishes and calculations, means was passing from you into the enemy's ranks, and was thus lost to the cause of God, you have seemed much perplexed and troubled. Talents of means have been entrusted to you by the Master for you to improve to His glory. You are His steward and should be very cautious lest you neglect your duty. You are naturally a world-loving man and will be inclined to claim as your own the talents of means committed to your care. But, "Give an account of thy stewardship" will be heard by you by and by.

The children of God are wise when they trust in that wisdom alone which comes from above, and when they have no strength but that which is from God. Separation from the friendship and spirit of the world is needful for us if we would be united to the Lord and abide in him. Our strength and our prosperity consist in our being connected with the Lord, chosen and accepted of Him. There can be no union between light and darkness. God intends that His people shall be a peculiar people, separate from the world, and be living examples of holiness, that the world may be enlightened, convicted, or condemned, according as they treat the light given them. The truth that has been brought before the understanding, the light that has shone upon the soul, will judge and condemn if it be neglected or turned from.

In this degenerate age, error and darkness are preferred rather than light and truth. The works of many of Christ's professed followers will not bear the test when examined by the light that now shines upon them. For this cause, many do not come to the light lest it shall be made manifest that their works are not wrought in God. Light discovers, makes manifest, the evil hidden under darkness. Men of the world and men who are Christ's servants indeed may be alike in outward appearance; but they are servants of two masters whose interests are in decided opposition to each other. The world does not understand or discern the difference; but there is an immense distance, a vast, separation, between them.

[690]

Says Christ: "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." The true followers of Christ cannot enjoy the friendship of the world and at the same time have their life hid with Christ. The affections must be withdrawn from the treasures of earth and transferred to the heavenly treasure. How difficult was it for the

young man who had great possessions to withdraw his affections from his worldly treasure, even with the promise of eternal life before him as his reward!

When all that we have and are is not consecrated to God, selfish interests close our eyes to the importance of the work, and the means that God calls for is withheld. But He who has lent us this means for the advancement of His cause will frequently withdraw His prospering hand and in some way scatter the means thus withheld, and it will be lost to its possessor and lost to the cause of God. It is not preserved in this world or in the world to come. God is robbed, and Satan triumphs. The Lord would have you closely search your own heart, Brother O, and get the love of the world out of it. Die to self, and live unto God. Then will you be of that number who are the light of the world.

[691] I have been shown that you were cherishing erroneous views in regard to the future, views savoring of the pernicious sentiments of the Age-to-come. You sometimes talk out these ideas to others. But they are not in harmony with the body. You do not make a right application of Scripture. When Jesus rises up in the most holy place, and lays off His mediatorial garments, and clothes Himself with the garments of vengeance in place of the priestly attire, the work for sinners will be done. The period of time will then have come when the mandate will go forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: ... and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

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

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

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

[692]

There are in the Scriptures some things which are hard to be understood and which, according to the language of Peter, the unlearned and unstable wrest unto their own destruction. We may not, in this life, be able to explain the meaning of every passage of Scripture; but there are no vital points of practical truth that will be clouded in mystery. When the time shall come, in the providence of God, for the world to be tested upon the truth for that time, minds will be exercised by His Spirit to search the Scriptures, even with fasting and with prayer, until link after link is searched out and united in a perfect chain. Every fact which immediately concerns the salvation of souls will be made so clear that none need err or walk in darkness.

As we have followed down the chain of prophecy, revealed truth for our time has been clearly seen and explained. We are accountable for the privileges that we enjoy and for the light that shines upon our pathway. Those who lived in past generations were accountable for the light which was permitted to shine upon them. Their minds were exercised in regard to different points of Scripture which tested them. But they did not understand the truths which we do. They

[693] were not responsible for the light which they did not have. They had the Bible, as we have; but the time for the unfolding of special truth in relation to the closing scenes of this earth's history is during the last generations that shall live upon the earth.

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

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

Those who died before the light was given upon the law of God and the claims of the fourth commandment were not guilty of the sin of violating the seventh-day Sabbath. The wisdom and mercy of God in dispensing light and knowledge at the proper time, as the people need it, is unsearchable. Previous to His coming to judge the world in righteousness, He sends forth a warning to arouse the people and call their attention to their neglect of the fourth commandment, that they may be enlightened, and may repent of their transgression of His law, and prove their allegiance to the great Lawgiver. He has made provision that all may be holy and happy if they choose. Sufficient light has been given to this generation, that we may learn what our duties and privileges are, and enjoy the precious and solemn truths in their simplicity and power.

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

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

God would have all make a practical use of the plain teachings of His word in regard to the salvation of man. If they are doers of the word, which is plain and powerful in its simplicity, they will not fail to perfect Christian character. They will be sanctified through the truth, and through humble obedience to it will secure everlasting life. God wants servants that are true, not only in word, but in deed. Their fruits will show the genuineness of their faith.

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

[695]

Chapter 81—Accountability for Light Received

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

[696] Paul and Silas labored in the synagogue of the Jews at Thessalonica with some success; but the unbelieving Jews were greatly dissatisfied, and created a disturbance, and made a great uproar against them. These devoted apostles were obliged to leave Thessalonica under the cover of night and go to Berea, where they were gladly welcomed. They speak in commendation of the Bereans thus: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed.”

Brother P has failed to see the vital importance of the question. He has not felt the burden pressing him to search diligently, independent of any man, to find out what is truth. He has thought too much of Elder P, and has not felt the necessity of learning of One who is meek and lowly of heart. He has not been teachable, but self-confident. Our Saviour has no words of commendation for those who are slow of heart to believe in these last days, any more than He had for doubting Thomas, who boasted that he would not believe

upon the evidence which the disciples rehearsed, and which they credited, that Christ had indeed risen and appeared to them. Said Thomas: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails," "and thrust my hand into His side, *I will not believe.*" Christ granted Thomas the evidence that he had declared he must have; but He reprovably said to him: "Be not faithless, but believing." Thomas acknowledged himself convinced. Jesus said unto him: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Brother P's position has made him a weak man. He remained for quite a length of time warring against nearly everything but the Sabbath. At the same time he was fellowshiping commandment breakers, being still claimed by the Adventists who were in bitter opposition to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. He was in no condition to help them because he was in a state of indecision himself. His influence has rather confirmed many in their unbelief. With all the help, evidence, and encouragement that he has had, his standing back has displeased the Lord, while it has strengthened the hands of those who were fighting against God by their opposition to the truth. [697]

Brother P might now be a strong man possessing influence with God's people in Maine and esteemed highly in love *for his works' sake*. But he inclines to the idea that his backwardness is a special virtue, rather than a sin of which he must repent. He has been very slow to learn the lessons which God has intended to teach him. He has not been an apt scholar, and has not had a growth and experience in present truth, which would qualify him to bear the weight of responsibility that he might now bear had he diligently improved upon all the light given. I was shown a time when Brother P began to make an effort to subdue himself and restrain his appetite; then he could the more easily be patient. He had been easily excited, passionate, irritable, depressed in spirit. His eating and drinking had very much to do in keeping him in this state. The lower passions bore sway, predominating over the higher powers of the mind. Temperance would do much for Brother P; and more physical exercise and labor is necessary for his health. As he made efforts to control himself, he began to grow, but did not receive that blessing in his

efforts to improve that he would have received had they been made at an earlier period.

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

[698] Brother P's ideas of order and organization have been in direct opposition to God's plan of order. There is order in heaven, and it is to be imitated by those upon earth who are heirs of salvation. The nearer mortals attain to the order and arrangement of heaven, the nearer are they brought to that acceptable state before God which will make them subjects of the heavenly kingdom and give them that fitness for translation from earth to heaven which Enoch possessed preparatory to his translation.

Brother P should be guarded. There is a lack of order in his organization. He has not been in harmony with that restraint, that care and diligence, which are necessary in order to preserve harmony and union of action. His experience, his education in religious things for years past, has been a great detriment to his dear children and especially to God's people. The obligations which Heaven has imposed upon a father, and especially upon a minister, he has not realized. A man who has but a feeble sense of his responsibility as a father to encourage and enforce order, discipline, and obedience will fail as a minister and as a shepherd of the flock. The same lack which characterizes his management at home in his family will be seen in a more public capacity in the church of God. Wrongs will exist uncorrected because of the unpleasant results which attend reproof and earnest appeal.

A great reform is needed in Brother P's family. God is not pleased with their present state of disorder, their having their own way, following their own course of action. This condition of things in his family is destined to counteract his influence wherever he is known. It also has the effect to discourage those who have a will to help him in the support of his family. This lack is an injury to the cause. Brother P does not restrain his children. God is not pleased with their disorderly, boisterous ways, their unrefined deportment. All this is the result of, or the curse that follows, the unabridged

liberty which Adventists have claimed that it was their blessed privilege to enjoy. Brother and Sister P have desired the salvation of their children, but I saw that God would not work a miracle in their conversion while there were duties resting upon the parents of which they have but little sense. God has left a work for these parents to do which they have thrown back upon Him to do for them. When Brother and Sister P feel the burden that they ought to feel for their children, they will unite their efforts to establish order, discipline, and wholesome restraint in their family. [699]

Brother P, you have been slothful in bearing the burdens which every father should bear in his family; and, as the result, the burden which has been left for the mother to bear has been very heavy. You have been too willing to excuse yourself from care and burdens at home and abroad. When, in the fear of God, with solemnity of mind in view of the judgment, you resolutely take the burden that Heaven has designed you should take, and when you have done all that you can on your part, then you can pray understandingly, with the Spirit, and in faith, for God to do that work for your children which it is beyond the power of man to perform.

Brother P has not made a judicious use of means. Wise judgment has not influenced him as much as have the voices and desires of his children. He does not place the estimate that he should upon the means in his hands and expend it cautiously for the most needful articles, for the very things he must have for comfort and health. The entire family need to improve in this respect. Many things are needed in the family for convenience and comfort. The lack of appreciating order and system in the arrangement of family matters leads to destructiveness and working to great disadvantage. Every member of the family should realize that a responsibility rests upon him individually to do his part in adding to the comfort, order, and regularity of the family. One should not work against another. All should unitedly engage in the good work of encouraging one another; they should exercise gentleness, forbearance, and patience, speak in low, calm tones, shunning confusion, and each doing his utmost to lighten the burdens of the mother. Things should no longer be left at loose ends, all excusing themselves from duty, leaving others to do that which they can and should do themselves. These things may be trifles; but when all are put together, they make great disorder [700]

and bring down the frown of God. It is the neglect of the littles, the trifles, that poisons life's happiness. A faithful performance of the littles composes the sum of happiness to be realized in this life. He that is faithful in little is faithful also in much. He that is unfaithful or unjust in small matters will be in greater matters. Each member of the family should understand just the part he is expected to act in union with the others. All, from the child six years old and upward, should understand that it is required of them to bear their share of life's burdens.

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

[701] Dear Brother P, the lessons which you have learned amid the distracting influences that have existed in Maine have been exceedingly injurious to your family. You have not been as circumspect in your conversation as God requires you to be. You have not dwelt upon the truth in your family, diligently teaching its principles and the commandments of God unto your children when you rise up and when you sit down, when you go out and when you come in. You have not appreciated your work as a father or as a minister.

You have not zealously performed your duty to your children. You have not devoted sufficient time to family prayer, and you have not required the presence of the entire household. The meaning of "husband" is *house band*. All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues, energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. The father is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice. The wife and children should be encouraged to unite in this offering and also to engage in the song of praise. Morning and evening the father, as priest of the household, should confess to God the sins committed by himself and his children

through the day. Those sins which have come to his knowledge, and also those which are secret, of which God's eye alone has taken cognizance, should be confessed. This rule of action, zealously carried out by the father when he is present, or by the mother when he is absent, will result in blessings to the family.

The reason why the youth of the present age are not more religiously inclined is that their education is defective. True love is not exercised toward children when they are allowed to indulge passion, or when disobedience of your laws is permitted to go unpunished. As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined. You love your ease too well. You are not painstaking enough. Constant effort is required, constant watchfulness and earnest, fervent prayer. Keep the mind in a praying mood, uplifted to God; be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

You have failed in your family to appreciate the sacredness of the Sabbath and to teach it to your children and enjoin upon them the importance of keeping it according to the commandment. Your sensibilities are not clear and ready to discern the high standard that we must reach in order to be commandment keepers. But God will assist you in your efforts when you take hold of the work earnestly. You should possess perfect control over yourself; then you can have better success in controlling your children when they are unruly. There is a great work before you to repair past neglects; but you are not required to perform it in your own strength. Ministering angels will aid you in the work. Do not give up the work nor lay aside the burden, but take hold of it with a will and repair your long neglect. You must have higher views of God's claims upon you in regard to His holy day. Everything that can possibly be done on the six days which God has given to you, should be done. You should not rob God of one hour of holy time. Great blessings are promised to those who place a high estimate upon the Sabbath and realize the obligations resting upon them in regard to its observance: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath [from trampling upon it, setting it at nought], from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth,

[702]

and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

[703]

When the Sabbath commences, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord’s. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do, any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or anything which could have been done on the six working days. Friday is the day of preparation. Time can then be devoted to making the necessary preparation for the Sabbath and to thinking and conversing about it. Nothing which will in the sight of Heaven be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath. God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings us into bondage and condemnation.

Brother P, you should discipline yourself to discern the sacredness of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and should labor to raise the standard in your family and wherever you have, by example, lowered it among God’s people. You should counteract the influence you have cast in this respect, by changing your words and actions. You have frequently failed to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;” you have often forgotten, and have spoken your own words upon God’s sanctified day. You have been unguarded, and have upon the Sabbath joined with the unconsecrated in conversation upon the common topics of the day, such as gains and losses, stocks, crops, and provisions. In this your example injures your influence. You should reform.

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

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

[704]

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

None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbathkeepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time. They then excuse themselves by saying: “The Sabbath was given for a day of rest. I will not deprive myself of rest to attend meeting, for I need rest.” Such make a wrong use of the sanctified day. They should, upon that day especially, interest their families in its observance and assemble at the house of prayer with the few or with the many, as the case may be. They should devote their time and energies to spiritual exercises, that the divine influence resting upon the Sabbath may attend them through the week. Of all the days in the week, none are so favorable for devotional thoughts and feelings as the Sabbath.

All heaven was represented to me as beholding and watching upon the Sabbath those who acknowledge the claims of the fourth commandment and are observing the Sabbath. Angels were marking their interest in, and high regard for, this divine institution. Those who sanctified the Lord God in their hearts by a strictly devotional frame of mind, and who sought to improve the sacred hours in keeping the Sabbath to the best of their ability, and to honor God by calling the Sabbath a delight—these the angels were specially blessing with light and health, and special strength was given them. But, on the other hand, the angels were turning from those who failed to appreciate the sacredness of God’s sanctified day, and were removing from them their light and their strength. I saw them

[705]

overshadowed with a cloud, desponding, and frequently sad. They felt a lack of the Spirit of God.

Dear Brother P, you should at all times be circumspect in your conversation. Has God called you to be a representative of Christ upon earth, in His stead beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God? This is a solemn, exalted work. When you cease speaking in the desk, that work is but just begun. You are not released from responsibilities when out of meeting, but should still maintain your consecration to the work of saving souls. You are to be a living epistle, known and read of all men. Ease is not to be consulted. Pleasure is not to be thought of. The salvation of souls is the all-important theme. It is to this work that the minister of the gospel of Christ is called. He must maintain good works out of meeting and adorn his profession by his godly conversation and circumspect deportment. Frequently, after your pulpit labor is over and you are seated with company around the fireside, you have, by your unconsecrated conversation, counteracted your efforts in the pulpit. You must live out what you preach as duty to others, and must take upon yourself, as you never yet have done, the burden of the work, the weight of responsibility which should rest upon every minister of Christ. Confirm the labor bestowed in the desk by following it up with private effort. Engage in judicious conversation upon present truth, candidly ascertaining the state of mind of those present, and in the fear of God making a practical application of important truth to the cases of those with whom you are associated. You have failed to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.

[706]

As a watchman upon the walls of Zion, constant watchfulness is necessary. Your vigilance must not abate. Educate yourself to be able to appeal to families around the fireside. You can accomplish even more in this direction than by your pulpit labors alone. Watch for souls as one that must give an account. Give no occasion for unbelievers to charge you with remissness in this duty, by neglecting to appeal to them personally. Talk with them faithfully, and beseech them to yield to the truth. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life." As the apostle views the magnitude of the work and the weighty responsibilities resting upon the minister, he exclaims:

“And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.”

Those who corrupt the word, handing out wheat and chaff, or anything that they may deem gospel, while they oppose the commandments of God, cannot appreciate the feelings of the apostle as he trembled under the weight of the solemn work, and of his responsibility as a minister of Christ, having the destiny of souls for whom Christ died resting upon him. In the estimation of self-made ministers it will take but a small pattern to fill the bill and make a minister. But the apostle placed a high estimate upon the qualifications necessary to make a minister.

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

[707]

I was shown, Brother P, that you were naturally irritable, easily provoked, and that you had lacked patience and forbearance. If your course was questioned, or you were urged to take your position upon the truth, you felt too much that you would not be hurried. You would not move a step because others desired you to do so. You would take your time. Should your hearers pursue the same course, you would consider them blameworthy. If all should do as you have done, God’s people would require a temporal millennium in which to make the needed preparations for the judgment. God has mercifully borne with your backwardness; but it will not answer for others to follow your example, for you are now weak and deficient where you might be strong and well qualified for the work.

Brother R could effect but little for you. His labors were unwisely directed. He erred in especially interesting himself for those who thought they should become teachers. Had he not touched the case of a minister in Maine, and had he labored in new fields where

there had been no Adventists, many would have been brought to the knowledge of the truth. Brother S has been advancing slowly and occupying a position more pleasing to God in regard to patience, forbearance, and endurance; and yet there is a much greater work to be done for him before he can make a successful minister in the cause and advance the work of God.

[708] Brother R zealously interested himself in your case, but you refused to be helped by him. Time and strength were devoted to you; and matters were shaped for your special benefit to remove your prejudice and win you to accept the truth, until your indolence and unbelief exhausted the patience of Brother R. Then the character of his labor changed, and he pressed you to come to a decision and move out upon the light and evidence you had received. This earnest effort on his part you termed crowding and jamming you. Your mulish temperament was manifested; you rose up against this dealing and rejected the efforts he made to help you. Here you injured yourself, disheartened Brother R, and displeased God. Your feelings toward Brother R were not Christian. You gloried in your resistance of his efforts in your behalf. The Lord blessed the labors of Brother R in raising up a people in the State of Maine. This labor was hard and trying, and you did your share in making it so. You did not realize how hard you were making the work for those whom God had sent to present the truth to the people. They were exhausting their energies to bring the people to the point of decision in regard to the truth, while you and others of the ministers stood directly in their way. God was working through His ministers to draw to the truth, and Satan was working through you and other ministers to discourage and counteract their labor. The very men who professed to be watchmen, and who, if they had stood in the counsel of God, would have been the first to receive the word of warning and give it to the people, were among the last to accept the truth. The people were in advance of their teachers. They received the warning even before the watchmen because the watchmen were unfaithful and were sleeping at their post.

[709] Brother P, you should have had feelings of brotherly sympathy and love for Brother R, for he deserved this from you rather than one word of censure. You should severely censure your own course because you were found fighting against God. But you have amused

yourself and others at the expense of Brother R by relating his efforts for you and your resistance of his labors, and have enjoyed a hearty laugh over the matter.

It becomes every minister of Christ to use sound speech, which cannot be condemned. I was shown that a solemn work is to be accomplished for the ministers of Christ. This cannot be done without effort on their part. They must feel that they have a work to do in their own cases which no one else can do for them. They must seek to gain the qualifications necessary, in order to become able ministers of Christ, that in the day of God they may stand acquitted, free from the blood of souls, having done all their duty in the fear of God. As their reward, the faithful undershepherds will hear from the Chief Shepherd: "Well done, good and faithful servant." He will then place the crown of glory upon their heads and bid them enter into the joy of their Lord. What is that joy? It is beholding with Christ the redeemed saints, reviewing with Him their travail for souls, their self-denial and self-sacrifice, their giving up of ease, of worldly gain, and every earthly inducement, and choosing the reproach, the suffering, the self-abasement, the wearing labor, and the anguish of spirit as men would oppose the counsel of God against their own souls; it is calling to remembrance the chastening of their souls before God, their weeping between the porch and the altar, and their becoming a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. All this is then ended, and the fruits of their labors are seen; souls are saved through their efforts in Christ. The ministers who have been co-workers with Christ enter into the joy of their Lord and are satisfied.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Ministers are too forgetful of the Author of their salvation. They think they endure much, when they bear and suffer but little. God will work for ministers if they will let Him work for them. But if they feel that they are all right and do not need a thorough conversion, and will not see themselves

[710]

and come up to the measurement of God, He can do better without their labors than with them.

God requires ministers to come up to the standard, to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed. If they refuse this strict discipline, God will release them and select men who will not rest until they are thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Our hearts are naturally sinful, and slothful in the service of Christ; and we need to be guarded constantly, or we shall fail to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; and we shall not feel the necessity of aiming vigorous blows against besetting sins, but will readily yield to the suggestions of Satan and raise a standard for ourselves rather than accept the pure and elevated standard that God has raised for us.

[711] I saw that the Sabbathkeeping ministers of Maine have failed to become Bible students. They have not felt the necessity of a diligent study of the word of God for themselves, that they might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works; neither have they felt the necessity of urging the close searching of the Scriptures upon their hearers. If there had not been one Seventh-day Adventist minister in Maine to oppose the counsel of God, all that has been accomplished might have been done with one half the effort that has been made, and the people might have been brought out of their distracted, confused state into order, and now have been strong enough to stand against opposing influences. Many places which have not yet been entered might have been visited and successful labor bestowed, which would have brought many to a knowledge of the truth.

Much of the labor which has been spent in Maine has been for Seventh-day Adventist ministers, to bring them into a right position. It has required hard labor to counteract the influence which they exerted while opposing the counsel of God against their own souls and standing in the way of sinners. They would not enter in themselves, and them that would, they hindered by precept and example. A mistake has been made in entering fields where there are Adventists who do not as a general thing feel any necessity of being helped, but who think themselves in a good condition and able to teach others. The laborers are few, and their strength must be spent to the best possible advantage. Much more can be done in the State

of Maine, as a general thing, where there is not one Adventist. New fields should be entered; and the time that has hitherto been spent in wearing labor for Adventists who have no wish to learn should be devoted to these new fields, to going out into the highways and hedges, and working for the conversion of unbelievers. If Adventists will come and hear, let them come. Leave the way open for them to come if they choose.

Appendix

Page 400—The admonition in the personal testimony addressed to Brother and Sister E, that “eggs should not be placed upon your table,” has by some been given a general application. That this was not intended as a general teaching for families of normal circumstances is made clear not only by the setting of the statement itself, but also by no less than three specific published utterances of Ellen G. White which would correct any misapplication of this personal testimony. These are found in [Testimonies for the Church 7:135 \(1902\)](#), [The Ministry of Healing, 320 \(1905\)](#), and [Testimonies for the Church 9:162 \(1909\)](#). We quote the last two statements:

“It is true that persons in full flesh and in whom the animal passions are strong need to avoid the use of stimulating foods. Especially in families of children who are given to sensual habits, eggs should not be used.”—[The Ministry of Healing, 320](#).

“While warnings have been given regarding the dangers of disease through butter, and the evil of the free use of eggs by small children, yet we should not consider it a violation of principle to use eggs from hens that are well cared for and suitably fed. Eggs contain properties that are remedial agencies in counteracting certain poisons.”—[Testimonies for the Church 9:162](#).