

HEART TO HEART TALKS

By
FRANCIS MC CLELLAN WILCOX

www.maranathamedia.com.au

Author of The Testimony of Jesus, Day by Day, The Coming Crisis, and other volumes.

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Dedication

To our dear Advent believers throughout the world. “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” “Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Romans 10:1; Hebrews 13:20,21.

Foreword

The author of this book served as editor-in chief of our general church paper, the “Review and Herald” for over thirty-three years. Since his retirement, with the close of 1944, he has been continued as a member of the editorial staff, writing as an associate editor. The following chapters have been selected from his many editorials through the years for publication in this book.

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A. One and Only Savior

SAVED BY GRACE

THERE is no power in man to save himself. Inherently he possesses no righteousness. By nature he is lost and undone, "Having no hope, and without God in the world." Ephesians 2:12. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. We are "carnal, sold under sin." Romans 7:14. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3: 10. In our flesh there "dwells no good thing." Romans 7:18. We are "filled with all unrighteousness." Romans 1:29.

Failing to recognize this truth, men have sought through all the ages to save themselves. By fasts and penances, by the infliction of bodily pain, by long pilgrimages, by great benevolences and other good works, they have tried to transform their hearts and change their natures, but they have fought a losing battle. No man can extricate himself from the pit into which his own carnal nature has plunged him; but, thank God, there is a way of escape. Deliverance has been provided. One mighty to save appears upon the scene. The merciful heavenly Father looks down in pitying tenderness upon the creatures of His hand, and in His infinite mercy and tender love provides a way whereby they may come into a different state, whereby their characters may be transformed.

Grace is love and unmerited favor. We do not merit Christ's great sacrifice in giving His life for our salvation, nor the tender pleadings of the Holy Spirit for us to turn from our evil ways. On the contrary, we have been rebels against His government. We have rejected His overtures of mercy many times. We have done despite to the Spirit of grace. But, notwithstanding this, in His unfathomable and infinite love He comes to us again and again, and seeks to win us to Himself.

What Is God's Righteousness?

The righteousness of God is expressed in the law of God. This law is the transcript of His character. It reveals what He Himself is. "All thy commandments," declared the psalmist, "are righteousness." Psalm 119:172. And the observance of these commandments by His children is declared to be righteousness on their part.

The righteousness of the law is exemplified in Jesus Christ and is revealed through the gospel. By the power of the gospel the believer is enabled to meet in his life, through faith, the righteousness required of the law. Of this the apostle Paul states: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:16, 17.

The same blessed truth is expressed again by the apostle in this same epistle: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Romans 3:20-25.

Obtaining God's Righteousness

How may one obtain this righteousness of God, 'revealed in the law of Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ? The answer is a simple one; namely, by accepting Christ as the Savior from sin. Listen to His gracious word: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

All heaven unites in this invitation. The Christian believer echoes in his life and words the heavenly message: "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And, whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

Blinded by sin and unacquainted with the approach to the throne of grace, man may wonder with what words he shall present his petition for peace and pardon. In gracious condescension the Majesty of

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heaven meets even this condition. He puts within the mouth of the penitent the very words which he may employ in seeking the righteousness of faith. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." Hosea 14:2. And when this prayer or any similar prayer is uttered, this is the blessed assurance: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Verse 4. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Truly it is a blessed experience to find forgiveness of sins and that peace which passes all understanding, in reconciliation with the great God of heaven. Upon those who do this the Lord pronounces His divine blessing.

"Now to him that worked is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worked not, but believed on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also described the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Romans 4:4-8.

Justified and Saved

In this experience of regeneration Christ takes care of the sins of the past. The believer is justified by His blood. "God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5:8, 9.

To justify is to make righteous, to make equal to the divine standard. As the penitent confesses his sins and lays hold of Christ's atoning sacrifice in his behalf, there is imputed to him, for all his past life, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that when God looks upon the past years of unrighteousness, He sees no longer a life filled with crime and iniquity, but He sees the spotless life of the Son of God that has been put in the place of the life of the believer. Thus the man stands in God's sight as though he had never committed iniquity.

But this takes care only of the past. How will the believer be kept from falling back into the sins of which he has been guilty? What will break the power of the old habits? What will enable him to place his feet in the upward path and maintain his integrity before God? He is justified or reconciled by the death of Christ, but he is saved by Christ's life. Read this in the Divine Record: "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Romans 5:10.

The faith of the penitent, which claims forgiveness for the sins that are past, claims the possession of a new life in Christ Jesus. And so the apostle's desire for the Ephesians was that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith. (Ephesians 3:17.) It was by this indwelling life that the apostle Paul walked in the path of righteousness. He declared that in his own personal experience of conversion he himself no longer lived, but that it was the Christ life which glowed within him. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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." Galatians 2:20.

With what confidence and assurance may the child of God lay hold of this divine promise. The battle is not ours; it is the Lord's. We, in our own weakness and frailty, cannot hope to cope successfully with the enemy of all righteousness. But we may hide in Christ, we may rely upon the power of His Holy Spirit, of His indwelling life, to rise up and defend us in the hour of temptation.

In response to the penitent's plea for forgiveness, Christ's imputed righteousness covers the sins of the past. In response to the penitent's plea for power to keep from sin, imparted righteousness is bestowed. This imparted righteousness is the Christ life, or Holy Spirit, dwelling in the heart of the believer, shaping and molding the life after the similitude of Christ's character.

"The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven." - MRS. E. G. WHITE in Review and Herald, June 4, 1895.

Divine and Human Co-operation

This entire experience of reconciliation and regeneration must be wrought out by the co-operation of man with God. Divine power has made us free moral agents. The Lord will not force us to come unto Him. He declares, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. Hence, in coming to God man must will to do so. He must yield himself a willing subject into the hands of the divine

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Architect, to be molded and fashioned according to the divine will. In his life of sin he has willed to do wrong. He has chosen the paths of evil in preference to the paths of righteousness. It is for him now to use that same power of will in working the works of God and in following the paths of truth and righteousness. This is plainly stated by the apostle.

“Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield you 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. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.” Romans 6:11-14.

But suppose the will is weak. Suppose the sinner, while recognizing his great need, feels that he is powerless to place even his will on the side of God’s will. For this there is the gracious promise, “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Romans 5:20. It is for the penitent one to cry unto God from the depth of his misery for power to yield himself, for a desire after life so strong that it shall resolve itself into purpose, and God will hear this cry for deliverance. He will bend low to lay hold upon the one struggling in his weakness for deliverance from the power of sin.

Growth in Grace

One more phase of this subject should be considered in this connection. The life of the Christian is a life of growth. It is likened by the Savior to the growth of vegetation. There is “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear,” and the apostle Peter emphasizes this same truth in the concluding verse of his second epistle: “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ is contained in His Word, and this also is emphasized by this teacher of righteousness. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby: if so he you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” 1 Peter 2:2, 3. It is by the milk of the Word that the believer is made strong. It is by taking the promises of God and appropriating them to his own personal needs by the divine aid of the Holy Spirit that he becomes a partaker of the divine nature. “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4.

In this experience “the path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.” Proverbs 4:18. By the perfection of grace in his life, the child of God will be fashioned after the similitude of Christ’s character and will be fitted to associate with the heavenly family throughout the ages of eternity.

THE PRODIGAL AND HIS RETURN

ONE of the most beautiful stories in the Divine Record is the one found in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, telling of the prodigal and his return. Here was a man, the son of a kind and loving father, who, demanding his share of the inheritance, left the parental roof and went out into the world for himself. He felt that he was sufficient to cope with the issues of life, that he was wise enough to decide the questions which might arise in his experience. He was restive under home restraint. He desired the thrill that came with new scenes and new experiences. He failed to realize that the responsibility of choosing involved as well responsibility in the results, and bitterly he learned this lesson.

Drawn on step by step farther and farther from the principles which had been his safeguard in early life, he plunged into the maelstrom of wild dissipation, spent his inheritance with evil associates, and at last was reduced to absolute penury. Starvation stared him in the face. He was lost and undone, without hope and without God in the world, a homeless wanderer, a derelict, driven by the wind and tossed about on the seas of misfortune. He had gone a long and winding way from his father’s house.

His abject humiliation brought him to himself. He reviewed the steps by which his feet had slipped. He saw the mistake he had made in departing from his father’s home, and he resolved to find his way back, not as a triumphant conqueror, as he had hoped to return when he went away, not as an honored citizen upon whom the world would shower distinction and praise, but as an outcast, a beggar clad in tattered garments. He sadly traveled back over the road which before he had traversed in his wild delirium of joy and new-found freedom.

He comes with no demands, with no effort at self justification, with no excuses for the part he has

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acted. He casts no blame upon his associates. His prayer is not the prayer of the Pharisee but the burdened cry of the poor publican. He comes trusting his father's mercy to treat him better than he deserves.

How graciously is he received! The father has anxiously waited through the long years for this turning about in his son's experience. He has prayed that he might learn, even through failure and humiliation, the lesson of his own unworthiness and insufficiency. And now as he comes, humble and contrite, in beggar's garb, the heart of the father is touched to pity and tenderness. His eyes discern him a long way off, and he hastens to meet him. He welcomes him home as he would a triumphant conqueror. He orders the fatted calf to be killed, and a feast to be prepared, and the relatives and neighbors are assembled to engage in a joyous festival in honor of the return of the long-lost son.

The Lesson for Us

What a lesson this affords us of God's tender mercy for His penitent children! and what a lesson also as to the attitude of the prodigal who returns to the fold of Christ! When we in our failure and backsliding come back in sincerity to the Father's house, we must come with no blare of trumpets, with no excuse for our prodigality, with no justification for our course, with no plea for extenuating circumstances. We must not excuse our dissipation on the plea that others have been deceived. We shall have no disposition to charge our companions in guilt with the greater responsibility. We shall be willing to accept the full measure of our guilt.

This attitude, and this only, will put us in the path of reconciliation will restore the confidence of our brethren, will place us in that attitude of mind and condition of hem in which we can receive the divine grace of forgiveness which the Father holds out to us.

The prodigal went a long way from home. He had to travel a long way back. When we sin against God and against His church, there is no short cut to restitution. There is no respectable confession which seeks to preserve our dignity and save our influence, that will meet the demand of the divine requirement.

May God help us to learn from the lesson of the prodigal and his return, the beauty of God's forgiveness and loving grace, and the necessity of our returning in the same way as did the prodigal-not with the spirit of the Pharisee, seeking justification; but with the spirit of the publican, who could only smite upon his breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Drifting With the Current

When I was a boy I lived near the Indian River in northern New York. Many a time have I sat on its banks and watched logs and other debris drifting with the current. They were carried hither and yon by the various eddies in the river, making no resistance against the current which carried them downstream. And many a time I have gone out on this river in a canoe and drifted, likewise, idly, listlessly, indefinitely. It took real energy and hard, Muscular work to paddle upstream.

I have thought Of these experiences many times as applied to the life of a Christian. It is so easy to drift with the downward tides; it is so difficult to breast the current and make real progress against opposing Odds. And this has been the experience of the church of God in every age. Some, losing their first love, have drifted with the currents of the world around them. Others have faithfully and heroically stood their ground, resisting the evil influences by which Satan was seeking to lull them into the sleep of carnal security. The drift downward leads to destruction. upward way leads to final salvation. It rests with each one to choose the way he will take.

PERSONAL RELIGION VERSUS DENOMINATIONAL RELIGION

A PERSONAL experience in God is necessary to the salvation of every soul. This Strongly and repeatedly emphasized throughout the Scriptures of truth. The call of God primarily not to man in a community sense is but to each individual. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16 "And the Spirit and the, bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

In response to this call there must be the exercise of a personal faith. "If thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God hath razed him from the dead, thou shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture said, Whosoever believes on him shall not be ashamed." Romans 10:9-11.

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For the acceptance or rejection of this call every man is made accountable. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:12. And in the day of final reckoning every man will be judged according to his works, and the reward will be proportionate to the fruits of his labors. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works!" Matthew 16:27.

Of that day of final awards the prophet Ezekiel declares, "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, said the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20.

One great danger which has threatened the church in every age is that this vital truth of a personal and practical Christianity would be forgotten. Israel of old forgot it. In consequence the form was substituted for the substance, the letter for the spirit, and trust was placed in service and ceremony rather than in real heart work and personal experience.

The writer of these words and the readers thereof confront in their religious experience the same danger. We have a beautiful system of truth; we are connected with a progressive movement. There is much to draw out our interest, enlist our activities, and arouse our enthusiasm. We rejoice in the spread of the message through the printed page and gospel herald. We view with pleasure the large force of youth in our schools who are preparing for service. We are confident that this movement in which we are engaged is of divine origin, and that its speedy and glorious triumph is assured.

But we may see all this, feel all this, and believe all this, and yet fail to comprehend the full significance of the gospel message as applied to personal needs. We may have a sort of denominational religion, but fail in obtaining a personal experience in God. Against this we are warned in the message to the Laodicean church as found in Revelation 3:14-21.

Before his conversion Saul possessed a denominational zeal, but it took a personal revelation of Christ to show to him his own individual need and to transform him into the apostle to the Gentiles. Peter was foremost in proclaiming his loyalty, but not until Christ looked on him, and his heart was broken, did he reach a saving personal knowledge of Christ. The apostle Paul recognized his danger, even as a gospel messenger, of being a castaway. Our danger is equally great.

No Substitution

Belief of a system of doctrines or faith in the triumph of a cause cannot be substituted for faith in a personal Savior. Faith in the conversion of others will not avail for the application of the blood of Christ to our own needs. We must see Jesus as our personal Savior, as the one who forgives our sins, and who speaks peace to our souls. He must dwell in our lives by His blessed Spirit, purifying our purposes, subduing our iniquities, and conforming us to the likeness of the divine example. With this personal knowledge of Christ in our lives, we shall be able to bring others to the same fountain of cleansing and blessing.

The need of the church of God today is not a denominational religion but a personal, living faith, which will apply individually the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. May God give us hearts to seek for this personal experience. We should take time to cultivate the Spirit's graces. As gospel laborers, as institutional workers, we are in danger of forgetting God while engaged in His work. Let us take time from life's busy activities to become acquainted with Jesus. This will prepare the way for the in flowing of the Spirit, for the glorious manifestation of divine power, which will attend the labors of the remnant church. This experience will make us more loyal to the truth, more eager to carry the gospel to those in darkness, more zealous in placing our property and our very lives upon the altar of service as an evidence of our love for the One who has taken us into such close and sweet communion with Himself. This personal relationship can be attained through the confession of sin, through consecration and submission, through prayer and faith and watchfulness, through the study of the Word, and the blessed ministry of the Holy Spirit. God is anxious to unite with us in bringing it about. May we avail ourselves of the means which He places within our reach, and of the present opportunity to gain in Him that experience which will make our efforts effective here, and bring to us personal salvation in His kingdom.

DO YOU KNOW THE LORD?

WE DESIRE to address this question to every reader of this book: Do you know the Lord? The question is a pertinent one for every reader to consider, for the writer to consider as well. You may be a member of the church-doubtless you are-but there are some members of the church, some professed

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Christians, who really do not know the Lord.

We are all busy men and women, busy in our individual experiences of gaining a livelihood and caring for our families. We are a busy denomination. We have a great and important message to carry to the world. We are straining every energy to carry it forward. We are selling publications, giving to missions, educating our children for service, aiding our sanitariums, and in every possible way seeking to hasten the message to its culmination.

But we may do all this and not know the Lord. We may sell denominational books, and yet not know the Lord Jesus Christ. We may give liberally to missions, be faithful in the payment of tithes and strict observers of the Sabbath of the Lord so far as outward form is concerned, and yet not have reached in our own Christian experience a real knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies for the burning, and still lack the essential quality of love. Are you one of this number? Have you a name to live, and yet after all is your experience a dead one? Is your name on the church book, and are you counted by your fellows as one of Israel, and yet are you really disconnected from the true vine?

What is it to know the Lord Jesus Christ? It is to know Him in all the blessed relationships which He sustains to the human family. It is to know Him as a friend, the dearest friend in all the world. It is to know Him as a loving Father, a sin-pardoning Savior. Do you know Him in these relationships? Do you hold sweet communion with Him? Do you confide in Him? Can you feel, as it were, the touch of His hand, the beating of His great heart of love? Do you know what it is for Him to walk with you and talk with you day by day?

To know the Lord is to know the power of His resurrection in a changed life; not as a Savior alone in the great eternity beyond, but as a Savior here and now; as one that cleanses from sin here, today. Do you know the Lord in this relationship? Has He given you the victory over your temper, over evil surmising, over envy and jealousy? Has He given you the victory over evil speaking? He is able to do all this, and added to His great power is His willingness to do it. The joy of the Christian life is the joy of victory, of triumph over sin, in personal experience; and this personal triumph it is the privilege of every disciple of the Lord to have. Is this triumph yours?

Joy of Service

To know the Lord Jesus Christ is to know the joy of service, and the fellowship of suffering. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abided faithful. He can not deny himself." 2 Timothy 2:11-13. When we come to know Him as He is and to rejoice in His companionship, oh, then we will love to live and labor for Him! Our service will not be a forced one. We will be able to say with the psalmist, "How love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97.

The path of duty may lead over mountain heights. The road may be rugged and rough and steep. Weariness, fatigue, and pain may afflict us; but even in the pain and sorrow, in the rough and rugged way, we may rejoice in Christ's presence and companionship. That communion will lend sweetness to all the journey. We shall know what it is to sing songs in the night of our experience. Love will prompt the labor and sweeten every bitter draft. The waters of Marah will be turned into fountains of blessing and rejoicing.

Dear reader, are you having in your life such an experience as this? It is your privilege. God does not want us to go on in a cold, halfhearted experience. He does not want us to feel compelled to give a forced service. When we continually force ourselves to Christian duty, it makes of the service of God slavish drudgery. There is a better kind of service, and it is your privilege and mine to enter into it. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and he at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." Job 22:21.

THE FIGHT, THE FAITH, THE CROWN

HAVE fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

Considering the circumstances under which these words of triumphant faith were spoken, we must regard them as among the most remarkable utterances in all history. The apostle Paul was nearing the end of his earthly journey. Rejected by his own nation, to whom he sought to minister the gospel, forced to appeal to the court of Caesar to escape the unjust judgment of his own flesh and blood, incarcerated in a

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dreary dungeon cell, forsaken by his own disciples, with the prospect before him of speedy death, he faced a situation that was indeed anything but hopeful or reassuring. But while the outlook was dark, the up look was bright. A greater than Caesar sat on the throne of eternal justice, and to him the apostle looked for the final adjudication of his cause. A heart of infinite love yearned over the persecuted and forsaken disciple, and in that communion and fellowship the apostle found solace and comfort.

In his prolonged captivity the apostle had been surrounded by the legionaries of Rome. He had witnessed the triumphal celebrations of victorious armies. He had looked upon the battle-scarred veterans as they returned from the conflict. He compares in this scripture the experience of the soldier of Christ with that of the soldier of earthly governments. But oh, what a difference in the aims, the purposes, the methods, the labors, the rewards, of the two classes!

The nations of men fight for the love of conquest, for national honor, for aggrandizement in money or in territory, or because of real or fancied insults. Victory is purchased at any sacrifice of pain and suffering and bloodshed. Desolated fields, burned villages, ruined homes, widowed wives, orphaned children, and a thousand other woes follow in the wake of human strife. "There are thorns in victory's proudest crowns."

To the apostle human war brought its lesson and served him as a simile, but in his heart its spirit found no appeal. His was a holier cause. His was a fight for God and for the eternal principles of love and justice and purity and peace. It was his to heal wounds, not to make them; to save life, not to destroy it; to reconcile his enemies, not to do them despite. Of the conflict in which he was engaged, he declares:

"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." Ephesians 6:12.

"(For the weapons of our warfare," he says, "are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:4.

This warfare included primarily the conflict with sin in his own heart. Of his own experience he says, "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." 1 Corinthians 9:27.

And as the apostle sought through the mighty weapons of God's Spirit and grace to vanquish the enemy of all righteousness from his own heart, so he sought by every means in his power to assist his fellows to wage the same successful warfare in their experience. This was the great and mighty conflict in which the apostle engaged. It was a fight for character, for right, for God.

Keeping the Faith

He further declares, "I have kept the faith." The keeping of the faith meant far more to the apostle than the giving of mental assent to a system of theological dogmas and doctrines. This brief word represented a life of sacrifice and suffering, of toil and hardship and privation. Born in the proud city of Tarsus, a Roman citizen in his own right, a Jew in religion, a member of the aristocratic sect of the Pharisees, taught by Gamaliel, a learned doctor of the law, a member doubtless of the Sanhedrin, the apostle Paul had before him every worldly prospect for a successful and honorable career. Easily could he have become a leader in his own nation and in the world of thought and action. But he was turned aside from this pleasing prospect.

While on his way to Damascus, commissioned by the highest authorities of the Jewish church to persecute even unto death the followers of Christ, a vision from God enlightened the eyes of his understanding. He saw for the first time in their true light his own, sordid purposes, his unholy and selfish ambitions. He realized the vanity of human achievement, the emptiness of worldly honor and glory, the worthlessness of earthly riches, and in striking contrast the beauty and nobility of a life devoted to God and to the uplifting of his fellow men, and the eternal reward of well doing. He declares:

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Philippians 3:7, 8.

It was no easy service to which the Master called him. He must throw in his lot henceforth with a poor, despised people. He must adopt a name associated in the world's estimation with a cross of infamy. But the greatness of his soul and the nobility of his purpose were shown by his decision. He stopped not to confer with flesh and blood. He returned not to Jerusalem to take counsel with his friends. He was obedient to the heavenly vision, showing first to those in Damascus, later in Jerusalem and Asia Minor, and finally

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in Rome, his change of life purpose and his newborn faith.

Paul's Great Trials

Of the stern realities of his Christian experience he speaks freely. Comparing his credentials of apostle ship with the claims of false teachers, he declares:

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which comes upon me daily, the care of all the churches." 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.

And this on the part of the apostle was not an unwilling service to his Master. He declares, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." 2 Corinthians 12:10. The keeping of the faith meant something to the apostle Paul. It meant wearing labor, toilsome journeys, unremitting toil, sacrifice, persecutions, and finally death.

Was all this sacrifice worth while? Did it pay the apostle to turn aside from every earthly prospect, to reject all that the world proffered him, and to cast in his lot with the humble people of God? Will the Christian's hope give comfort when all else fails? Listen to the apostle's unwavering profession of faith from his prison house in Rome. Speaking of his appointment as a preacher of righteousness, and of the persecutions which that work brought to him, he declares, "Nevertheless I am not ashamed. For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is, able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Timothy 1:12.

Moses' Wise Choice

We find a striking parallel of the experience of the apostle Paul in the history of Moses. Within his grasp were the riches of Egypt. As a son of Pharaoh's daughter he was heir to the Egyptian throne. Every motive of worldly ambition, of selfish interest, of personal gratification, urged him to identify himself with the royal household. But, closing his ears to every importunity, he rejected these proffers of worldly greatness and honor. The record is that he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a Season.

This sterling integrity of a faithful servant was honored by the God of heaven. Moses became the leader of a mighty movement, an agent in the hands of God for the formation of a commonwealth founded upon principles of equity and justice which have been incorporated into the laws of every civilized government since that period. And when Moses died, God resurrected him and took him home to glory. Think you when Moses descended upon the mount of transfiguration, and amid the celestial glory talked with Elijah and with Christ, he regretted the choice he had made? The proud throne of the Pharaohs had long since crumbled to dust; the haughty oppressors of the children of God were known only in the pages of history; but Moses, who chose the lot of the bondmen and esteemed the reproach of Christ above the pomp and pageantry, the riches and glory, of worldly splendor, lived and reigned in the courts above.

Is the Christian's hope worth while? Let the patriarch job answer. From the depths of his affliction he cried: I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of your hands." Job 19:25; 14:14, 15.

Let Balaam answer as he contemplated the reward awaiting faithful Israel: "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Numbers 23:10.

Listen to the king of Israel as in soul distress he turns to God: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 27:13, 14; 17:15.

And to this concert of testimony might he added the dying witness of the saints of God in every age. It was the witness of the apostle. His testimony was, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

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No Neutral Ground

In this conflict of warring principles every created intelligence has a part. Directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, every human being is casting his influence on the side of God or on the side of the adversary. There is no neutral ground. Indeed, to choose to be neutral is to choose the ways of death. And no man can evade responsibility for his choosing.

Human reasoning says that it is vain to serve God, and inquires, What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance and walk mournfully before the Lord of hosts? The Lord in this life apparently puts little difference between the righteous and the wicked. He sends His rain on the just and on the unjust. He desires that man shall serve Him from love and from principle rather than through the hope of temporal reward. But the time will come, He declares, when we shall “return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that served Him not.” Malachi 3:18. Of His children at that time the Lord declares, “They shall be mine, said the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spared his own son that served him.” Verse 17. In that day we shall recognize, as never before, that it pays to serve God.

It was to the day of final awards that the apostle Paul looked forward. It was respect for the recompense of the reward which led- Moses to decide for God. May God make that our hope. The night of sin will soon be over. We see the signs of approaching day. Christ will soon come to take His children home. May we learn to suffer with Him here, that we may reign with Him in eternity. By His grace may we so live that at the end of our earthly journey we may say in the words of the Spirit’s prompting, representing our own experience, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

He Will Care for You

When your load seems hard to carry,
And the path of life is steep;
When the mountains rise above you,
And the valleys are so deep;
It is then you need a helper
And a friend to bear your load,
Someone who can lift your burdens
And assist you on the road.

When your heart is crushed and broken
With a nameless pain and grief;
When your soul is filled with sorrow
And you seek for some relief;
There is One who knows your burdens,
One who ever is your Friend;
He hath trod the way before you,
He does fully understand.

There is One, the blessed Jesus,
Who alone your heart does know.
You may tell Him every sorrow,
Every heartache, pain, and woe.
He will press you to His bosom
With a tender, loving care;
He will whisper words of comfort,
And will all your troubles share.

Yes, there’s One who will go with you
Through the dark and cheerless night,
One who never fails nor falters-
He will make your burdens light.

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It is He who died for sinners,
He will guide you all the way;
Then, dear soul, give Him your burdens
And your night will turn today.
N. P. NEILSEN

B. The Divine Comforter

THE MYSTERY OF SORROW

WE LIVE in a world of sunshine and shadow, of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain, of life and death, of realized hopes and disappointed expectations. Choose as we may, we must drink the bitter as well as the sweet of life's experiences. We ask many times, Why is this? Why this strange and mysterious anomaly of good and ill? By no human logic are we able to solve life's problems.

Life's web seems tangled at best, the pattern confused and conflicting. But how comforting to believe that the hand of the divine Weaver is shaping the design, and that which appears so confusing now will give place to beautiful proportion and harmonious symmetry. This is our hope in death's dark hour. God watches over His own. He stands unseen in the shadow, but His hand guides the divine shuttle. He will cause every experience of life to work for His own glory and for the good of His children.

The Human and the Divine

We are sometimes inclined to view the questions of life from a human perspective. Present plans, present pleasure, or present convenience dictates our choice. Not so with God. He chooses not for our temporary pleasure or profit but for our ultimate good. He takes into account, not the few short hours of this present life alone, but the sweep of eternity. We may say, indeed, in the words of the poet:

“Our times are in God's hands, and all our days
Are as our needs: for shadow as for sun,
For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike
Our thanks are due, since that is best which is.”

“When thou passes through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walks through the fire, thou shall not he burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” Isaiah 43:2.

The trials of life constitute the divine crucible. God “shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Malachi 3:3. He who has never known sorrow in his life has never known the sweet companionship of the divine Comforter.

“God has a song to teach us, and when we have learned it amid the deep shadows of affliction, we can sing it ever afterward.”-ELLEN G. WHITE in Review and Herald, November 25, 1884.

“Now we see through a glass, darkly.” 1 Corinthians 13:2. We cannot reason out why we are guided over the path we travel. But sometime all shall be made clear. We are instructed:

“All the perplexities of life's experience will then be made plain. Where to us have appeared only confusion and disappointment, broken purposes and thwarted plans, will be seen a grand, overruling, victorious purpose, a divine harmony.” - Education, p. 305. “God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning.” - The Desire of Ages, p. 225.

“The ills we see,
The mysteries of sorrow deep and long,
The dark enigmas of permitted wrong, Have all one key;
This strange, sad world is but our Father's school;
All chance and change His love shall overrule.
What though today
Thou cannot trace at all the hidden reason
For His strange dealings through the trial season? Trust and obey;

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In after life and light all shall be plain and clear.”

Pain and sorrow, if patiently borne, “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” And thus we become companions of Christ in His sufferings. Sorrow and suffering reveal to us more fully God’s tender love. And in the comfort we receive we are better able to comfort others who are in any trouble with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

God’s Attributes

It is well for us to consider, in the hours of trial and darkness through which we are called upon to pass, what there is in God’s character that constitutes a basis for faith and confidence. The Father in heaven is not incompetent to care for His own. As we study His attributes, there are three which stand out in bold relief from all the others: His infinite power, His infinite wisdom, and His infinite love. Consider each of these for a moment.

He possesses all power in heaven and in earth. He is the direct or indirect cause of every energy and impulse in the universe. Indeed, it was by His mighty power that the universe came into existence. He spoke, and it was. “He commanded, and it stood fast.” Out of nothing His word created the material worlds.

Added to this infinite power, is His infinite wisdom. With God there is no experiment. He knows the end from the beginning. He cannot learn by experience.

But the third attribute is necessary to complete the trinity. God possesses infinite love as well, and in this He has given us the supreme evidence. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die for poor, lost humanity, yea, more, for a race of rebels. And to this statement the apostle adds, “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?” Romans 8:32. God’s love enlists for us the exercise of His infinite power and His infinite wisdom. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

This trinity of attributes constitutes the foundation for abiding trust. We may therefore confidently believe that we are in His hands, and that He will choose for us, such experiences in life as He sees will be for our eternal good. As to the value of sorrow in our lives we have received this instruction:

“Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. God ‘does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.’ When He permits trials and afflictions, it is ‘for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.’ If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means of turning our eyes to heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him.”

“The trials of life are God’s workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our character. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process; it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel. But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple. Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace.” - Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, Pages 23, 24.

It appears many times to us in our afflictions that God has withdrawn Himself; but if our eyes could be opened, we should see Him standing back in the shadow and watching over His own. He is watching to see that the fires of affliction and trial do their appointed work. His great heart of love is touched with sympathy in all our afflictions. The trial which seems so hard today is working out His glorious purpose in our lives, and it will bring to us comfort and courage.

“Happy is the man whom God corrected. He makes sore, and binds up; He wounded, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.’ To every stricken one, Jesus comes with the ministry of healing. The life of bereavement, pain, and suffering may be brightened by precious revealing of His presence.”

“God would not have us remain pressed down by dumb sorrow, with sore and breaking hearts. He would have us look up, and behold His dear face of love. The blessed Savior stands by many whose eyes are so blinded by tears that they do not discern Him. He longs to clasp our hands, to have us look to Him in simple faith, permitting Him to guide us. His heart is open to our grief, our sorrows, and our trials. He has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness compassed us about. We may keep the heart stayed upon Him, and meditate upon His loving-kindness all the day. He will lift the soul above the daily sorrow and perplexity, into a realm of peace.” - Ibid., Pages 25, 26.

To toil, to strive, to labor, and to lift, For love of God and good of fellow man, Is noble worth. But patiently to rest and wait awhile, To find in pain and disappointed hope His guiding hand and way of perfect peace, To bow in faith to His well-ordered plan Even though His plan may cut athwart our own, Is

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nobler still.

TURNING THE BITTER TO SWEET

THE children of Israel had been delivered from the power of Pharaoh. A path had been made for them through the Red Sea, and they had passed over on dry land. The Egyptians attempting to follow them were overthrown in the flood of waters. This marvelous deliverance should have set at rest every doubt. The manifestation of God's tender mercy and marvelous power should have enlisted the fullest consecration and deepest trust on the part of every soul, and no doubt many thought that never again in their experience would they doubt the Lord.

When Moses and the children of Israel sang the song of deliverance, when Miriam and all the women of Israel, with instruments of music, engaged in their triumphal dance, no doubt every heart was filled with rejoicing. From Egyptian servitude, with its consequent depression and darkness, they had been raised by the interposition of God to the heights of triumph and joy. But they did not fully fathom the deeper underlying motives and purposes in their lives. They could rejoice in the hour of prosperity and success, but it yet remained to be seen whether they could carry that rejoicing into the hour of trial and difficulty.

They were brought in their journeying into the wilderness of Shur, and for three days they traveled without finding water. Finally they reached Marah. Here was water in abundance, and in eagerness they welcomed it. But hope was turned to disappointment; for the water was bitter, and the people were unable to drink it. This was an opportunity for them to demonstrate their faith in God, but here in the hour of darkness they failed. The record is that the people murmured against Moses, and in murmuring against Moses, they murmured against God and His providence. In his distress Moses cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree which, when it was cast into the water, turned the bitter into sweet.

Failure to Trust God

God had brought His people to this testing time in order to prove them. He knew the character of the waters before He directed their journey thither. He knew what He would do in order to quench their burning thirst. How much better it would have been had Israel trusted to His providence! How blessed would have been their experience had they in confidence stood by with cheerful hearts and composed spirits, waiting for God to work out His purpose, and seeing how He would deliver them from their extremity! Surely, He who had visited upon Egypt the plagues of His wrath who had made it possible for them to escape from their oppressors, and had cleaved for them the path through the Red Sea, was able in His own way to furnish water to satisfy their needs.

The lesson is for us. Many times in our experiences we are brought to Marah's brink. We thirst; and when we attempt to supply our need, the water is bitter. These experiences come to us as God's proving and testing, the same as to Israel of old. How many times do we, like them, murmur and complain. O, let us learn the lesson of confidence and trust, of waiting for God to work things out in His own way and time! If we trust Him, He will literally verify His promise to us that "all things work together for good to them that love C-rod." Romans 8:28. Let us, then, commit to Him the tracings of our pathway; let us trust Him to go before us as before ancient Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire, we patiently following where He leads.

The Voice of Infinite Love

Many and varied are the means and agencies employed by the Master to teach us needed lessons. He speaks to us through His written Word, and through the impressions of His Holy Spirit, through the counsels of friends and even through the criticisms of enemies. He speaks to us in the book of nature. The smiling sunshine, the gently blowing breeze, the merry songsters in the leafy treetops, the variegated flowers and foliage-all bring messages of the Father's love. And no less does He speak to us through the power of the elements and through life's bitter experiences. The judgments of God bring messages of warning to the impenitent. They proclaim in thunder tones His invitation to repentance. Life's sorrows are His pruning shears. Bitter trials become His furnace of purification, burning out of the human heart the lust of envy and the corroding canker of malice and jealousy.

Let us seek to discern the voice of Infinite Love speaking to us in every experience which befalls us. Let us seek to learn the lessons which these experiences would teach. If rightly regarded, they will give

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us largeness of heart, tenderness of spirit, breadth of mind. They will soften, subdue, and ennoble. They will teach us lessons which we may pass on to others in ministry to their need. The songs which we learn to sing in the darkness and in the midst of trial will represent in us an experience of grace which we could obtain in no other way.

Enemies may oppose us, evil tongues may speak against us, fire may consume our dwellings, disease may afflict our bodies, death even may enter our homes. Let us not complain; let us not find fault with God, but believe that as we trust our cases in His hands, He will work everything out for our eternal good, and will give us in this life only the treatment that He, as a wise Physician, sees our cases need in order to fit us for the life to come. If we trust Him, He will turn for us, in every experience, the bitter into sweet.

Does God Care?

Does God care for us in our trials and affliction? Does He care if we are hungry and cold? if we are sick and discouraged? Many in the world today are asking these questions. We can say unequivocally, Yes, God does care. Of Israel of old we are given the definite assurance that "in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:9. We serve the same compassionate, merciful heavenly Father today, and we are assured by the apostle Peter that we are to cast all our care upon Him, "for he cares for you."

The Master once assumed the nature of mankind and lived upon this earth. In the days of His flesh, the apostle assures us, He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Christ knew what it was to be hungry; He knew what it was to be weary; He knew even the power of darkness and depression, if not discouragement. See Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, pleading with the Father, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but pleading his divine resignation that He adds, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Behold Him on the cross, crying out from the darkness that enshrouds Him, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" Because of this human experience, this kinship with us in our trials and difficulties, the apostle admonishes us, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16.

I thank God that we serve not an unfeeling image of wood or stone; we serve a loving Father, whose heart throbs with pleasure at the joyful laugh of a little child, and whose eye melts in pitying tenderness over the trials and afflictions of His disciples. If we can only realize this blessed truth and believe that the Lord is just as near us in the darkness as in the light, in the hour of pain as in the hour of pleasure, it will lighten our load of grief, it will make us brave and strong in the day of test, and it will give us the spirit of thankfulness even in affliction. Because we shall believe that the loving Father is working out some needed experience that could not come otherwise.

Christ's Companionship

Christ desires to become our companion in every one of life's experiences. He desires to come so near to us that we shall feel the assurance of His presence and be able to say with the patriarch Job, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye sees thee." Job 42:5.

So let me say to the sorrowing one, to the one suffering affliction, to the one who is sick and discouraged, to the one who is in want, who is cold and hungry, God cares, and in His own good time He will turn the tide and work deliverance.

Do you ask, If He cares, why then does He permit the sorrow, the sickness, the hunger, the distress? I answer, I cannot tell specifically, but I have such faith in His character and in His dealings with the human family that I know He orders every experience that comes into the lives of His trusting children for their good. He sees that the furnace of affliction will do for them what could be accomplished in no other way. He bruises that He may bind up again; He wounds that He may heal. He causes earthly friends to withdraw their support that His child may be driven closer to Him. He sends pain and sickness, perhaps, that we may sympathize with others who are similarly afflicted. He takes away our loved ones because in our trust in them and in our idolization they have taken the place of God in our affections.

I know not why in any particular instance God sends trial and affliction, but I do know, as I have said, that God is good and He is wise; He is too good to be unkind and too wise to err. And if you and I will but commit our cases into His hands and co-operate with His providence as they are revealed in life, we shall find that the words of the apostle Paul will be verified in our experience, that all things work together for good to them that love God." It is for you and me to prove true in the testing.

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And so, dear one, do not repine. Do not grow rebellious over things you cannot help. Strive manfully and bravely to better your situation, seek God for wisdom to enable you to do this, seek the counsel of friends to see whether they have anything to suggest, and then patiently trust God for all the outcome. He will not forget you or forsake you. He remembered righteous Lot in the destruction of the cities of the plain, and took him to a place of safety. He remembered Jeremiah when he was cast into the loathsome pit, and rescued him from his enemies. He remembered Daniel when by the unrighteous decree of the king he was cast into the den of lions, and shut their mouths so that they did not hurt him. He remembered the three worthies who were cast into the fiery furnace, and brought them out without the smell of fire upon their garments.

And He is the same wonder-working God today, mighty in power, merciful and loving in spirit, and interested now as fully as ever before in all the experiences of His loved ones. He may permit the fires of the furnace to do their work in your life and mine, but He will temper the heat. The dross may be consumed, but the gold of character will be purified and made more resplendent. God cares; let us trust Him.

“When thou passes through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walked through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”

SOMETIME WE SHALL UNDERSTAND

LIFE presents many mysterious problems. We look out into the great universe of God, and how many things there are that we cannot fathom or understand. The heavens above and the depths beneath are beyond our comprehension. The Scriptures of truth contain mysteries. The lives of others are as closed books to our study, and even our own experience has dark and unexplained chapters. We cannot understand why certain things have befallen us, why we have been called upon to pass through certain trials, why certain influences have shaped and molded our experiences. We have been bereft of friends; we have suffered sickness; property has been swept away; those we loved and trusted have apparently turned against us. Our fellows have counted our best efforts for naught, misjudged our motives; and it has seemed at times, as it did to Jacob of old, that our experiences were against us.

To the trusting child of God there is comfort in the thought that the darkness will sometime give place to the light; that the crooked places will be made straight and the dark places plain. Sometime, if not in this world then in the world to come, we shall have the privilege of viewing questions from the standpoint of heaven's exalted plane. We shall see, in so far as finite can see through infinite eyes, as God sees. We shall measure with the great measuring rule of divine wisdom.

The apostle Paul refers to this time and to this experience in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians when he says: “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

A Glorious Heritage

This more perfect knowledge is to be a part of the glorious heritage of the children of God in the ages to come. How blessed it will be to see with undimmed eyes! How sweet to carry about with us the consciousness that our associates are in sympathy with our purposes and understand our motives! We shall not see through a veil, dimly, but face to face. We shall know even as we are known. Some of the hard, trying experiences through which we have been called upon to pass will then be explained by our own blessed Master.

“Christ will lead His redeemed ones beside the river of life, and will explain to them all that perplexed them in this world. The mysteries of grace will unfold before them. Where their finite minds discerned only confusion and broken purposes, they will see the most perfect and beautiful harmony.”- Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 194.

In view of this experience which awaits us, let us be patient. We are now in God's great training school. By the trials and difficulties that we meet He is endeavoring to fit us for a place in His coming kingdom. The trials are His workmen. By them our rough characters are chiseled and fashioned and molded, after the divine similitude. The rough, sharp comets are taken off, and we are fitted to become beautiful stones in the temple of our God.

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By faith we may know, as did the apostle Paul, that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” Again and again human reasoning will deny the truth of this statement as applied to our personal experience; but it is for us, through God’s grace, to permit faith to cast down reasoning, and to build our hopes, not upon the unstable foundation of our own philosophy, but upon the sure word and promises of God. We may not understand how divine omnipotence can shape the experiences of life so that they will work out our eternal good, but our great Father of wisdom and love has pledged His word that this shall be done for us, as far as we will patiently submit our cases into His hands.

Then let us not repine and mourn and complain. Let us be patient through the purifying process, trusting that in the glorious future we shall understand all life’s mysteries, and know why God has led us over the road we have traveled and brought us through the experiences which have befallen us.

In the following song the poet has beautifully expressed our thought and the hope that should comfort our hearts throughout life’s journey.

“The desert way He sometimes leads us,
The simple manna that He feeds us,
The humble work for which He needs us,
We may not always understand;
But while for Canaan gardens yearning,
God’s lessons patiently we’re learning,
The fiery Pillar still is burning
He leads, He leads;
We need not understand.

“The bondage which we’ve left, repenting,
The foe that follows unrelenting,
The deep, wide sea our flight preventing,
We need not always understand;
But we’ve a Father wise and loving,
Let faith His promises be proving;
Stand still and see the waters moving
He rules, He rules; We need not understand.

“Why to the bitter fountains guided,
When it was for crystal springs we chided,
Nor knew we prayed with heart divided,
We may not always understand;
But by the lonely pool of Marah,
The living water seemed dearer,
And Christ, the riveted Rock, is nearer
Life flows, life flows, We need not understand.

“And when we reach the Jordan River,
Where day’s last shadows faintly quiver,
O may the arms of the Life-giver Bear safely to the promised land!
Till then we trust the One who knows,
No storm forbidden ever blew, No tear unnoticed ever flowed
He knows, He knows; Sometime we’ll understand.”

Beauty for Ashes

Out of the shadows comes song, Out of the storm a calm;
Out of affliction, strength and poise, Out of life’s bitter, balm.

Out of our failings, out of our falls, Pity for others’ shame;
Out of our hunger for tenderness, Love and a little less blame.

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Out of our darkness springs light To brighten another's way;
Out of our battles, lost or won, Strength for a brother's fray.

Out of the gray of a clouded sky, Falls the cooling rain;
Out of our sorrow, out of our woe, Healing for other's pain.

Out of the tangled and broken threads, Out of your life and mine,
The Master weaves a beautiful thing, After His own design.

BERTHA D. MARTIN

C. The Christian Church

A SEPARATE PEOPLE

GOD designed that His children in every age should be a peculiar people. He established His church to do a distinctive work, separate from every other organization in the world. It was His design that the members of His church should stand forth as lights in the world, as ambassadors of heaven to those who knew not God. This principle is enunciated by the prophet of the Lord, who was called by Balak, king of Moab, to curse Israel.

“How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? Or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” Numbers 23:8, 9.

The children of God are actuated by purposes different from those of the people of the world. They labor from different motives. In the very nature of the case they could not be reckoned among the nations of earth. They must stand separate and alone.

This was the call extended to Abraham, the father of the faithful. He was asked to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, to go into a strange land and among strange peoples as God's light bearer. Throughout his sojourn in the land of Canaan he maintained this separate character, and this separate, distinctive existence was enjoined upon his descendants. The Israelites were faithfully admonished not to form any affiliation or partnership with their neighbors in Canaan. They were not to permit their sons and daughters to marry unbelievers; they were not to bow down to other gods, but were to maintain the holy character and exalted position to which God had called them. (Deuteronomy 7:1-6.)

The New Testament Scriptures abound with many statements of these principles. The burden of Christ's prayer, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, was that while His followers were left in the world they should be kept free from worldly contamination and worldly influences. The apostles enunciated this principle over and over. In the writings of John, Peter, James, and Paul the church is warned against worldly affiliations.

In reviewing the history of the church we see that wherever this plain instruction was disregarded and the principle of complete separation violated, apostasy from the truth and departure from God were the inevitable results.

Balaam's Deception

Powerless to utter the curse which his covetous heart had framed against Israel, Balaam sought by more subtle methods to obtain the rich reward offered by Balak, and to bring upon Israel the displeasure of God. He recommended that Israel he invited to witness the sports and attend the feasts of the Moabites. He himself as a professed servant of the Lord lent his personal influence to secure their attendance. His wicked scheme succeeded all too well. Hundreds from the camp of Israel were beguiled into the snare. They mingled with their heathen neighbors; they attended their feasts. In consequence they became the prey of the seductive wiles of the Moabitish women and sacrificed their integrity of character, going so far finally as to offer sacrifices to the gods of Moab. The anger of the Lord was kindled against them. The plague broke out in the camp of Israel, and twenty-four thousand were destroyed. It was a costly thing for Israel to

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forget the place to which God had called them in the world.

In the days of Jehoshaphat we are afforded another striking illustration of the results following disobedience to the instruction of the Lord. Ahab reigned in Samaria over the ten tribes. Jehoshaphat was king at Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat sincerely followed the true God. Ahab, while he recognized the God of heaven, worshiped the gods of the heathen about him. Antagonistic to both kingdoms was Syria, on the north. Against the king of Syria Ahab proclaimed war, and invited Jehoshaphat to join him against their common foe. It seemed a reasonable request, and Jehoshaphat, forgetting the distinctive place to which God had called him and the kingdom over which he ruled, “joined affinity with Ahab.” Ahab was slain, and Jehoshaphat barely escaped with his life. As he returned to Jerusalem, Jehu, the prophet, met him and inquired, “Should thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord!” 2 Chronicles 19:2. The king of Judah was not reprov'd for fighting against Syria. Indeed, Syria was one of the nations which Israel was commanded to exterminate. In joining affinity with Ahab, Jehoshaphat had lost his distinctive character. He was associating with those who knew not God, and for that reason the blessing of Heaven could not attend his efforts.

Ezra Refuses to Compromise

Later, in the days of the rebuilding of Jerusalem under Ezra, some of the people round about Judea, the successors of the ten tribes-who maintained at Samaria a mixed worship, who “feared the Lord, and served their graven images” desired to unite in the work of restoring the temple service. They said, “Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as you do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.” Ezra 4:2. But Zerubbabel and those associated with him in the work were not deceived by these specious representations. They realized that God had called them to do a distinctive work for Him, and in the performance of that work they must stand alone. They returned the answer: “You have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.” Verse 3.

In consequence of this refusal to permit these surrounding nations to make common cause with them, the repairers of the city were subjected for long years to all manner of persecutions, which was continued not alone through the administration of Ezra but reached into that of later generations. By threats, cajolery, and intrigue they sought to form an alliance with Nehemiah. In response to their request for a conference he returned to them this noble answer: I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” Nehemiah 6:3. Like Ezra, he recognized the distinctive character of God’s work, and that in carrying on that work he must stand free from every outside influence and worldly entanglement.

God has called His people who are engaged in this movement to occupy a unique place in the world and to do a distinctive work. Seventh-day Adventists are entrusted with a special message for their fellows. With what spirit should that message be given? On what basis should our work be carried forward? How should we relate ourselves to the various societies and movements which in part may have common interests with us? These surely are questions for earnest consideration. We believe it is well for us to study carefully the principles contained in the scriptures which have been cited.

Love Not the World

The Lord through His prophet declares of His church, “Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” Numbers 23:9. He designed that His church should be a separate people, and that they should do a distinctive work. Directly and indirectly Satan has sought to corrupt the church and divert it from the work it was commissioned to do. He has sought to do this directly through corrupting worldly influences which lead to positive sin. The apostle John bears this warning:

“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 passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever.” 1 John 2:15-17.

Indirectly the enemy of all righteousness has sought to corrupt the church by leading it to compromise its position in forming affiliations with the world. The evil has not at first been apparent, but the fruits of these affiliations, when persisted in, have proved to be apostasy and separation from God. Against such association the apostle Paul utters a direct warning in the following words:

“Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with

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Belial? Or what part hath he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, said the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, said the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

In this counsel is emphasized the idea of complete separation. The people of God must live in the world till the coming of the deliverer, but they are not to be of the world; they are not to imbibe its spirit or follow its practices. They are to stand among their fellows as separate and distinct in purpose and in character. Says the apostle Peter, “You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.” 1 Peter 2:9. In what particulars are the peculiarities of the children of God to be made manifest? “That you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” The apostle Paul bears the same testimony in Titus 2:11-14:

“For the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

With the plans and purposes, the pursuits and pleasures of this world the children of God have nothing in common. They cannot consistently unite with the careless along at the race track or in the theater, in the dancing hall or at the billiard table. In dress, in conversation, and in general deportment they must show that their affections are set on the things of God and not on the riches and pleasures of this world. To their fellows they have been made the ambassadors of the King of heaven, and in their lives they are to represent the principles of the divine government. In their labors for God they can know no man after the flesh. Their mission is to the people of every kindred and nation, of every color and social state. They recognize that “God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feared him, and works righteousness, is accepted with him.”

One Gospel for All

The world is divided into classes. Political, social, and religious distinctions are observed. These distinctions cannot be regarded by the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ. Men of every class are afflicted with the same disease-sin. The heralds of the cross are to carry to them the one universal remedy-salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The people represented in this movement have been called into existence to do a specific work for this day and generation—a work which no other religious body is attempting or professing to do. There is due the world today a message of warning pertaining to those things which are soon to come upon the earth. This message is designed as a message of salvation. It warns against the evils and the errors which are threatening the very existence of vital godliness. It calls the inhabitants of the earth to forsake the worship of man for the worship of God; to break from the thralldom of sin and accept the liberty that there is in Christ Jesus. It warns against the worship of the beast and his image and against the reception of his mark, against the great combinations of evil which will be formed in antagonism to the truth of God in the last days; and it develops a people who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:6-12.)

To no other church, to no other organization, patriotic or political, has the giving of this message been committed. It is the distinctive work of the people connected with this movement. Seventh-day Adventists have been called into existence for the very purpose of sounding this warning. They must not in any way compromise their position or lower the standard which they have been set to maintain.

They cannot give the message from motives of patriotism or expediency. They bear a gospel of love, not of hate; of salvation, not of condemnation; of good will, not of class hatred or distinction. They are to seek to save their fellows of every class and persuasion. Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, heathen and Mohammedan. In this work of soul saving they must keep so free from class and party spirit that their message will go unclouded and unencumbered, free and untrammelled, carrying the spirit of love and good will to all men. Their power in the proclamation of this message will be in direct proportion as they keep out of their lives every corrupting worldly influence, and in proportion as the movement itself maintains its high and holy character distinct and separate from every worldly affiliation.

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A POSITIVE, WELL-BALANCED MESSAGE

THE gospel of Christ is positive, not negative. Its supreme purpose is to build up, not tear down. There will be, of course, a tearing-down process in the very work of building up, but this will follow as the natural result; it will not be the objective. We live in a world of sin. We see evil on every side, even in the church of Christ. The wheat and tares will grow together until the day of final harvest. As long as poor human nature is connected with the work of God, we shall see imperfections. We must be careful that we do not look at these imperfections so constantly, or contemplate so long the mistakes and failures which exist, that our message will become a sad lament over sin instead of a positive up building message of righteousness.

False Reformers

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram sought to reform the church in the wilderness. But unfortunately they had only a negative message to proclaim. They could tell of the weaknesses of Moses-and doubtless he possessed weaknesses, as does every human leader-but they had no better system of government to propose, no remedy for the human imperfections which they recognized. They were not true reformers. They were only faultfinders, the accusers of the brethren; and their prototypes have existed in every age. We find them in every quarter of the earth at the present time. Unfortunately, too many of them are like the original type back in the wilderness. They have failed first to reform their own lives. Their message provides no remedy for the evils which exist. Their gospel is a negative gospel, one of criticism and faultfinding. They are carrying on the same work for which some of their forebears were noted, and the signal judgment visited upon their predecessors should stand as a timely warning to them.

There is danger that even though we do not connect with any particular disorganizing movement, we shall cherish in a measure the same spirit in our personal relation to the church of God, finding in the conduct of some of our brethren and sisters, the way they eat and drink, or the way they dress, that which will engross our entire thought, and become the only message we have to give.

Withering Spiritually

The only religion which some people possess is a worldly, self-righteous form, which finds its inspiration in the faults of others. This is well expressed in the following words:

“I saw that some are withering spiritually. They have lived some time watching to keep their brethren straight watching for every fault, to make trouble with them. And while doing this, their minds are not on God, nor on Heaven, nor on the truth; but just where Satan wants them on some one else. Their souls are neglected; they seldom see and feel their own faults, for they have had enough to do to watch the faults of others without so much as looking to their own souls, or searching their own hearts. A person’s dress, bonnet, or apron takes their attention. They must talk to this one or that one, and it is sufficient to dwell upon for weeks. I saw that all the religion a few poor souls have, consists in watching the garments and acts of others, and finding fault with them. Unless they reform, there will be no place in Heaven for them, for they would find fault with the Lord Himself.” -Testimonies, Volume 1, Page 145.

While we condemn evil in the church, let us not clothe ourselves with any sort of self-righteousness which makes ourselves pure and everyone who differs from us impure; which makes ourselves righteous, and everybody who does not meet our standard unrighteous. We need to distinguish between sin and sinners. We should condemn sin, but we should love the sinner. We should hate wrong, but we should put forth every kindly Christian effort to save the wrongdoer.

The church of Christ has a right to judge of the deportment of its members. This is positively taught in the Bible. When men and women do not walk in accordance with the principles of the gospel, if earnest labor does not effect a reform, their separation from the church should be brought about. But although the church has a right to judge in such matters in its judicial capacity, we have been warned again and again against private judgment, against personal criticism, against impugning the motives of men and women, against judging of their Christianity because they do not conform to some standard erected in our own minds.

A Place for Constructive, Helpful Criticism

Helpful, constructive criticism has its place. Oftentimes there exist conditions which need to be analyzed and remedied. Criticism of this sort seeks the glory of God and the advancement of His cause, and not the destruction of His work or the tearing down of individuals. When we are tempted to criticize

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conditions existing in the church, it is well for us to examine our own hearts to find the real motive which prompts us. In too many cases we are prompted by personal pique or animosity against individuals. Oftentimes it is made with the spirit of self defense, to excuse personal sin and show how much more greatly a brother or sister has sinned. How many times we deceive ourselves into believing that we are contending for some great principle of right when, after all, no principle is involved. It is merely our own opinion. It is because our judgment has been called into question, and we want our own way instead of accepting the ways of others.

Helpful, constructive criticism has its place; but let us remember that helpful, constructive criticism is prompted by the spirit of love, and is governed and balanced by the wisdom that comes from above.

Be Kind and Considerate

There is a great need in many hearts and lives, even of professed Seventh-day Adventists, of the grace of human kindness. In our dealing with the erring, with those who have gone astray, we need to exercise the spirit of kindness and love. With this spirit we can express to people the plainest truths, and they will not take offense; we can point out glaring errors in the lives of sinners, and they will not become angry. But when this labor is put forth in the spirit of self-righteousness, when one fails to heed the admonition of the apostle Paul, to consider himself lest he also be tempted, then it is that the sinner rises up in self-justification of his own course, and in rebellion against the one who is seeking to help him.

Let us stand like the immovable rock against every species of sin. Let us maintain the simplicity of the message which God has given us. Let us advocate simplicity in diet, simplicity in dress. Let us do it kindly and considerately, and in a way that will win our erring brethren and sisters, and not repel them.

Judge Not

We may consider with profit the following beautiful lines from Adelaide Anne Procter:

“Judge not; the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou cannot see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God’s pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou would only faint and yield.”

“The look, the air, that frets thy sight,
May be a token, that below
The soul has closed in deadly fight
With some infernal fiery foe,
Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
And cast thee shuddering on thy face!”

“The fall thou dared to despise,
May be the angel’s slackened hand
Has suffered it, that he may rise
And take a firmer, surer stand;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.”

“And judge none lost; but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain;
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain
And love and glory that may raise
This soul to God in after days!”

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BROTHERLY LOVE

THE unity of the believers in the work and service of the Master is absolutely necessary to success. This spirit of unity is essential to the success of even worldly enterprises, much more of spiritual work. For this unity the Master prayed in that wonderful petition recorded by John:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me.” John 17:20, 21.

This unity is not to be achieved by centralized human authority or influence. There is in it no element of fear. It is not brought about by the blind submission of one disciple to another. Christ is the center of the unit. “One is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren.” Matthew 23:8. As every man submits himself to the divine Head and finds unity with that Head, in this way will he find unity with every other man who likewise centers in Christ.

The mainspring of this unity is love-love of the Lord and Master, and love of the brethren. Indeed, the test of one’s love for God is his love for his brethren. Declares the apostle, “If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” 1 John 4:20.

The evidence that one has passed from death unto life, is found in the love he bears toward his brethren. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother abides in death. Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” 1 John 3:14, 15.

These considerations are worthy of special study by the members of the church, and particularly so by the ministers of Christ. There is a great need of the cultivation of love for the brethren. We see altogether too much criticism – criticism on the part of brother of brother, on the part even of preacher of preacher. Roots of bitterness are cherished. Someone feels that his name has been cast out as evil, his reputation has been injured, his motives have been impugned, his conduct has been misjudged. There has been created in consequence a feeling of malice, of antipathy, against those who have done this. Instead of going to those who have wronged him or whom he has wronged, he hides his inward feelings under a fair exterior, he talks of faith and love, but at the same time he is cherishing in the inmost recesses of his heart feelings which are the very opposite of those which he exhorts others to manifest in their experience.

Our Love Tested

It goes without saying that our love for our brethren will be at times severely tried. There will be apparent provocation for us to think ill of them and to believe that they think ill of us. We shall be associated with men whose ways are unpleasant, who have traits of character that grate upon our sensibilities. Christ had all of these provocations. He had to deal with the penurious, thieving nature of Judas, with the impulsive, coarse nature of Peter, with the unholy ambition of James and John. But He loved them notwithstanding, and He sought by the power of that love to draw them to Himself, and even when some of them turned against Him, when He knew that Judas was a traitor at heart and was seeking opportunity to betray Him, He still sought to draw them back unto Himself.

Is it not a remarkable experience to contemplate, that though Christ knew from the beginning the fearful work Judas would do, every step that Judas would take in the final betrayal, yet the Master said not one word to the other disciples? By no act of His, by no word or look on the part of Christ, were they conscious of Judas’s guilt. What an example for us!

In view of provocation in our own experience we are exhorted by the apostle in these words: “Finally, be you all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that you are thereunto called, that you should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.” 1 Peter 3:8-10.

We need to reach that place in our experience where each [shall] esteem other better than themselves.” Then nothing will be done through strife and vainglory. (Philippians 2:14.) May the Lord give us this spirit of brotherly love. We must obtain it before we go over into the kingdom. If we are among the saved at last, we must live with our brethren and sisters throughout the endless ages of eternity. How can we live with them in peace there unless we learn to live with them here? How can we enjoy the association of the pure and holy unless we ourselves become pure and holy? God still affords us opportunity to do this. He provides the power and the grace whereby we may attain unto this character.

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Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

CHRISTIAN COURTESY

THE church of God needs to keep before it continually its family relationship. We should be one in Christ, and because one in Christ, one with one another. “For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee!” Hebrews 2:11, 12.

It is only as this divine relationship is recognized, and the spirit which creates it is allowed to control in each individual heart, that there can be preserved in the church of God the bonds of peace and love. Each member of the church possesses an individuality of his own, a temperament peculiar to himself, characteristics which differentiate -him from all his fellows. These are due to heredity, to environment, to education. Naturally these varying characteristics found in different members of the church are bound to clash unless they are subordinated to the one controlling Spirit, and unless there is maintained in each heart love for one another, and kindly consideration and courtesy for each and every member of the church.

The church of God presents a sad picture to the world when it engages in strife and controversy. By such conduct it gives the lie to its holy profession, and denies the great truth of unity by which Christ says, “The world may know that thou has sent me, and has loved them, as thou has loved me.”

In worldly associations we see the spirit of good fellowship and kindly courtesy manifested from selfish considerations. We see men oftentimes contending over principles, arrayed on opposite sides of some great issue, members of opposing parties, and yet personally a warm fellowship oftentimes exists. If those engaged in the earthly conflict can manifest toward one another this spirit of fellowship and kindly courtesy from motives of policy or self-interest, how much more should the followers of Christ, whose purposes and work should be actuated from above.

In the history of the church and of the world we have now entered upon strenuous times. Sometimes even in the church of God we may be associated with unreasonable men and women. Our views may be opposed by our brethren. Others may employ methods and follow plans widely different from our own. This will require a constant exercise of kindliness and courtesy. If we must differ from others as a matter of principle, let us be sure that the spirit of the Master, the spirit of truth, inspires the dissent on our part. The difference which engenders strife and discord and uncharitableness and harsh criticism of others is quite likely not to be a contention for vital truth.

In doing the work of Christ we must speak first His words, and then we must speak His words in His spirit. The failure to do either will repel men rather than win them. It will embitter and never sweeten the hearts of our associates. Sometimes it is necessary for the disciple of the Lord to stand stiffly for truth, even as Paul of old contended for the faith delivered to the saints. In this there may be necessary plainness of speech, but let the plainness of speech be connected with humility of soul.

How Men Are Won

Sharp drives at an opponent never win him for the Lord. It is by the meekness and gentleness of Christ that the hearts of men are won to the gospel. Let us manifest toward all men kindly Christian courtesy. Whatever the occasion, whoever our opponent, however much in our estimation the cause of truth may be maligned, or our personal character attacked, let us be sure, in standing for the truth, that we do it in Christ’s way and not our own. All through His earthly ministry Christ dealt with unreasonable men. His pathway was beset by designing spies, who sought continually to entrap Him in His words, that they might find occasion against Him. All this oftentimes called for plainness of speech. Sometimes, as in the case of the Pharisees and of the cities which rejected His marvelous work, words of denunciation were uttered, yet these were never spoken in anger. While condemning the sin, His heart went out in yearning and pitying tenderness for the sinner; He withstood the evil principle, but sought to draw to Himself the men who upheld it.

We need today, in the message we are carrying to the world, and in our church relationship, to distinguish between men and principles, between the sin and the sinner who holds it. Christ is our pattern; He is the divine example for every pupil in the school of Christ. Let us see that in our own relationship to all men we correctly represent His character in the words we utter, the sentiments we express and the spirit which inspires the utterance. Let us preach the word plainly, faithfully, uncompromisingly; but let us preach it in the spirit of the One whose gospel it is, the spirit of our divine Master.

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“COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE”

AGAIN and again in the Scriptures of truth the people of God are exhorted to be of good courage, to be hopeful, courageous, of good comfort. The basis for their courage and comfort is the promise of divine companionship. After the death of Moses the Lord spoke to Joshua, “Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed;” and the basis for this courage is in the assurance, “For the Lord thy God is with thee whither so ever thou goes.” Joshua 1:9. If God be with us, whom else do we need for guidance and protection? “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31.

God loves His church with an everlasting love. Of His relationship to Israel of old it is declared, “Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” Isaiah 63:8,9. He is just as surely afflicted with our afflictions today as He was afflicted with the experience of Israel of old. He is “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” His love is as enduring as eternity, and it is for us to pass on this word of comfort and courage to the church of Christ.

Sometimes we fear there is a failure to do this. We stand ready to point out sin, and if we are faithful watchmen, we cannot shirk this responsibility. We must warn the flock always of the danger which threatens it, whether that danger is from without or from within. But while we stand ready to rebuke, if need be, let us also stand ready to commend.

Some of the sternest rebukes recorded in the Scriptures of truth are coupled with commendation. Take, for example, the message to the church of Ephesus-the apostolic church. The Lord declares, “I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou cannot bear them which are evil. And thou has tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and has found them liars: and has borne, and has patience, and for my name’s sake has labored, and has not fainted.” Revelation 2:2, 3.

After commending them for their faithfulness in many particulars, He then points out the sins which are separating them from Him: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love.” Verse 4. He exhorts the church to remember whence it has fallen, and to repent and do its first works.

Threatening Evils

There are things in the church of Christ today which need righting. Evils of various types are threatening the lives of some. This we recognize with sorrow of heart, but we also recognize that though some are falling back in their experience, God has true and faithful children. Sometimes we are inclined to a pessimistic view. We look into the darkness. We contemplate the wrongs until we begin to feel, as did Elijah of old, that all have forsaken God, and we are the only ones left who are standing loyal to Him. Elijah was informed that there were seven thousand in Israel just as loyal as he himself, who had not bowed the knee to Baal or kissed his image; and we are constrained to believe that there are many more than seven thousand in Israel today who are true and loyal to the principles of this message, and who have dedicated all that they possess to the service of God.

It is indeed painful to see some with the spirit which possessed Balaam of old-a burning desire to curse Israel. We were impressed with this some time ago by a letter we received from a young man. He wrote, not in a spirit of sorrow, but in a spirit of apparent self-righteousness, of the, sins of Israel and of the back sliding condition of the church at home, forgetting, or failing to recognize, that some of the very men and women whom he censured had given their all to this message through the years, had borne the burden and the heat of the day, and were at that very time dedicating their sons and daughters to Christian service, and giving liberally, even in their penury, for the support of this particular young man, and of the cause of God generally.

Compared with these sacrificing toilers, this young man had never accomplished anything in this work, but he felt that he had done much. Apparently he represents a class who, if we received the report they bring, would lead us to lose all faith in our brethren and sisters, all faith in the leading of God in this movement, and to conclude that instead of the Lord’s taking a people through to the heavenly Canaan, His work is going to pieces. May God save us from this sort of pessimism. Even more, may He save us from this wicked unbelief, because this is the reasoning of the natural heart.

When some of these overzealous brethren seek to fasten our vision upon mistakes and failures, we are reminded of the word of divine inspiration uttered through Balaam. He sought to curse Israel, but God gave him this message: “Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed, and I cannot

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reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.” Numbers 23:20, 21. This was a wonderful statement for God to make. Repeatedly He had chastised Israel, and only a short time after this incident He visited sore judgments upon them. But when mere man rose up to condemn and curse His heritage, the love of the great Father heart rose up in their defense.

We hope that sometime the spirit of censure, faultfinding, and cursing will be turned into the spirit of true missionary labor. We shall find largely what we look for in this world. If we look for evil, we shall find it. If we look for the good, we shall see that.

“Do not look for wrong and evil,
You will find them if you do;
As you measure to your neighbor,
He will measure back to you.

“Look for goodness, look for gladness,
You will find them all the while;
If you bring a smiling visage
To the glass, you meet a smile.”

We recognize the coldness that exists in the church, the formality and worldliness which have entered the lives of some. We believe that we should do all in our power to stem the tide, rescue the feet of the wayward from the downward Path, but oh! we do rejoice with all our hearts that God still lives, and for the loyal brethren and sisters in the church.

THE JOY OF STEWARDSHIP

JESUS is coming again. He is coming soon to take His children home. Signs in the world around us indicate that this is indeed true. Before this great event the joyful news of His coming must be carried to the nations of men. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14.

To us who read and hear these words, there is afforded the blessed opportunity of having a part in this soul-saving service. God has made us the stewards of His grace. As expressed by the apostle Paul, we are the “ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” 1 Corinthians 4:1. And to this the apostle adds, “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” Verse 2.

This stewardship pertains not alone to the preaching of the Word but to every phase of ministry to Christ the Lord. God has given “to every man his work.” He has something for every believer to do in the giving of His message. Some will be called upon to go to lands afar, to give their whole time and energy to the preaching of the Word; others will labor in the homelands; still others will give of their means to support those in active service. Every one of these believers is equally a steward of God.

Speaking of the hour of His coming, the Master inquires: “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? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing.” Luke 12:42, 43.

Stewards of Our Lord’s Goods

As we read the context in which this scripture is found, we learn that this stewardship includes, not alone the ministry of preaching, but the ministry of giving as well. For we read in verses 33 and 34: “Sell that you have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that failed not, where no thief approaches, neither moth corrupted. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

As the herald of the cross finds his greatest joy in soul saving service, so may the one who gives of his means to support the ministry of the Word find the same joy in the ministry of giving. The joy will spring from love for his blessed Lord, from love of the souls for whom that Lord gave His life in willing, loving service.

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Loving and Giving

Several months ago I saw a motto which impressed me very deeply. I have thought of it many times since. It was this: "We may give without loving, but we cannot love without giving." I have found this statement to be absolutely true in my own personal experience, and in the little knowledge I possess of the experience of others.

Love for one's work is the strongest lever to move the wheels of circumstances and conditions by which that work is accomplished. Love is the strongest incentive in the pursuit of every objective in life. Nearly every morning, as I walk to my office, I observe men and women hurrying to their employment. Many times I ask myself, as I pass some man, What motive actuates this man in his labor? Does he work from love for his work? If so, he is succeeding in his endeavors. He is seeking to make that work more perfect and effective every day of his life. Is he working from love for home and family, because there falls to him the support of wife and children? Even so, this spirit of love lightens his labors and brings a song into his heart, even though his work may be arduous and exacting. He is a free man. Love makes him free.

On the other hand, does he work from a sense of duty -work because he has to? Do circumstances which he cannot control prove the lash that drives him to his daily task, even as the slave is driven to his work? Is there nothing in his work or service prompted by love? Then his life is one of slavery.

Stern Duty Versus Blessed Privilege

Thus it is in our service for Christ. Do we obey the Sabbath commandment from a sense of stern duty, because we fear that we shall not be saved unless we do? or has the spirit of Sabbath rest entered into our souls so that we rejoice that there are stated times and periods when we can shut out the world, cease from physical labor, and more fully enter into communion with the Lord? Love is the prompting motive of this sweet and joyful communion.

Do we give to the treasury of the Lord because we feel that we must, because we fear that if we do not we shall rest under divine condemnation? Then we are in bondage; we are in the bonds of the old covenant, and are trying by our own works to earn our salvation.

Do we give because of our love for the One who has done so much for us? Do we realize the great sacrifice made for our salvation, that when we were lost and undone, Christ the Lord came down into the pit and sacrificed His life to lift us out, so that from pure gratitude and genuine love we bring to Him our gifts and offerings? This is freedom. This is the joy of Christian service. We give because we love. Love is the prompting motive.

God Loved and Gave

This was the motive which prompted the gift of Christ the Lord. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." He gave because He loved. Love was the impelling motive. And Christ the Lord, as He looked down upon the misery in this world, as He saw the great pall of death settling down upon its inhabitants because of sin, found greater pleasure in coming to save men by the sacrifice of His own life than He could have found in remaining in the courts of glory. What love, indeed, was this! Such love we, with our poor finite minds, can never fathom. But we can experience it in some measure if Christ dwells within, if we are led by His Holy Spirit.

The joy which prompted Christ in sacrificing His own life for lost mankind is the joy of service which He would give to His children. We read that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," as well as long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Love for the Lord Jesus will bring to us joy in His service. We shall be able to exclaim with the psalmist, "How love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day." We will keep God's commandments because we love Him. We will keep them, not in our own strength; but by the grace which He supplies.

The Joy of Sacrifice

In laboring for the salvation of our fellow men, we will find joy in our ministry, even as Christ found joy in His. Indeed, there is no joy so great and satisfying as the joy which fills one's heart as he looks back, at the close of the day, and feels that he has done the best he knew to bring help and blessing into the life of someone in need.

This joy has filled the lives of many fathers and mothers as they have placed their sons and daughters upon the altar of God's service, as they have bidden them good-by, with the possibility of their never meeting them again in this world, and have seen the ships sail out of the harbor and onto the high seas, bearing their loved ones thousands of miles away to engage in service for their Lord.

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And when some of these children have died in the mission field, and have watered with their own blood the gospel seed they have sown, their parents have said, in their love for Christ, I do not regret the gift I made. If I had other children, I would gladly lay them likewise upon the altar of service.”

Giving the Life

Those who stay at home have the joy of stewardship. They have been entrusted with their Lord’s goods. These goods, the competence they have earned, their salary or daily wage or bank account or farm or home, represent their lives. These possessions are the material representation of the energy and strength and labor and toil which their possessors have expended through the years. Hence, in giving of these possessions to the Lord, and laying upon His altar the gold and the silver, the giver gives his life, as truly and as verily as the one who volunteers for foreign service; and it will be so accounted of God in the day of final reckoning.

God has made us stewards of His goods. May we be faithful in our stewardship. And it is our privilege to find joy in the exercise of that stewardship. We may give without loving, but we cannot love without giving. May the gifts we give and the service we render be the true expression of our love for the Lord Jesus Christ, who has done so much for us.

How may the exercise of our stewardship of the Lord’s goods be manifested? In what ways may we show to the Lord and to our fellow men that we are true to the trust reposed in us? We may do it in our ministry to the poor, to the sick, to the afflicted. We may do it in faithfully rendering to God His own in the tithe of our income. This tithe does not belong to us in any case. It is, however, committed to us in trust, and we can be true to this trust only as we return to the divine Giver His own.

Free will Offerings an Expression of Love

We may be true in the exercise of our stewardship in rendering to God not only the tithe, but offerings as well. I have always felt that our offerings constitute the higher expression of our love. We know that the tithe belongs to the Lord, and should be placed in His treasury. This is a solemn obligation, as well as a high privilege. But the question of our offerings is one which rests wholly with our own decision. We may give much or little as we will. Our offerings, therefore, are a high test of our true love and gratitude to God.

When we appreciate in greater fullness the sacrifice of Christ the Lord, when we realize the cost of our salvation in the death of the only-begotten Son of God, we shall feel, as never before, that all that we have and are belong, to Him. He has saved us from the pit of destruction, He has redeemed us from everlasting death, He has broken the power of sin in our lives, He has freed us from our prison house, He has given us a hope of the life beyond, an eternity of joy in His kingdom. Compared with this, how small is the sacrifice we can possibly make for Him. The spirit of Pentecostal sacrifice should fill our hearts, and, like the early disciples, we should count our possessions as not being our own, but as belonging to the Lord and to His work, to be surrendered as His Spirit shall direct.

In the building of the sanctuary, Israel of old, in their love and gratitude to the Lord for their deliverance, had to be restrained from giving. And of the churches of Macedonia, the apostle Paul writes, “That in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” 2 Corinthians 8:2. And the reason is given: “This they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” Verse 5. As we give ourselves to the Lord today as fully as did these Macedonians, the abundance of our joy, even in deep poverty, will abound unto the riches of our liberality. This truly is the spirit that must actuate the Advent people who will welcome the Lord in the day of His coming.

Pentecostal Giving

The time, I believe, has fully come, in the providence of God and in answer to the Macedonian calls for the gospel, when the message, “Sell that you have, and give alms,” should be sounded. The advent believers should place their all upon the altar. They should consecrate to God, in this hour of need, houses and lands, stocks and bonds, the ability to earn, the power to get wealth, every ambition and purpose in life.

And then, as the providence of God shall indicate and as His Spirit shall lead, this property should be turned into money and paid into the treasury of God for the support of His work. It may not be necessary today for you or me to sell our humble home. The providence of God may not indicate that some brother sell his shop or store. He may be able to earn a larger income from the operation of his business in a few months than he could obtain from its sale. It might be cheaper for the believer to own a little home than to

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sell the same and pay rent in order to house his family. These are questions which everyone must settle with the Lord and work out in prayer to Him, and as may be desired, in counsel with his brethren.

The call of God today is for full surrender, for complete consecration, the dedication to the Lord of everything that we have, and then the disposal of that property as circumstances shall warrant and the Holy Spirit shall lead. In this whole-soul, whole-hearted, complete consecration, we shall find the joy of the Lord, the joy of oneness with the Master, the joy of surrender to His plan and purpose, the joy of sacrifice for the One we love.

May the spirit of liberality possess our hearts. May love for our truest and dearest Friend, our Savior, our Brother, our Comforter in time of need, our merciful High Priest, our Redeemer, our King who soon will come in the clouds of heaven to take His children home, inspire our hearts and lead us to count no sacrifice too great for the One who has done so much for us. We may give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving. Let us demonstrate our love, not in words merely, but in loyal, loving, sacrificial service.

A Little Thing

A little thing-a loving smile-
A child's sad face was brighter made,
It chased the gloom away awhile,
It cheered a heart with sorrow weighed.

A little thing-a kindly word-
To one inured to scoff and scorn;
The better instincts by it stirred,
Awakened life, desires new horn.

A little thing-a silent prayer-
Uttered for one in trial deep,
It furnished strength the load to bear,
From sin's dark ways a soul did keep.

A little thing-a thoughtful deed-
Inspired by love and pity kind;
It fed the hungry in his need,
Brought strength to body, peace to mind.

A little thing one little thought-
Becomes a seed for weal or woe;
By it are mighty issues wrought,
The weak made strong, the great brought low.

A little thing-a purpose deep
A motive hidden from the light,
Cause to rejoice or cause to weep,
As turns the victory in life's fight.

The little things make life's great whole,
They prove the nature base or true,
The character of heart and soul,
Possessed by many or by few.

Despise not, then, the deed so small,
Or smile of love, or word of grace,
Let kindness in thy pathway fall,
And unkind things to love give place.

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F. M. W.

D. Life in the Home

OUR RELATION TO THE HOME

THE home is a primary institution, one of the first established by the Creator. When God created Adam. He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." He therefore created Eve and designed that their posterity should develop into a race of holy beings who would people the new earth.

The atmosphere of the home should be the nearest to the atmosphere of heaven of any place in this world. It should constitute the safeguard of society, the bulwark of the state. It should be an oasis in the desert wastes of this sinful world.

This ideal can be reached only by perfect co-operation of husband and wife in training their children for God. A precious promise is contained in the last chapter of the Old Testament, which says that before the coming of the day of the Lord, Elijah the prophet will be sent, who shall "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Malachi 4:5, 6. Note the divine order. The text does not say that the hearts of the children will be turned to the fathers first of all, but the very reverse of this. When the hearts of the fathers turn to the children, then this will awaken an answering response in the hearts of the children, and they will turn to the fathers.

Recognizing the great importance and value of the Christian home, the enemy of all righteousness is using every effort to destroy this institution. We see in the world around us a sad, sad spectacle. Many homes are broken, not alone by death, but, even worse than this, by infidelity and divorce, juvenile delinquency and crime are increasing by leaps and bounds. Boys and girls in their early teens are engaging in all manner of criminal procedures-theft, robbery, immorality, and oftentimes murder. Surely all Christians should give greater heed to the influences operating in their homes, to see that these influences gather with Christ and do not scatter abroad.

In this connection we desire to offer a few definite suggestions regarding how we as parents may bring up our children in the fear of the Lord.

1. Recognize our children as members of the Lord's family, as brethren and sisters in the church of Christ. This recognition on our part will dignify our relation to them. We will seek to deal with them then, not as those whom we have a right to command, but as those whom we should beseech, whom we will seek to recover from the error of their ways, as we would a brother or sister in the church.

2. Recognize the influence of heredity. We transmit to our children many of their traits of character. If we will but recognize that some unfortunate tendencies with which we have to cope in their lives are the evils with which we have to struggle in our own, we will be more considerate and more charitable in our dealings.

3. Be companionable. Let your children know and understand that you are their truest and dearest friends. In your attitude toward them be cheerful and hopeful. Sympathize with them in their trials and perplexities. They may come to you with that which seems very small and insignificant, but in their childhood, their youth and inexperience, such trials seem great to them. Enter into their plans. Plan with them.

4. Make home pleasant. Too often we feel that we must reserve the best in our homes for our friends when they visit us. The best in the home is none too good for our children. They should have our first thought and consideration in giving them the conveniences and the pleasant things which the home affords.

5. Provide suitable reading. We have known of some parents who felt that the reading of their children should be confined to the Bible and religious books. The home should be a school. There are scores of wholesome books such as biographies, books on travel and nature. Teach your children to know the birds and to be able to recognize them by sight or by their songs. Teach them to know the flowers, and trees. Many books dealing with these creations may be obtained. In the choice of reading matter we should seek to educate our children to discern between the good and the bad, and to cultivate a taste for that which is clean, wholesome, and uplifting.

6. We should make the friends of our children welcome in the home. Indeed, in that way we shall

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better understand the character of their associates. Better by far for our children to mingle with neighbor boys and girls in the home than to meet them on the street corner or off by themselves with no one to chaperon or direct them. When we become acquainted with the friends of our children, we can better advise and guide in their future relationships.

7. In our homes we should honor the church and religion. If we feel that the pastor or other church officer is worthy of criticism, let us not express this openly in our homes. Rather it is better to go to the ones involved and have a talk with them. Perhaps the Lord might use the one we criticize to bring about the conversion of our loved ones.

8. The parents should be united in the question of discipline. Nothing is more demoralizing in the life of a child than to have his father and mother discuss before him the disciplinary measures which should be employed in the child's training, and particularly to let the child know that differences of opinion exist. Such questions should be talked over carefully by the father and mother. Each should sustain the other in all plans and arrangements pertaining to the home.

9. Our children should be taught order and system and punctuality. The value of the home life in the experience of thousands would be greatly enhanced by the observance of these principles. The observance of system and punctuality would greatly lighten the work of the mother. Tardiness at meals and at family worship can demoralize the home for the entire day.

10. Our children should be taught economy. There is a marked tendency today to live extravagantly. The luxuries of a few years ago have become, in the estimation of thousands, the necessities of today. This spirit of economy should be exercised in the matter of clothing, in the food that is eaten, and in everything that pertains to the home life of each member of the family. Christ taught the principle of economy when He said to the disciples, after miraculously and bounteously feeding the multitude, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Economical living will enable us to do more for the spread of the gospel and to supply the needs of the poor and destitute.

11. As children of God we should recognize that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and that whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. In feeding our bodies we should heed carefully the instruction that has come to us in the Bible. Our clothing should represent the principles of simplicity, modesty, and dignity. When we express in our own lives these principles relating to diet and to attire, our children will be led to follow our example.

12. We should pray with and for our children. We may do this at the family altar. We may do it with each individual child as seems best. Sad to say, some parents seek the intervention of others in behalf of their children, and confess that they themselves have never had the courage to pray with their children. This is a sad confession indeed. Think of the Christian father or mother who is unable to pray with his or her loved one. Surely such parents need a new conversion to God and a deeper Christian experience.

13. We should share responsibilities in the home with our children. The home circle should be a partnership. Gather your children together and discuss plans and procedures. Talk over with them the family budget, the matter of social gatherings that you may have, etc. There are few if any questions concerning the home life that may not profitably be discussed with every member of the family, and parents will be surprised at the valuable suggestions which they will receive from their children. By this partnership plan the co-operation of their children will be enlisted. Teach your children how to purchase food, how to buy shoes, their clothes. This will prepare them for the sterner duties of life.

14. Place your children on their honor. Trust them. Do not let them feel that you are spying continually on every move they make or every word they speak. At the same time, of course, you must be alert and awake to influences that are shaping their lives.

15. If necessary, parents should employ disciplinary measures requiring obedience. This is enjoined by the Scriptures. We have heard mothers say that they love their children too much to punish them. There is nothing of genuine love in such feelings. It is pure sentimentalism instead of love.

True love takes into account the ultimate well-being of the child as well as its present passing pleasure. The wise surgeon finds it necessary to inflict temporary pain for the good that is to be achieved by the surgical operation, and the Father in heaven brings His children in this world through varied experiences to fit them for translation, for a home in His kingdom.

16. The first duty of every mother is toward her children in the home. Many in the world around us are neglecting their children and seeking remunerative employment. Their children are left to look after themselves or are committed into inexperienced hands. Some of these mothers will awaken to the sad realization that through neglecting their children they paid a far greater price than any remuneration which they received from outside employment could offset. The greatest missionary work which any mother can

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do is to care for the children whom she has brought into the world. Someday the Lord will ask her what she has done with the "beautiful flock" which was entrusted to her keeping.

17. In choosing his lifework, the child should be permitted, as far as possible, to follow his own natural inclination. Some young men have been encouraged to study medicine who are not fitted in temperament or personality for this work. Through the years some have been encouraged to enter the ministry who have made a failure of this line of endeavor. Therefore we believe it is well for parents, as well as teachers, to study the natural talent and inclination of their boys and girls.

18. Be examples in your home. If you fail and make mistakes, confess your sins to your children the same as you would confess them to other members of the church. It is no lowering of anyone's dignity to confess his wrong; rather it exalts and dignifies one in the estimation of God and his fellow men.

19. Recognize that your children grow up. Many parents have failed to recognize this, and it has lessened their influence in the lives of their offspring. Our boys and girls grow up more quickly than children did long years ago. Affairs move much more rapidly in the world today. As parents we must recognize this, and when we do we will give those who have come into young manhood and young womanhood the privilege and the right to shape their own destiny and choose their own way. Do not endeavor to dictate their course or continually bestow upon them unsolicited advice and counsel. We know that in many cases the failure on the part of parents to recognize that their children have become men and women has brought alienation in the home and has driven some of the children away from the home nest in order that they might secure what they considered liberty of choice and action.

20. In concluding this list of suggestions let us say a word regarding the place of the grandfather or grandmother in the home. These aged ones can make their presence a real blessing or an influence of alienation. Do you live in the home of your son or daughter? Do you feel that you must dictate the policies of the home? Be reserved in your suggestions. Do not talk too much. Many, as they grow older, become too talkative. Failing to recognize that their sons and daughters with whom they live must work out their own experience, they continually recount the past and draw lessons from their own experience. If matters in the home do not go just as you feel they should, do not criticize or find fault. Remember that the Lord knows how you feel. He is your great friend. He can sympathize with you, and you can take to Him every care and perplexity.

Finally, let us remember as parents that the home life is a true test of our religion. The one who is not a Christian in his home is not a Christian anywhere, regardless of the position he occupies in the church. He may be a church leader, the president of a conference, a successful evangelist, the president of a college; but if in his own home shut up within four walls, with no one but the Lord or the members of his family to see and hear what takes place—he cannot live the Christ life, then he needs a new conversion. But, thank God, it is possible to live above the perplexities and disappointments of life, to be a Christian every day in our homes and in our relations to all men. May the Lord by His grace enable us to do this.

CHRISTIAN RECREATION

WHAT place should recreation fill in the lifework? How is it related to labor? What principles should govern it?

With many in these times, amusement has come to be the aim of life's existence. The apostle tells us that in the closing days of earth's history many who make a profession of Christ will prove to be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. They will possess a form of godliness, but by their careless lives they will deny the power thereof. (2 Timothy 3:1-5.)

The Aim of Rational Recreation

What a great change has come into the practice of the Christian church with respect to this question! I have before me a little book (now out of print) entitled *Popular Amusements*, written by J. T. Crane, D.D., a Methodist clergyman, in the year 1869. This was in the period when the Methodist Church still retained much of its original simplicity; when its prohibition against its members' engaging in the popular pleasures of the world was not considered a dead form as it is largely today. I cannot agree with all that Dr. Crane expresses in this volume, but I am indebted to him for the excellent quotations not otherwise credited which this article contains. Speaking of the aim and object of recreation, he says:

"The true idea of rational recreation is expressed in the very name. The aim is to renew, restore, create again. It is to lay aside the more serious avocations of life for a brief space, that we may resume them

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with new vigor. It is to make a little truce with toil and care, that we may return to the battle with more stout hearts and keener weapons. We rest, that we may be better prepared for work. Rational recreation never loses sight of duty. It teaches us to seek, now and then, a little leisure, that we may be able to labor the harder and the longer; to be gay and merry, only that we may be the more susceptible in its time, of all solemn, holy emotion. Recreation, in the true sense of the term, is not only free from evil, but it is full of good intents, aiming, above all, to aid us in the great concerns which look beyond the horizon of the present life. We shake off care, but not conscience. We do not lay aside the service of God and take a day to ourselves, but strive to win the benediction pronounced upon the man that fears always.”

A clear distinction should be made between recreation and amusement. The following quotation from Education, page 207, expresses the difference:

“There is a distinction between recreation and amusement. Recreation, when true to its name, recreation, tends to strengthen and build up. Calling us aside from our ordinary cares and occupations, it affords refreshment for mind and body, and thus enables us to return with new vigor to the earnest work of life. Amusement, on the other hand, is sought for the sake of Pleasure, and is often carried to excess; it absorbs the energies that are required for useful work, and thus proves a hindrance to life’s true success.”

Underlying Principles

In settling every question we should consider the principles which underlie it. What principles should govern the selection of creative enjoyment? The following, I believe, are worthy of careful consideration in the study of this question:

1. Our recreations should be innocent in themselves. It is not essential that we consider the question of recreation in its bearing on health alone. If it is health giving, that, of course, is in its favor, but there may be other considerations which would lead to its rejection. If there is contained in it any element of wrong, on this ground it should be discarded.

If it involves any transgression of divine law; if it leads us to disregard the welfare of our fellow; if the pleasure is purchased by pain wantonly inflicted upon man, or beast, or bird, or insect. If it tends to render us frivolous or reckless, or in any way leaves us farther from God and heaven, less conscientious, less devotional, less tender in heart, less active and earnest in all good works, we must condemn it, no matter how fascinating it may be, no matter what may be the members or the social position of those who favor it. Of all the poor excuses for sin, one of the poorest and meanest is the plea that we trampled on the law of God and defied His justice for the sake of amusement.”

2. Our recreation should be of a character that will not unfit us for religious duty, or lead to a disinclination on our part to engage in spiritual exercises. That which leads us to neglect the services of God’s house, which takes away our interest in the study of His Word, which gives us a disinclination to engage in secret prayer, which leads us to feel less interest for the cause of Christ and for the salvation of our fellow men—any amusement or recreation which has this influence in our lives, should be avoided. We cannot afford to build up our physical powers at the expense of our soul’s interests.

3. Our recreations should be of a character that will not lessen our Christian influence. “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.” Proverbs 22: 1. The world watches us closely, whether we are at work or at play. Particularly do unbelievers watch the children of God when they are “off duty,” when, unhampered by business hours or office regulations, they are left free to act out their own natural feelings. If the form of recreation chosen is brought into the life as a mere pastime, as a means to while away time, but without purpose or definite object. If the spirit brought to the hour is the wild, hilarious, reckless spirit possessed by those in the world, the unbeliever looks on and sees but little difference between the life of the professed Christian and his own. Christian dignity should be maintained on every occasion, and in his recreation as well as in his hours of labor, the disciple of Christ should let all men see that he possesses high and holy ideals to which he is endeavoring to attain in every relationship of life.

4. Our recreation should be health giving and refreshing. The great contests of physical endurance carried on in the world have wrecked health and bequeathed lives of wretchedness to many who have participated in them. The undue excitement that attends the reading of novels, going to theaters, and so forth, has brought wreck and ruin to many nervous natures. The spirit of moderation, of sound judgment, should govern in the pursuit of creative enjoyment the same as in daily labor. Recreation is the handmaid of labor, and when it is put to its proper use, it promotes rather than retards the accomplishment of life’s tasks. If the recreation of today robs us of energy for life’s work tomorrow, we are losers rather than gainers.

5. Our recreations should never lead to the neglect of present duty. When the excitement of the

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evening's entertainment robs us of sleep; when thoughts of the time spent in recreation intrude themselves into the working hours of the morrow, robbing us of the clearness of thought and the energy of activity which should be devoted to honest labor. When the anticipations of an outing on the morrow unfit us for the sober duties of today, we may conclude that our creative enjoyments are exerting a wrong influence on our lives, and we should either drop them altogether, or relate ourselves to them in an entirely different spirit.

The true conception of duty in relation to the pleasant things of life will not lead us in the home to throw upon the wife extra burdens in order that we may find in the association of friends the privileges denied her. It will not lead us to pass over the consideration due father and mother in order that, at their expense, we may have a pleasant hour. Christian recreation regards the interests and pleasures of others above our own.

6. Our recreation should not be too expensive in time, energy, or money. Life is short at best, too short for the accomplishment of the great and noble purposes which Heaven places before us. We have a work to do for God and for our fellows. Around us the world is perishing. At every turn we find the suffering appealing for sympathy and assistance. Truly we cannot afford to spend time or energy or money needlessly. Remembering the true object of recreation, we will not do this. We will take time to rest, only that we may work the harder. We will spend means for personal uses, only that we may be placed in a better condition physically, mentally, and spiritually to secure more means for the support of the cause of God in the earth, and for the carrying forward of our activities in connection therewith.

7. Our recreations should be under wise management and in a proper environment. This is particularly necessary where a company is brought together. A machine, if left to run itself, will run wild. Even a good cause without proper direction comes to an evil end. This emphasizes the necessity of bringing to the question of recreation and social relationships the maturity of age. The youth should seek counsel from those who are older grown, and who have become wiser with the experience of years in questions of this character.

Children should not be left on the street or at school to choose their own games. Parents and teachers have a duty that they cannot evade in interesting themselves in the employment of every hour on the part of those committed to their care. Particular regard should also be had to environment. Recreations that may be harmless of themselves at home and under proper supervision, may become a great channel for evil in a different environment.

There is a difference only in degree and spirit and environment between innocent, harmless enjoyment and sinful fun and frolic. In one, reason bears sway. The period of relaxation is subordinated to life's great purposes, and the securing of rest is used only as a means to the better accomplishment of that purpose. The time and the talents, the powers of mind and body, are recognized as belonging to God, to be used alone for His glory. In the other, the pleasure becomes the end sought rather than a means to an end. Its enjoyment becomes the purpose of life rather than an aid to the accomplishment of a purpose. Reason is subordinated to caprice. God is forgotten, and the spirit that rules in the children of men becomes the controlling influence in the life.

With the natural tendency of human nature to excess, it is comparatively easy to merge the innocent amusement among the few and in the seclusion of the home or school life into the more exciting exhibition of the public game. And it will be difficult for the immature judgment of many to recognize the distinction between innocent enjoyment at home and the games played under the stress and excitement incident to the great popular amusements. This tendency should be recognized and continually guarded.

In every question that relates to Christian recreation we should consider Christ, as our example. As Christian believers we profess to follow Him. "He that said he abides in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6.

HOPE THOU IN GOD

THE life of the practical Christian has in it but little of romance. It is not made up wholly of rapturous contemplation and daydreams, nor yet of joyful realization of its highest purposes, joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, realization and disappointment, are intermingled and combined in varying degrees.

The child of God in this world is clothed with mortal flesh. He has to do with all its frailties and weaknesses. By nature and environment he is akin to the great multitude around him, the majority of whom

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know not God. Like them, he is the subject of disease, the prey to temptation, the object of Satan's attacks. Unlike them, he possesses higher purposes and purer desires, and has working in his life a power which is seeking to enable him to attain his noblest ideals. But though yielding his heart to the divine influence of the Spirit, so long as he is in this present state, he is subject in some measure to the vicissitudes of human existence. He may resist sin, but he still will feel the strain of the conflict. He may trust to divine guidance, but will be beset by doubts and fears. He may triumph over evil, but will feel the power of temptation. It will be a constant warfare. Overcoming grace will strive against besetting sin. The forces of good and evil will hold conflict in the mind. There will be constant temptation to sin, and unceasing appeals of the Spirit to walk in the paths of obedience. Every heart will see hours of darkness. Every life will feel at times its utter loneliness. Sorrow will well nigh overwhelm, and withered hopes will turn to ashes the fondest anticipations.

God permits these trials and experiences for a wise purpose. They are His workmen, shaping and molding the divine purpose in the life. We are not to consider them strange, nor to doubt our experience in, or acceptance of, God because of them. It is through them that we become more fully acquainted with the divine character. Only he who has known sorrow, has come to know the sweetness of divine sympathy and consolation. It is only as we experience our own weakness, as did sinking Peter, that we are led to cry out for help. It is only as we realize our utter unworthiness, that we cast ourselves at the feet of divine mercy. It is when we see our own utter wretchedness and moral defilement, and in contrast the beauty of the divine character, that we desire to exchange our filthy rags for Christ's righteousness. In despair we are led to grasp the hand reached down to help, and when all alone and forsaken, we welcome the proffered companionship of the blessed Comforter.

It is for these reasons-that we may love Him more, know Him better, and trust Him implicitly that He permits the sorrow, the heartache, the chastening of life's experiences. To every despairing soul He says, "Hope thou in God." To the straying and backsliding He sends the invitation, "Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." He invites the weary, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." He promises to exchange "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Look to the Light

Poor, discouraged soul, take hold of God anew. Accept and believe His promises. Turn your eyes from self-consideration to Him. You cannot obtain light by contemplating the darkness. You cannot receive inspiration for tomorrow's battles by dwelling upon today's defeats. Look to Jesus. Cast yourself at His feet. Cry unto Him for aid and succor. He will not cast you off. He will not turn a deaf ear to your entreaties. Though you have sinned ten thousand times, He will receive you, and help you to make up all the past. Then try once more. Let Him be your courage, your strength, your power to resist. From all the past learn the lesson of your own foolishness, frailty and utter lack of sufficiency, and take hold of His strength, and make peace with Him. He waits to be gracious; He longs to reveal His power in your behalf. His Spirit invites you today; reject it not, nor grieve it from you, but accept the invitation of divine grace. God is able to save you.

There are no limitations to His power. He declares that His "hand is not shortened, that it cannot save," neither is His "ear heavy, that it cannot hear." He is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

God does not mock you. The appeals of His Spirit are the evidence He offers that He wants you to return. Your case is not hopeless, for the Spirit still bids you turn. Come just as you are. You cannot make yourself better. Your very weakness and wretchedness are appeals to God. He will save you because you need salvation. He will heal because you are sick and in need of a physician. He will be your wisdom because you have none of your own, and your righteousness because yours is as filthy rags. "Him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out." "To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart." "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

LIFE'S GREAT INTERROGATIONS

LIFE presents a great medley of joy and sorrow, of hope and disappointment. Many of its complex and intricate problems seem unsolvable. We are lost in a maze of thought and contemplation as we seek to reason out the perplexities of human experience. Afflictions of various kinds-sickness, disaster, and death-

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present mysteries which we shall never be able to solve in this world.

I have been impressed with this many times through the years as I have visited homes of sickness and sorrow, as I have attended the last obsequies of cherished friends and loved ones, as I have seen funeral trains wending their way to the cities of the dead.

The Husband and Father

The husband and father is laid low in sickness. Day by day a terrible disease preys upon his strength. Little by little that strength ebbs, and finally the life goes out in darkness. He leaves a devoted companion of years. He leaves helpless children, whose only support now is the widowed mother. She must nerve herself for life's conflicts. She must earn the livelihood for her little brood. But she is a Christian woman. She has come to know the One in whom she has believed from her early youth. And though she cannot understand why this sad blow is permitted to fall, her faith declares that all things are for the best, that she and her little ones are in the hands of a loving heavenly Father, and that the God of the widow and the fatherless will be her strength and stay.

Think you that her faith is misplaced? Nay, verily. It has as its foundation the precious promises of the Word of God, and sometime she will see that the experience that seemed so hard was permitted of God for the good of herself and her loved ones. And the father, who will come forth in the morning of the resurrection, will see that his death was in God's providence, and that all that followed proved a blessing.

A Mother in Israel

I attended the burial of a mother in Israel, a woman of beautiful character, of consecration to Christ and His service, as demonstrated through the years as she stood by her husband's side, nobly acting her part in the prosecution of God's work both in the home and in foreign fields. She leaves to mourn, a devoted husband, and children in their teens, at an age when the mother's directing hand is needed to shape and mold their lives. She died at the height of her physical and mental vigor. Why was this permitted? It is one of life's great interrogations. We do not know, but we may believe that the future will bring the answer. Until this hour of revelation, it is for us to believe that the hand of affliction was, after all, the hand of love and mercy.

An Idolized Youth

A young man recently came to an untimely death. He went forth in the morning in the strength of young manhood, vigorous in mind and body, enthusiastic of spirit, consecrated to a high and holy purpose, ambitious to fit himself for usefulness in the cause of God. The sunset hour saw him cold in death. He was the idol of his parents, the inspiration of his associates. Why did the withering blight of death come so early to this flower of youth? This is another of life's great interrogations. God knows, and He was the dearest and truest friend of this young man, the dearest and truest friend of his sorrowing parents. If He did not ordain the accident that took the young man's life-and this we cannot believe-He permitted it to come. The guardian angel might have turned away the shaft, but he did not, and we must believe that he did not for some good reason.

But sometime in the glory land the guardian angel or the great Life-giver will sit down with those sorrowing parents and explain to them why this dark chapter was written into their life history. And they will see then, as they cannot see now, that all things work together for good to them that love God-that the Lord does not afflict willingly or grieve the children of men, but that He permits disappointment, shattered hopes, loss of property, sickness, and even death in the world today because these by His overruling power work out in some way and in some measure His great purpose for the children of men.

Blessings Upon All

In this world the Lord apparently makes no difference between the ungodly and the righteous. He sends His rain upon the just and upon the unjust. He sends to the righteous and the wicked alike, according to varying circumstances, prosperity or disaster, sickness or health, life or death. If the Lord today did make the difference that we in our finite, fallible judgment would be inclined to make, He would send upon the land of the wicked man drought and plague and disaster, and upon his family, affliction and disease. He would give to the righteous man copious showers, bounteous blessings, full fruitage in all his crops; to his family, light and life and happiness. The wicked man, seeing the great difference, would reason in his heart that it paid to serve God, and he would turn to the Lord in hypocritical pretense, with heart unchanged, in order to gain the temporal blessings he desired.

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The prophet emphasizes this in the third chapter of Malachi. God's children are represented as saying, "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Verses 14, 15. Then the prophet pictures the rewards of the righteous and the wicked.

What are these rewards? Of them that fear the Lord and that think upon His name, it is declared, "They shall be mine, said the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spared his own son that served him." Verse 17.

But the fate of the wicked and impenitent presents the dark side of the picture: "Behold, the day comes, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble. And the day that comes shall burn them up, said the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Malachi 4:1.

God Makes a Difference

At this time, when this great difference is made between the children of light and the children of darkness, it is declared, "Then shall you return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that served God and him that served him not." Malachi 3:18. And so there will come a day of accounting, a day when God will remember and reward His own, a day when we shall see, as we cannot realize in this world, that it has paid to serve God. And in that day the great enigmas of life will be solved; life's interrogations will be answered. The questions which perplex us here will be made plain. We shall see then as God sees now. We shall understand the wisdom of His righteous judgments.

So let us hope on and believe on. Let us trust in the darkness as well as in the light, in the hour of affliction as well as in the hour of rejoicing.

The Sting of Sorrow

There is this great difference between the sorrow visited upon the righteous and that visited upon the wicked, even in this life. The wicked feel the sting of the sorrow. In their sky there is no star of hope. They are shut in by the blackness of their own fearful foreboding. Not so the trusting child of God. For him the sting of sorrow is removed. The star of hope shines resplendent in his sky. He looks beyond the darkness of the tomb to the glory of the resurrection morning. His faith bridges the chasm between the parting hour and the glad and happy reunion in the kingdom of God.

How blessed it is, when we lay our loved ones away, to know that it is our privilege to meet them again. Death makes more precious the Advent hope. It makes us long for the coming of the Life-giver, for the time when the kingdom of God will be ushered in, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and death, man's great enemy, shall be forever destroyed, and every happy heart shall possess the joyful assurance that life unending is the lot of God's people.

The parting and the Meeting

In this world we part. We know not but that the parting may be forever. A day, an hour, a mere moment, may bring our friends or loved ones under the dominion of death. What a contrast is this with life in the kingdom to come. There we may meet around the throne of God in joyful praise and happy acclaim, and then we may separate and go in opposite directions as we take our journey through the universe of God. We may wander apart thousands of miles, but every moment of the separation we have the definite assurance that we shall meet again in God's own time, and clasp happy hands as we unite our voices in praise to the Prince of life. This is the glorious heritage that awaits the child of God.

From the depths of our sorrow in this vale of tears and death, we may look with faith to the highlands of the glorious world to come, and in the inspiration of this contemplation we may rejoice, even in our sorrow. May God give us this consciousness of the divine Presence with us, this faith which will sustain us. Thus shall we endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

We visit the homes of our brethren. We find many of them living economically and meagerly. They are denying many wants that they may have means for the spread of this message. They are endeavoring, in their neighborhoods, to live lives which will commend to others the saving gospel which they profess. We know of women engaged in daily toil, earning a mere pittance, and yet for the prosecution of this work they are giving liberally of the small means with which they are entrusted. They are endeavoring in the fear of God to bring up their children for His service. They are seeking to be messengers of light in their neighborhoods. God loves these loyal souls. Faith still lives in Israel. God is developing out

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of this untoward generation a people who fear His name and love His truth, and who are endeavoring to walk humbly before Him. Let us not forget this.

God's work is not going to pieces. This movement is increasing in volume and power as the days go by, and it is going to triumph gloriously in the end. If we will make sure that the holy principles of the gospel sanctify our own lives, if we will keep pace with the advancing providence of God, when this message triumphs, we shall triumph with it.

"Comfort you, comfort you my people." Let us be of good courage in God. He loves us with an everlasting love. He stands as our Friend, our Father, our Elder Brother, and He will prove a Friend in the time of need, and a Comforter in every trial, if we will but commit the keeping of our souls unto Him as unto a faithful Creator.

DIVIDED HOMES

COME of our readers live in divided homes. It is for their help and encouragement, if possible, that I write at this time. Some of these lonely ones have written me, seeking counsel as to the course they should take under certain conditions. I refer to these as lonely ones; indeed, this accurately portrays their condition. The husband, perchance, is an unbeliever. He does not know the Lord, and consequently, he has little interest in religious questions. The wife has no one with whom to unite in prayer. If there are children, the mother must maintain the family altar of prayer, encourage her children to read the Bible, to attend church and Sabbath school.

On the other hand, the husband is interested in worldly pleasures and pursuits. He feels aggrieved that his wife will not go with him to the movies or to other worldly sports and amusements. Because the Christian wife cannot do this, criticism ensues, and the quiet peace of the home is destroyed.

Duty of the Wife

How is the wife to relate herself to these trying circumstances? This is the question that often comes to me, and the question I desire to discuss at this time.

I may say at the outset that the first duty of the wife is to Christ, her Lord and Savior. She cannot afford to do that which she knows is contrary to His will. He is her example. She cannot conceive of His attending the theater, the dance hall, or the card party were He on earth. If Christ would not do this, then His disciples should not. But conversely, the disciples should so live that, like Daniel of old, no occasion could be found against him unless it be of his loyalty to the right.

Jesus' Home Life

Christ, when on earth, lived in a divided home. His so-called brothers, the sons of Joseph, had little faith in His divine mission. His godly life was a source of irritation to them. I quote from Christ Our Savior, by Ellen G. White:

"Jesus showed a loving interest in all men. Every suffering one whom He met, He tried to help. He had little money to give, but He often denied Himself of food in order to help others. When His brothers spoke harshly to poor, wretched beings, Jesus would go to these very ones and speak words of kindness and encouragement. To those who were hungry and thirsty, He would bring a cup of cold water, and often would give them the food intended for His own meal. All this displeased His brothers. They threatened and tried to terrify Him, but He kept right on, doing as God had said. Many were the trials and temptations that Jesus had to meet. Satan was always watching to overcome Him.

"Harmless and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous; amid the unjust tax gatherers, the reckless prodigals, the unrighteous Samaritans, the heathen soldiers, and the rough peasants. He spoke a word of sympathy here, and a word there, as He saw men weary, yet compelled to bear heavy burdens. He shared their burdens, and repeated to them the lessons He had learned from nature, of the love, the kindness, the goodness of God. He taught them to look upon themselves as having precious talents, which if rightly used would gain for them eternal riches. By His own example He taught that every moment of time is of value, and should be put to some good use. He passed by no human being as worthless, but tried to encourage the roughest and most unpromising. He told them that God loved them as His children, and that they might become like Him in character. So in a quiet way Jesus from His very childhood worked for others. This work none of the learned teachers, nor even His own brothers, could make Him give up. With an earnest purpose He carried out the design of His life, for He was to be the light of the world." - Pages 38-41 (ed. 1900).

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Our Example

As our readers living in divided homes remember what Jesus endured in His earthly home, it will help them to endure cheerfully their trials and heartaches. They should manifest toward unbelieving husband and children the same kindly, gracious, loving spirit manifested by Christ. He is our example. He sought to win and not repel. And He did win some of His brothers, if not all. We read later of “James, the brother of the Lord!”

And so the godly wife should do all in her power to win her loved ones. Be patient in trial. Do not retort with unkind words when blamed or criticized. Manifest a deep interest in your husband’s work, encourage him in the attainment of every worthy objective. Invite his friends to your home. Seek to make every day of home life pleasant and agreeable. Give praise and commendation to every laudable attainment of every member of the family.

A Sympathizing Friend

And remember that you are not alone in your Christian strivings. You have a loving friend, a sympathizing Savior. He knows your struggles, your trials, from His own experience. “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:14-16.

When you reach what seems to be almost the breaking point, go by yourself alone, and pour out your heart to God. Believe that He hears you, and will send you help.

Pray for your loved ones, your husband, your children. Pray God to draw them to Him. But in your zeal for their salvation, be careful not to force upon them continually your burden of heart in their behalf. Seek to win them by love, by a godly, consistent Christian life. Be persistent in prayer. Instances without number reveal definite results, sometimes in a short while, sometimes after years of prayer and believing.

Be careful in confiding to others your family trials and perplexities. Keep within the confines of your home the unkind words spoken. If you must seek counsel in some trying situation, seek help from some experienced friend who will not betray your confidence.

But remember always that there is One to whom you may go who will never tire of your coming, never repulse you. You may take to Him the little trials, trials which might appear trivial to others. He who notes the fall of the sparrow will help you, for in His sight you are of more value than many sparrows. Indeed, He counts you so valuable that He gave His life for your salvation. What a wonderful Friend! Believe Him, trust Him, rejoice in His loving fellowship.

We Reap What We Sow

We may mold our lives at will From childhood’s early day, Our destiny for good or ill, The while our hearts with rapture thrill With the music of life’s lay.

The hopes of early youth
With eager hands we clasp;
Sometimes the error with the truth
We take to our hearts with little truth
Of the evil within our grasp.

But in mature thought
And midday’s clearer light,
We value less the heritage bought;
We count the chaff as a thing of naught,
Most worthless in our sight.

We seek to undo the wrong,
To purge from the gold the dross,
To remove the discord from the song,
Which will mar the music the whole life long,
And of the gain make loss.

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And if the roots are deep,
As habits of lifetime grow,
We may pray to God as we mourn and weep
That nature's lesson we learn to keep-
We reap what we may sow.

In youth's glad morning light
Then sow but seeds of grain,
That the harvest reaped in life's coming night
May be but the fruit of seeds of right,
And the sowing be not in vain.

For the reaping will surely come,
In God's own time and way,
When He gathers His saints to the harvest home
And metes to the wicked their final doom
At the last great judgment day.
F. M. W.

5. The Personal Appeal

“SOUND SPEECH THAT CANNOT BE CONDEMNED”

MUCH is said in the Scriptures of truth regarding the character of our words and the influence of our speech. By our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned. The apostle Paul counseled Titus to give the following instruction to young men:

“Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing pureness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.” Titus 2:6-8.

Men and women are judged by their speech perhaps more than any other one thing. When we meet strangers, our first impression is that which comes through the visual sense. Their general appearance, their manner of dress, instinctively impress us favorably or unfavorably, and this first impression is either deepened or dissipated as we engage them in conversation. If their language is pure, free from extravagance and affectation, the impression is favorable.

Out of the heart are the issues of life. “Excellent speech becomes not a fool.” The purposes of life, the deeper underlying motives of the heart, will be manifested in the speech. We may not all be able to speak grammatically, although it should be the earnest purpose of everyone to be able to use correctly his mother tongue. But there are certain things we may avoid and, if our speech is prompted by heart purity and Christian refinement, we will avoid.

1. Profanity in speech. By this we do not mean only the coarse, open profanation of the name of God, which we sometimes hear from men on the street. We include as well any form of speech or use of language which would cast discredit on the Bible, or make light of God or of sacred things. The one who has a proper conception of the great God of heaven, and of the sacredness of the Scriptures of truth, will not lightly play upon Scripture expressions in order to create a laugh. He will not take Bible illustrations expressed in parables and stories, and modernize them for some practical end, detracting from their sacred character. The name of the Deity will be spoken reverently, and the Scriptures of truth will be treated as the Book of God and not as a book of man.

2. Obscene language. There are thousands of professed Christians who, though they would not repeat a salaciously obscene story, are free to tell incidents suggestive of the obscene. This is particularly true on the part of certain types of men when ladies are not present. No pure minded man of refined nature will find pleasure in such allusions under any circumstances; and not only will he find no pleasure in openly expressing such sentiments, but they will be revolting to his own nature.

The apostle Paul, referring to things done by the workers of iniquity, declares, “It is a shame even

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to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” Ephesians 5:12. The one who delights in contemplating the impure, is closely akin to, if not equally guilty with, the one who engages in impure practices.

3. Silly and ridiculous speech. It is passing strange how silly many well-intentioned men and women can be sometimes in their conduct. We can pass by such deportment in children; we feel it belongs to their inexperience. But for mature men and women to lower their dignity in descending to the plane of simple childhood in foolishness, lowers them not only in their own estimation in later sober moments but in the estimation of their fellow men. We do not mean by this that the Christian should not laugh. The Creator has given us the power of enjoyment, the joy of pleasure. He has given us even a sense of the ridiculous. It is one thing to have a hearty laugh, which tempers life’s load and relieves the tedious strain of dull monotony, and another thing to cultivate a spirit of joking and jesting, which do not belong to the sober, serious affairs of Christian life. It is the business of the clown in the circus to be a fool and to make fools of others. This is his vocation. For this he is paid.

Much is said in the Scriptures of truth against light and trifling conversation. Indeed, foolish talking and jesting are classed by the apostle Paul with some of the so called graver sins:

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” Ephesians 5:14.

We need to cultivate a seriousness which stops short of moroseness, and a cheerfulness that does not descend into levity and foolishness.

4. Accuracy of speech. We should be careful to avoid the use of slang words and phrases, crude and inelegant expressions. And whereas we should seek to do this in ordinary conversation, we should be particularly careful in writing or in public address. Oftentimes some unfortunate expression on the part of a public speaker, some inelegant phrase or word of slang, will turn from him some sensitive listener who otherwise would be won by the message of truth he bears. Such phrases may attract the careless multitude, they may bring a certain sort of popularity from certain classes, but with others they repel.

People of culture and refinement can pass by a grammatical error. They recognize that when one is speaking in public he is liable to make mistakes of this character, but they cannot excuse the coarse and crude. The minister of Christ cannot be silly in his public address without suffering loss of influence. He cannot use coarse, crude statements and slang expressions without receiving this rating from many of those who hear. To the refined nature and the sensitive ear, such expressions grate almost as harshly as do the profane.

God holds us responsible for doing the best we know. We have a beautiful message and a dignified truth. Let us seek to present it with such dignity of demeanor - and with such purity of speech, that we shall commend to those who hear, its holy, sacred character.

Christ’s Character

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind attention, in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They had rejected Him, the Savior, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tender regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

“Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father’s heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Savior, was God manifest in the flesh.” - Steps to Christ, pp. 13, 14.

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BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT

A SPIRIT of intoxication possesses the world today. The lust of the eyes, the love of the world, the pride of life, the greed for wealth, the clamoring of appetite and passion, the thirst for excitement and pleasure, are the means by which Satan is ensnaring the hearts of men and leading them willing captives.

And not only the great sinful world has fallen a prey to his wiles, but we see the spirit of the world permeating the professed church of God. By the inroads of skepticism, mysticism, and higher criticism, and various false theories, he is seeking to dim the truth, and obscure the light of God's message.

In the midst of the prevailing error and apostasy, God is sending to the world a clear, decisive message of warning and reformation. As a result of that message, a people have been developed, and a church has been established. That church He designs to stand clear of the sins surrounding it. Although its members are in the world, they are not to be of the world or to partake of its spirit. They are to be witnesses against sin, a living revelation and manifestation of the truth in its purity. Against this remnant church the assaults of the enemy will be the fiercest. By every subtle influence and intrigue he will seek to draw them from their allegiance to God.

Whether he does this by leading souls to the commission of some great sin, or by starting their feet in the downward path so they will forget God, his purpose is equally accomplished. It may be by involving them in some speculative enterprise to absorb the time and means which should be given to the promulgation of the truth, or by working into their hearts a spirit of pleasure and carelessness. It may be by entangling them in political alliances, or by swallowing them up in the giddy pleasures of society. Some speculative theory, having a substratum of truth, but mingled with misleading error, may absorb the mind; or it may be some hobby, some little detail of truth itself, which in its proper setting in the message serves a valuable place—even this may be taken and so enlarged by a vivid imagination that it shall be made to appear a paramount issue, and every other principle of the message subordinated to its advocacy. It matters not by which of these means souls are switched off from the straight main track of truth; the purpose of Satan has been served, and the great message of God is forgotten and finally rejected.

Loyal Leaders

This great danger threatens the church of God today, and will stand as a menace to its progress until the end of time. In this hour the church of God needs earnest, vigilant, sober men and women. It needs those who possess sanctified sense and sound judgment; those who cannot be driven from their moorings, but who, recognizing the truth in its purity and the message in its completeness and symmetry, shall pull and work in even lines.

Zeal and earnest enthusiasm need to be combined with sober thought and conservative carefulness. Enthusiasm alone will run wild and reckless. Conservatism alone will block the wheels of progress, and cause a progressive work to retrograde. Each needs to be tempered and gauged by the other. In this message all natures are mingled. The fast, the slow, the progressive, the conservative, are placed side by side in labor. The maturity and experience of age and the energy and enthusiasm of youth are to be intermingled. No man is a perfect whole in and of himself. He needs his natural weaknesses fortified by the strength of his fellows. With the union of all these elements, a band of well-balanced workers will be constituted to meet the opposing forces of the enemy.

Now is a time for quiet thought, for abiding confidence and trust, for sincere devotion and earnest energy. Let us not halt or grow weary; let us not be discouraged or become confused. Let us be faithful to our mission, and hasten to finish the work to which God has called us. God reigns; His hand is on the helm; His care is over all His church.

The conflict is about over, the storm will soon spend its fury. We cannot afford now to look back; we cannot afford to set sail by ourselves. This message has passed its initial stages of experiment. The ship of truth will soon reach the haven; storm-tossed and weather-beaten, it will soon cast anchor in the port of heaven. God calls His children now to abide in the ship. This is the only place of safety. The truth for which we have lived and labored, and for which some of our fellows have laid down their lives, will triumph. If it has molded and fashioned our experience, its triumph will prove our triumph, and we shall rejoice in victory throughout the eternity of God.

THE EQUALITY OF BELIEVERS

THE equality of the members of the church of Christ is clearly taught in the Word of God. The

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believers in Christ Jesus constitute one brotherhood, each possessing equal rights and privileges with all the others. This is the teaching of the Master. Addressing His disciples, He says:

“Be not you called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be you called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” Matthew 23:8-12.

We recognize, of course, that God has established certain gifts in His church. He has appointed apostles, teachers, pastors, and evangelists. These are His own appointed representatives, and to these various offices belong respect and honor. To those occupying these positions there fall certain duties and functions which do not belong to the rank and file. These duties pertain to the office, not to the individual filling the office. Apart from his official duties, the officer has no rights or privileges not belonging equally to the humblest member.

No man, because of his social position in his community, because of his power in the political world, because of his intellectual endowment, or because of his wealth, possesses any rights or privileges not belonging to the humblest member of the body of Christ. Unfortunately, this principle is not always recognized, and there is made a difference between brethren.

Again and again through the years have some possessing marked social qualities which enabled them to gather round them a following which gave them entrance to society, so called, felt that they belonged to a superior class. They formed little circles and created in the church the spirit of caste. There is no caste or distinction in Christian brotherhood. Rich and poor, learned and illiterate, men and women of every race and color, meet, on common ground. The religion of Christ calls no man down- from a higher to a lower plane in Christian fellowship. Rather, it exalts every man, regardless of his worldly standing, to a higher plane than he has ever occupied before.

Natural Ability, the Gift of God

The power to influence men, qualities of heart and mind which enable one to shine in society, intellectual ability which makes one a giant among his fellows-these are gifts from God, and if sanctified to God's service and used in humility, are valuable talents which will bring forth fruit unto eternal life. But when used as the world employs these gifts, they become evil in their influence, creating strange, mysterious impulses in the church of Christ. They lead those who possess this power to call men to themselves, instead of pointing them to the Lamb of God.

It is natural that men of wealth should feel that their earthly possessions entitle them to leadership and to a voice in the church of God, not possessed by their poorer brethren. As their wealth gives them influence and power in the world, and prestige among their associates, may they not use their wealth in the church of Christ, for the furtherance of their own plans and ambitions? Indeed, this has been done many times in the popular churches. Oftentimes the influence of the rich has molded the church to its own spiritual destitution, saved sinners from righteous discipline, and led the professed ministers of Christ to compromise in declaring the straight counsel of the Lord. Seventh-day Adventists need to heed the lesson.

There is danger that human nature in us will lead to our making distinction between men because of their position or wealth. We are too much inclined to commend the greater gifts to church funds from the more wealthy than the smaller gifts from the poor, to publish the names of the higher givers, omitting the smaller offerings. Whenever we are tempted to make these differences, let us recall the commendation of the Master in evaluating the gift of two mites as of greater worth than the costly gifts brought to the treasury. The poor widow gave her all, the rich gave of their abundance. God recognized the spirit, not the amount given. It is gratifying indeed to note the innate modesty shown by many liberal givers-not permitting their names to be made public. They give as unto God, and not to be seen of men or for the praise of their fellows.

This is the true spirit of the Master. The principle of the equality of believers is emphasized by the apostle James. He declares “If you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” This statement is called out, evidently, by conditions existing in the early church when the believers were tempted to accord to the wealthy and influential, honor and privileges which they did not accord to the humble believers. Read in this connection James 2:1-10.

The power of the church of Christ will be found in the consecration of its individual members to the Master, in the spirit of love and impartiality with which they regard one another, in the spirit of unity which characterizes their labors for Christ. When the believers recognize that Christ is indeed, the center,

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that He is the head of every man, that each believer sustains the same direct relationship to Him as does every other believer, distinctions and differences will sink out of sight, and the glory of Christ and the good of His work in the earth will be the great objective in the heart of everyone. For this let us sincerely labor and devoutly pray.

THE SIN OF SELF-CONCEIT

IS NOT this great Babylon, that I have built?" was the cry of Nebuchadnezzar as, raised to the height of human ambition and material prosperity, he surveyed the capital of his kingdom, with its beautiful adornments. He failed to recognize the honor and praise due the One who had entrusted him with earth's dominion, and who had subjected all the kingdoms of men to his sovereignty. He was lacking in appreciation of the labors of his associates and subjects, through whom, under God, his glory had been achieved. He took to himself the praise and glory for all his achievements. There were the temples of his gods, his lordly palace, the beautiful hanging gardens, the construction of which had required the sacrifice and toil of thousands of men directed by the genius of master builders. Nebuchadnezzar said, The glory belongs to me. I have created all this. But even as he spoke there came a voice from heaven, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee." Daniel 4:31. He was driven from his splendid palace, stripped of worldly honor, deprived even of reason, and left to wander with the beasts of the field.

What a lesson on the vanity of human greatness! What a lesson as to the end of human selfishness, of worldly ambition! And the lesson is for men in every age. It is for those of us who read these words, for human nature today is the same as in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Humanity is much inclined, at the present time to take to itself credit for all its achievements as was the king of this heathen nation.

And this tendency of human nature brings the same temptations to Seventh-day Adventists as to the people of the great world. Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?" Have I not edited this paper that has achieved success? Have I not managed this institution which has had such wonderful prosperity? Have I not brought this college to its present standard of efficiency? Have I not stood at the head of this conference while so much has been accomplished? Did I not preach that sermon which was the admiration of all listeners? Have I not built up this prosperous business and made for myself a name in the world? These are the questions which the enemy of our souls suggests today to human hearts. If they are permitted to make sensible appeal to the consciousness of the soul; if the spirit of glorying is cultivated, it will lead to separation from God, as it did in the case of Nebuchadnezzar.

The Spirit of Christ

The spirit of Christ in the heart of the believer will bring meekness and humility, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." 2 Corinthians 10:5. Possessing this spirit, the apostle Paul declares:

"We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." "He that glories, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commended himself is approved, but whom the Lord commended." 2 Corinthians 10: 12, 17, 18.

It was when Job was in danger of cultivating this spirit of self-righteousness that God propounded the questions contained in the concluding chapters of that book. These questions, contrasting Job's weakness and lack of wisdom with the might and majesty and wisdom of the Almighty, led Job to exclaim:

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye sees thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:5, 6.

It is only as poor, fallible man measures himself with his unfortunate fellows that he finds occasion for glorying. As he looks out from the narrow circle in which he lives, and compares himself with the things of God, he will feel as did this patriarch; he will abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Is God today 'withholding from the church the fullness of His blessing because, if it were bestowed, mortal man would take the glory to himself? Is He holding back the message of truth from that publicity which in His providence it will sometime attain, because the lives of the believers in that message could not stand the searching light of public criticism? The great sin of the church of Laodicea is the sin of self-conceit, of human glorying. "I am rich, and increased with goods," declares the Laodicean, and the inference is that these riches and increase have come as the result of his own power and genius. The people

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of God. today, as never before, need to humble themselves before the Lord if they would obtain that exaltation in righteousness which He desires to bestow upon them. Declares the prophet:

“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God [“humble thyself to walk with thy God,” margin]?” Micah 6:8. Poor, vain human nature exalts itself above God, above the Master. It needs to humble itself, to walk with Christ.

To this work of humility the great threefold message of Revelation 14 calls this people. Declares the first angel, “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.” to man is given the glory of many of the great movements in this world. Even the Christian church has its great men whose word is honored and revered above the word of the Lord God of heaven. The remnant church will never be saved by its great men, by the power of human intellect or human genius, by the power of oratory or of elocution. It will be saved only by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, ministered through humble human instruments, that the glory may redound to God and not to man.

KEEP SWEET, AND DON'T GRUMBLE

THIS chapter is designed for two classes: first, for those who do grumble, and second, for those who do not grumble. We hope it may have some little influence on the grumblers to convert them from their evil ways, and on those who do not grumble to lead them more earnestly to persevere in right doing. The grumbler, or faultfinder, whose ways are perfect in his own eyes, sees nothing good in the lives or doings of his fellows. He is a pessimist. To him there is no joy of hope, no pleasure of anticipation; everything is dark and foreboding. He robs himself of the pleasures God designed him to enjoy, and so far as his influence extends, he makes life miserable for others.

The grumbler is usually a conceited man, and imagines that criticism is an evidence of a great mind, and that his mental superiority enables him to pass judgment upon those around him. This broad conception of his exalted plane arises from the narrowness of his mental horizon. In reality, it takes a very narrow mind to grumble and complain and to find fault. It matters not whether the cause of complaint be real or fancied, the effect on the character of the complainer is the same. The grumblers or murmuring, among Israel of old were the special objects of divine wrath. Says the apostle Paul, “Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.” 1 Corinthians 10:10.

The journey from Egypt to Canaan was marked by the graves of the grumblers Korah, Dathan, Abiram, two hundred and fifty of the princes of the congregation, besides many others, went down into the pit because, of their murmuring against God's providence and what appeared to them the mistakes of their fellow men. Moses, Caleb, and Joshua looked forward with expectant hope. They endured as seeing Him who is invisible. The greatness of their Heaven-appointed mission caused their personal trials and inconveniences to sink into insignificance. Before the criticizing, rebellious, stubborn hearts of their opponents, they could stand unmoved, firm in their loyalty and devotion to God. Not so, however, with the grumblers. Personal grievances and petty annoyances had become so magnified in their minds that they subordinated to these every worthy purpose and future hope. Instead of looking forward they looked backward. Egypt instead of Canaan was their goal.

Forward-looking Men

Thus has it been through all the history of the world. The men who have stood for God, who have achieved something worth while in connection with any enterprise, have been the men who have looked forward instead of backward; who have subordinated personalities to principles; who have passed by ignominy and reproach, slights and insults. They have been pushers, and faithful, steady plodders. They have been optimists. By faith they saw visions of great things to be gained. In the contemplation of the objects which possessed their souls, they had no time for trivial incidents. Especially has this been true in Christian work. The heralds of the cross have had respect unto the glorious results to be attained rather than to the sacrifices necessary to their attainment. Their motto, like that of Carey, has been, “Expect great things of God, attempt great things for God.” And like the great apostle to the Gentiles, “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,” they have pressed “toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:13.

Although the Lord regards with disfavor this unfortunate disposition of grumbling, His richest blessings are promised to those who, with charity and joy and hopefulness, take hold of the tasks

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committed to them and faithfully and uncomplainingly labor for their accomplishment. The spirit of divine revelation is the spirit of praise and thanksgiving. Nowhere does God exhort us to complain. Repeatedly does He exhort us to courage and good cheer. The warm handclasp, the cheery smile, the word of praise and appreciation, accomplish much for God and for our fellow men. This spirit drives away the gloom, and brings in light and liberty and blessing everywhere. Our fellows need smiles, not frowns, and encouragement rather than faultfinding.

Be a lifter for God in His great work for humanity. Keep cheerful and happy. Whatever may be your work, do it pleasantly. Are you a professional man, a tradesman, a mechanic, a farmer, or a housewife, do your work as unto God. Live not for self, but for others. Let no day pass without seeking to help the lives touched by your influence. Do the best you can. Be brave and true, pure and noble. Smile and push. If others fail, reach out the helping hand. If things do not go to your liking, pass it unnoticed. God is over all, and if we keep sweet and sunny and pleasant, it will serve to smooth away much of the roughness of life, and God will bring everything out all right, in the end. So let us keep sweet, and not grumble. If we learn this lesson, we learn the great lesson of practical Christian life.

THE LOWLY ONES

THE world recognizes its heroes and heroines. It sings the praises of the men and women of great achievement. In science, music, and art; in letters, statesmanship, and philosophy; in invention and discovery; and in the great religious and reform movements of the age, the world looks on and applauds the leaders, forgetting the while that back of these men, and perhaps associated with them in their efforts, were other earnest workers, who by their faithful, painstaking care of the details, made possible the great success achieved.

In sounding the praises of Nelson and Farragut and John Paul Jones we are prone to forget the sweat and toil of the men behind the guns, the firemen in the holds, the sailors at the masts, who by their careful adherence to duty, their loyalty in standing at their posts, made possible some of the great naval victories of the world. In the field of church work we think of Carey, Moffat, Paton, and scores of others who have done great things for God. It is well that we should gratefully acknowledge their noble work. But let us not forget the wives and mothers, the sons and daughters, the humble lay-worker associates, who, though perhaps unknown to the world by name, had no small part in the accomplishment of the grand results attained.

But though we sometimes forget, God holds in remembrance all service done for Him, whether great or small. To the humble ones the apostle Paul says, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which you have showed toward his name in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." God remembers today as in the days of Paul. He remembers every child and every service.

He remembers you, faithful brother, as you have put your all into His work. He has noted all these years the offerings to His service. Many times when the load was heavy and the road rough and rugged, you have put your shoulder to the wheel, and helped this cause of truth through straitened places. God saw the sacrifice you made when you gave that sturdy son, just reaching the age where he could be of help on the farm or in the shop, to go out into the canvassing field or to some foreign land, to garner souls in heaven's ripening harvest field. God will reward you for your sacrifices.

God remembers you, weary mother. For long years you have been shut up within four walls, and day after day have labored and toiled and prayed for those you loved. You have felt at times that no one cared for you or appreciated your efforts. But God has cared, and your loved ones have cared more than they have expressed. Sometime you will realize that your labor was not in vain; and as you have sought to send forth your children better fitted for the Lord's work, you will see in the kingdom the fruits of your labor. Do not repine, but be patient and hopeful. God has seen all, heard all, felt all. He has marked down in the book of heaven your labor of faithfulness.

And you, loyal wife, God does not forget your self sacrifice. Perhaps your husband is a missionary, and stands in the sacred desk to proclaim the gospel to perishing men, or goes from house to house to invite men to God. To you may be left the cares of home and the training of the children. You weary of the toil, the loneliness, the tedious waiting. Sweeten your experience with the consciousness that God recognizes your labor. In the home and among your neighbors you have a great missionary field. Endure the toil, be brave to do and dare, be faithful to your charge, and God will not forget. He has engraved your name on the palms of His hands. Sometime the darkness will turn to day, and you will

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rejoice that God counted you faithful, and took account of all your labors. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." Luke 16:10. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Matthew 10:42. When God makes up His great roll of honor, it will not necessarily be the names of the great of earth which will be engraved thereon. It will contain, and that, too, in the letters of light, the names of some of the humble toilers in God's service. Loyalty and faithfulness will find in the day of final accounts just and proper acknowledgments.

"HE PEDDLED HIS PAINS"

DO YOU peddle your pains? Do you frequently talk of your physical ills? The editor of the Christian Advocate tells of one who did this. This man possessed a fine personality; he was prosperous in his business, and among all his associates he diffused the spirit of hope and courage. But there came an evil day when he was stricken with disease, and it was necessary for him to undergo a surgical operation, and a year later a second one.

During this time the man's business suffered, and this served to increase his anxiety and mental depression. Then it was he began to peddle his pains. Wherever he went he told of his physical handicaps. Even when opportunity was afforded him to consummate a fine business deal, his self-centered interest in his physical condition and in what he had suffered obtruded itself into his conversation and defeated his business objective. Finally, a friend felt compelled to tell him frankly that he was his own worst enemy. This counsel was received, and as soon as the poor sufferer began to talk hope and courage, and to plan bravely for the future, his business affairs improved and even his aches and pains began to disappear.

The lesson of this incident is for me and for you. Do I peddle my pains? Do you go about peddling your pains? If so, let us reform. If we will but think of others' woes and seek to help them, it will lighten our own suffering. When we contemplate the hunger and illness, the cold and destitution, existing in Europe and the Far East, how thankful we who live in more favored lands should be for God's mercies. If illness overtakes us, we can secure medical aid. We have food and clothing and shelter. These temporal blessings, and above these, our hope in God, should keep us from murmuring. As we express hope and faith and courage, these qualities of mind will be strengthened, and our mental state will react strongly for good upon our physical condition. To this we are exhorted by the apostle: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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." Philippians 4:4-8.

To this inspired statement we may add this fine counsel: "It is not wise to look to ourselves, and study our emotions. If we do this, the enemy will present difficulties and temptations that weaken faith and destroy courage. Closely to study our emotions and give way to our feelings is to entertain doubt, and entangle ourselves in perplexity. We are to look away from self to Jesus." - Ministry of Healing, Page 249.

"One of the surest hindrances to the recovery of the sick is the centering of attention upon themselves. Many invalids feel that every one should give them sympathy' and help, when what they need is to have their attention turned away from themselves, to think of and care for others.

"Let the invalid, instead of constantly requiring sympathy, seek to impart it. Let the burden of your own weakness and sorrow and pain be cast upon the compassionate Savior. Open your heart to His love, and let it flow out to others.

"If those who are suffering from ill health would forget self in their interest for others; if they would fulfil the Lord's command to minister to those more needy than themselves, they would realize the truthfulness of the prophetic promise, 'Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and your health shall spring forth speedily.'" - Ibid., pp. 256-258.

Spiritual Pains

There are other and more serious pains than those pertaining to our physical beings. Heaven permits both physical and spiritual pains to come upon us for our good in the development of Christian

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character. We are told that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12. This persecution from the enemy of all righteousness may not be always by fire or sword or imprisonment, but perhaps more often by the ordinary trials of life. It is by these trials that we are purified and tested. Of His messenger God declares:

“And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Malachi 3:3.

When this test comes to us, we are not to consider that we are undergoing something unknown to others. Whatever the trial is, it is our privilege to believe that God will give us strength to bear it.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13.

The churches of Macedonia found in their affliction abundance of joy. And why? Because they believed their affliction was permitted for some good. (2 Corinthians 8:2.)

The apostle Peter told the believers that the trial of their faith was much more precious than gold that perishes. (1 Peter 1:7.) They were not to think it strange that they were tried, but were to rejoice in the experience.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.” 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

Perfect Peace

Let us take to our sympathizing Savior first of all our heart burdens. If doubts assail our minds, let us not express to others our doubts and fears. Of her own personal experience Ellen G. White has this to say:

In times of trial we must cling to God and His promises. Some have said to me, ‘Do you not get discouraged at times when you are under trial?’ And I have answered, ‘Yes, if by discouragement you mean sad or cast down.’ ‘Didn’t you talk to anyone of your feelings?’

“No; there is a time for silence, a time to keep the tongue as with a bridle, and I was determined to utter no word of doubt or darkness, to bring no shade of gloom upon those with whom I was associated. I have said to myself, I will bear the Refiner’s fire. I shall not be consumed. When I speak, it shall be of light; it shall be of faith and hope in God; it shall be of righteousness, of goodness, of the love of Christ my Savior. It shall be to direct the minds of others toward heaven and heavenly things, to Christ’s work in heaven for us, and our work upon earth for Him.” - Review and Herald, February 11, 1890. This is good counsel for us who read these words. It is our blessed privilege to believe that if we trust God He will cause all things to work together for our good. (Romans 8:28.) Thus we shall find peace in trial and tribulation.

We do not mean by what we have said that we should never tell others of our physical suffering or our soul’s perplexities. In our physical infirmities we need the counsel of physicians. And in our doubts and fears we may need to counsel with those who can help us. But we should avoid dwelling on such themes. Conversely, we should find that help in the “God of all comfort,” that we may be able to give to others in trial or sorrow the comfort “wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

So, in conclusion, permit me to say again, let us not peddle our pains, whether they pertain to our physical or spiritual ills. Let us think, speak, and act hope, courage, and confidence in the One who gave His life for our salvation.. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusted in thee. Trust you in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” Isaiah 26:3,4.

F. The Holy Spirit and Prayer

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS GIFTS

THE beloved Teacher had been with His disciples for more than three years. During that time they had witnessed His holy, blameless life, listened to His uplifting, ennobling instruction, and viewed with wondering amazement His mighty miracles in attestation of His divine origin and character. Their affections had come to be centered upon Him as their dearest friend.

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Now Christ was about to leave them, and sorrow filled their hearts. In seeking to comfort them, the Master promised to send them another Comforter: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but you know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:16-18.

Note the fatherly tenderness expressed in this promise: I will not leave you comfortless ["orphans," margin]. I will come to you."

Christ also tells His disciples that "it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16:7. The Holy Spirit had been given the church through all the centuries. He had always striven to turn men to God and direct them in the ways of righteousness. Now, after Christ should leave His disciples, the Spirit was to become His official representative, His vicegerent, in a new and larger sense than ever before.

We may remark in passing that Christ has only one Vicegerent. He gives no recognition to any prelate of any church or religious faith who may lay claim to this position.

Sin, Righteousness, Judgment

What was this Comforter, this Spirit of truth, to do? He would "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. The Master desired to teach His disciples many things, but they were not able to bear them, but the Spirit of truth would guide them in all their study. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Verses 13, 14.

This precious promise is for the church today, for us who read these words. How will that guidance be given? By convicting us of sin, and leading us to Christ for forgiveness and cleansing; by writing the law of God upon the tables of our hearts, and enabling us to observe its holy requirements. (See Hebrews 8:10-12.) By instructing us in the reading of God's holy Word. By impressing our minds and thus influencing our decisions. "And your ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk you in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left." Isaiah 30:21. Any impulse or impression that would lead us to act contrary to the teachings of the Bible is not born of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures have come to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1: 21. Therefore the Holy Spirit will never lead the Christian to go contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

The sinner who accepts Christ as his Savior expresses his faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of his Lord in the rite of baptism by immersion. This baptism is "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 28:19. This text clearly reveals that the Holy Spirit is one of the holy Trinity.

In our study of the work of the Holy Spirit we may profitably consider further what this heavenly agency is. We are not to think of the Spirit as a mere influence emanating from a divine source. Distinctive characteristics are ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. We enumerate a few of these.

The Bible represents the Spirit as possessing wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:10), having feelings of love (Romans 15:30), being able to instruct (Nehemiah 9:20), feeling grief over sins of professed Christians (Ephesians 4:30), making intercession for the saints (Romans 8:27), forbidding the apostle Paul to preach at a particular time in Asia (Acts 16:6, 7). These and other Scriptures reveal that the Holy Spirit is a personal being, the third person of the Godhead.

Reception of the Holy Spirit

How may we avail ourselves of the aid of this divine power in our battle against sin? Through repentance and forsaking sin (Acts 2:38, 39); by obedience to God's requirements (Acts 5:32); by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:14); by earnest prayer for the divine blessing (Matthew 7:7). Commenting upon the reception of the Holy Spirit, Ellen G. White gives this illuminating statement:

"Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people 1 to will and to do of His good pleasure.' But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is

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why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Oily to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive." - The Desire of Ages, p. 672.

Spiritual Gifts

God in His infinite love and wisdom has bestowed certain spiritual gifts upon the church. The apostle Paul enumerates these gifts as follows: "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Ephesians 4: 11.

We are told why these gifts are given. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Verses 12, 13.

Through the centuries one or more of these gifts have always been manifested among Christ's true disciples. The gift of prophecy as revealed in the Sacred Record affords striking and convincing proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. In their far-seeing vision the prophets foretold long centuries before they occurred many notable events in human history. The rise and fall of earthly governments, and many things those governments would do, were accurately predicted. Striking examples of this are recorded in the books of Daniel and the Revelation.

In the remnant church, the church looking for and preparing for the return of Christ to take His people to the heavenly mansions, the gift of prophecy will be manifested. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. "The testimony of Jesus" is declared by an angel to be the Spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19: 10.)

The one who is guided by the Holy Spirit will reveal this in his Christian experience. He will exemplify in his life definite fruits. These are enumerated as follows: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22, 23.

The Comforter

How earnestly should we seek for the daily guidance and enabling power of this divine agency. We should walk humbly and carefully before the Lord, realizing that He takes account of every act of our lives, the words we speak and the thoughts of our heart. In conclusion I quote the following fine statement as to the companionship of the Comforter, from Dr. R. A. Torrey, the great Methodist revivalist:

'Now that Jesus has gone to be with the Father, while we are awaiting His return, we have another Person just as divine as He, just as wise, just as strong, just as able to help, just as loving, always by our side and ready at any moment that we look to Him, to counsel us, to teach us, to help us, to give us victory, to take the entire control of our lives.

"This is one of the most comforting thoughts in the New Testament for the present dispensation. Many of us, as we have read the story of how Jesus walked and talked with His disciples, have wished that we might have been there; but today we have a Person just as divine as Jesus, just as worthy of our confidence and our trust, right by our side to supply every need of our life. If this wonderful truth of the Bible once gets into our hearts and remains there, it will save us from all anxiety and worry. It is a cure for loneliness. Why need we ever be lonely, even though separated from the best of earthly friends, if we realize that a divine Friend is always by our side? It is a cure for breaking hearts. Many of us have been called upon to part with those earthly ones whom we most loved, and their going has left an aching void that it seemed no one and no thing could ever fill; but there is a divine Friend dwelling in the heart of the believer, who can, and who, if we look to Him to do it, will fill every nook and corner and every aching place in our hearts. It is a cure from the fear of darkness and of danger. No matter how dark the night and how many foes we may fear are lurking on every hand, there is a divine One who walks by our side and who can and will protect us from every danger. He can make the darkest night bright by the glory of His presence."

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THE VALUE OF PRAYER

PRAYER is the Christian's native breath, the Christian's native air. Prayer is the earnest longing of the heart after God. It may be uttered or unexpressed. It brings the believer into communion with his Maker. He talks with God as he talks with an earthly friend. And as he listens attentively for reply, there comes sweet assurance of divine acceptance and divine guidance. The period of devotion may thus become the sweetest of all association—more precious than fellowship with the closest friend or relative.

When should prayer be offered? David, the king of Israel, declared, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." Psalm 55:17. Daniel, the prime minister of Medo-Persia "Kneeling upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God." Daniel 6: 10. And this he did under most trying circumstances, when by this very act he brought danger of death upon himself for his devotion.

I believe it is well to have stated periods for prayer, and three times a day is none too often for us to seek special help and wisdom from our Lord and Master. But while we may have stated times of prayer, we are to cherish the spirit of prayer continually. And to this we are exhorted by the apostle Paul, "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

And Christ the Lord declares that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18:1. It is not possible for us to be always on our knees in prayer to God. But it is possible for us so to sense our dependence upon divine power and wisdom that our minds will instinctively turn to the Lord for divine guidance in the accomplishment of every task. We should cherish the spirit of constant devotion.

Places of Prayer

It is well to have special places of prayer. These places will become hallowed spots. And they do not need to be lordly palaces in which we shall hold audience with the King of kings. He humbles Himself to meet with us in the lowliest places of earth. Under some spreading tree in the forest, in our private room—these simple places may be transformed into an audience chamber of the great King. The Holy Spirit broods over the place. We feel that we stand on holy ground.

Some years ago I visited the humble home of one of our brethren in Germany. In his home he had chosen a corner where he daily knelt before God for His blessings. God seemed nearer in this corner than in any other place in the house. But we may find an altar of prayer wherever circumstances may place us. As we walk the streets, as we sit at our desk, as we do our housework, as we plow in the field, we may hold communion with our blessed Master. We may stand on the street corner in the midst of the milling multitude, absorbed as they are in worldly pursuits, and there hold communion with Heaven. What a precious privilege is ours. We may find a direct line of communication with the throne of grace. And under such circumstances God will hear our cry as truly as when we pray in some place of solitude.

Family and Public Prayer

There is afforded us at the family altar a great opportunity to place before our Savior not alone our own personal needs but the needs of our loved ones. Unfortunately, in many homes the family altar has been broken down. There is great need today that it be revived from the dust. As parents, we need to gather our children around us and present them before God as an offering to Him and to His service. And the influence of family worship will go with our children through their lives.

How many times in my own experience have I benefited by the prayers of a godly mother. (My father was not a believer until shortly before his death.) Daily she sought God for His divine benediction to rest upon each of her nine children. My room was directly over hers. Many times I heard her praying in the still hours of the night. Sometimes my childish curiosity led me to rise from my bed and listen through a crack in the floor of my room. One by one she went over the names of her children, praying that they might be led to give their hearts to Christ, that they might develop into earnest Christians. These prayers melted my heart and affected my afterlife. God granted her petition, and every one of her children found in Christ, their mother's Friend, a Savior. Let us not neglect the family altar. If it has been broken down, let us restore it. Let us come to it daily with our offerings of praise and devotion, and our petition for guidance and power for Christian living.

A great privilege is afforded us in uniting with our friends and neighbors in more public prayer. This may be at the weekly prayer meeting of the church. It may be in a more restricted circle, where we unite with others for the attainment of some mutual objective. It may be for the restoration and life of some one who is ill. It may be in behalf of our missionaries who are laboring under trying circumstances in

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foreign lands. Praying before others may entail a cross because of personal embarrassment, but with persistence this will soon pass away. As we obtain help in hearing others pray, so there will be help for others in our prayers. The prayers may be feebly expressed. We may not know how to pray as we ought, but God understands. "Likewise the Spirit also helped our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. And he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Romans 8:26, 27. By the aid of the Holy Spirit our broken utterances are taken and presented in an acceptable manner before the great Ruler of the universe.

The objects of our prayer may be as numerous as our life interests, as our burdens of heart. We may pray for our friends and for our enemies. We may pray for our ministers, our Bible instructors, our colporteurs, our institutional workers. We may pray for our own personal needs, spiritually and temporally. There is nothing too small to bring to the attention of our heavenly Friend.

If the Lord heard prayer only in great trials, some would feel little need for His help. Personally, I have had few great trials in my life, but I have had a great multitude of small trials. And one of the most comforting things in my Christian experience is to believe that God takes account of the little things, and that He is interested in the little experiences that come into my life, because He loves me, the same as I am interested in all the little experiences of my children, because I love them.

Sad it would be, indeed, if in our devotions to God we made petition to Him continually for life's blessings and never remembered to praise Him for what He has done. Praise should precede our petition. Declared the apostle Paul: "The goodness of God leads thee to repentance. " Do we sometimes feel cold and indifferent in our religious experience? If we do, it is well for us to sit down and contemplate the goodness of the Lord. Let us think of all that Christ has done for us, realizing that the life we now live and our hope for the life to come is ours through His mercy and grace; that the food we have to eat, our clothing, our homes, the association of friends, everything we have and possess, comes not because we deserve it, but in spite of our unworthiness. I say, let us consider these things, and our hearts will overflow with new love for the One who has done so much for us.

My parents were stern disciplinarians, and sometimes in my older boyhood days I was inclined to feel that they were hard and unkind; but when I considered the many evidences of their love showered upon me daily, I recognized that they had disciplined me in love, even though I could not then understand its full value. Even so, as we contemplate God's goodness to us, we shall understand by faith that even life's trials and difficulties are experiences for which we may be thankful.

The Lord bestows many blessings upon mankind unconditionally. He sends His rain upon the just and upon the unjust. He does not, apparently, place in this world a premium upon righteousness. If He did, men would be led to serve Him outwardly for the sake of temporal gain. We cannot always discern between the righteous and the wicked, but there will come a time when this will be most evident. In the day of final accounts, when Christ makes up His jewels, when He separates between those who know Him and those who know Him not, "then shall you return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that served God and him that served him not." Malachi 3:18.

And so, let us not be tempted to say that "it is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" Sometime we shall see that God places a just estimate upon character, that He looks upon the heart, and not alone upon the outward life, and that those who faithfully obey Him will be rewarded by Him in the end. And although the Lord bestows upon saint and sinner in this world many general blessings, He has promised special blessings to His children upon certain conditions. Some of the principal conditions we may profitably enumerate.

No formal request on our part will open to us the storehouse of spiritual blessings. We must have a living sense of our own great need. And in response to this we have this gracious promise: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon your offspring." Isaiah 44:3.

The Exercise of Faith

"Therefore I say unto you, What things so ever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them." Mark 11:24.

The very fact that we come to the Lord in prayer shows some measure of faith on our part. And yet we must recognize that we have sought the Lord many times in a formal and perfunctory manner, without really expressing the utmost desires of our hearts. We have prayed from a sense of duty. And prayers under

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these circumstances are attended by but little living, vital faith.

It is our privilege to believe that if our prayers are in harmony with the will of God, He will grant our requests, not because of our worthiness, but in spite of our unworthiness because of our great need, and above all, because of His love for us. He who gave His only-begotten Son to die for us when we were lost in sin and rebellion, will, in His kindness and compassion, bestow upon us every needed requirement.

“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?” Romans 8:32. Let us not only ask, but let us also believe.

The Exercise of Forgiveness

“When you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark 11:25, 26.

We are reminded of this divine admonition every time we utter the Lord’s prayer. When we pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” we are virtually asking God to treat us the same as we treat our fellow men. And why should He not do this? Why should He not mete to us the same measure which we give to others? It certainly would be just.

Reconciled to Others

In seeking reconciliation with God by the confession of sin, we must seek reconciliation with our fellow men. If we bring to God our gift of praise and of prayer, and remember that we have wronged our brother, the consciousness of that wrong will destroy our peace of mind and shut out the blessing of God. Referring to this, the Master says:

“If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembered that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matthew 5:23, 24.

We cannot excuse ourselves from making our sin right on the grounds that our brother has wronged us. If he has committed twenty sins to our one, we are to go to him as though we were the chief sinner. God does not hold us responsible for making the sins of our brother right, but He does hold us responsible for making our sins right, and only as we do this can we confidently expect an answer to the petition which we present before Him.

Forsaking Iniquity

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Psalm 66:18. God does not bless us in order that we may consume it upon our lusts, in order that we may carry out some selfish purpose. He blesses us for our own highest good. He blesses us that the blessing may redound in the end to His glory. Let us be sure that as we come to the Lord, no selfish consideration prompts our requests. Let us be sure that we are not living in sin, that just as far as is humanly possible through the grace which Christ imparts, we have put every sin out of our lives.

Keeping God’s Commandments

“Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” 1 John 3:22. By no works of our own can we gain the righteousness of Christ. “For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10. Christ in us will do the works of Christ. “He that said he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” 1 John 2:6.

The evidence of our fellowship with the Lord will be seen in our love for and obedience to His righteous requirements. And only as we come to the Lord with a consciousness of renunciation of sin on our part can we take hold of His promises with faith. If we are conscious of living in sin when we come to God for help, the sin of which we are daily guilty will rise up before us like a great mountain and shut out God from our vision. It is to this the apostle John refers when he says, “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.” 1 John 3:21, 22. How greatly this emphasizes the need of our parting company with sin, of our not regarding iniquity in our hearts.

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The Habit of Prayer

One Christian writer has said that when it becomes the habit of the soul to commune with God, the power of the evil one will be broken. The habits of life are made up of a long series of acts or words of the same character. A habit becomes a part of our life. We perform it unconsciously. Several years ago I changed my office room. I had gone to the old room day after day for a number of years; so even after I changed my room I found myself unconsciously turning in that direction, and sometimes I would stand before the door of the old room before I was aware of my mistake.

When one forms the habit of prayer, in every hour of need he unconsciously turns to God. He does not have to stop and reason, Now I'll go and pray; but as he faces danger, as he senses his need, his thoughts instinctively turn to the Lord for help. It is in this way that he prays without ceasing. We need to pray much in order to form in our lives the habit of prayer. We need to exercise persistence in all our Christian experience—persistence in the study of the Word of God, persistence in well-doing. And we need to exercise this same persistence in prayer to God. If the answer to our requests does not come at once, we are to pray on. If the light does not break through, and we fail to see clearly the leading of the Lord, we are to pray on. We are to pray on and pray through. Pray through the darkness; pray until light breaks.

Persistent Prayer

Why does the Lord apparently turn aside the first petition addressed to Him, but respond to persistent pleading? Is it because He failed to hear us at first? Was He indifferent? Did He need to have His interest in our behalf awakened? No indeed. God's ear is ever attentive to the cry of His children. Sometimes, in His great wisdom, He delays the answer in order to enlarge our vision and increase our faith. Then, too, in answering prayer, the Lord often works through means and agencies. Perhaps as soon as our prayers ascend to Him, He sets in operation means whereby these prayers can be answered.

We have a beautiful illustration of this in the experience of the prodigal son. He left his home and went into the world. He spent all his money in revelry and excesses. During all this time his heartbroken father was praying for his return. But it was not until the prodigal was brought into dire distress that his heart turned back again to the home of his childhood. When he was reduced to penury and lacked for bread, he remembered that in his father's house there was an abundance and to spare, and so he resolved that he would return and seek his father's forgiveness. In the end the Lord answered the persistent prayers of the father.

And this is an encouragement to you, dear parents, today. Have you a child who has wandered from the home fold, who has forgotten you, who is lost in the pleasures of sin? And are you crying out to God for his return? Do not become discouraged. The Lord may have already set His hand to bring about the recovery. He may be permitting that child to go through experiences that will lead him to see the foolishness of sin, the result of following his own ways. It may be that thus his heart will be turned back again to the God of his parents.

Believing While Waiting

The book of Psalms is one of the most wonderful books in the Divine Record. In its study the human mind finds an answer to almost every mood that possesses it. Are we cast down and discouraged? The psalmist passed through this experience. Are we beset round about by enemies who are speaking evil of us? David knew of this experience.

Are we joyful and triumphant in God? We can find the psalmist, in his experience, rising to the very height of joy and rejoicing. But he did not always obtain a speedy answer to his prayer. We have in the twenty-seventh psalm this statement:

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." He did not always see all he desired. But that which kept him from fainting and discouragement was the faith that he would see that goodness in the end. And with this faith he continues, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

And so I would say to every discouraged soul who may read these words, If you do not yet see a fulfillment of your desires, if your earnest petition to God remains unanswered, "wait on the Lord: be of good courage." Pray on and believe on. God, in His own time, will answer your request if in His great wisdom it be for your highest good.

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PRAYER FOR THE SICK

THERE is another form of prayer which we may profitably consider in this connection—prayer for the sick. We have no need—whether it be physical, temporal, or spiritual—that it is not our privilege to bring to God in prayer. Christ is the great physician of the soul as well as of the body. The apostle John, addressing Gaius, expressed the wish: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospered.” 3 John 1:2.

The Lord does not willingly afflict the children of men. When we become sick, it is usually because of a violation of the laws of our being. In presenting our cases of illness to the Lord in prayer, we should be sure that we are cooperating with Him by removing, so far as is in our power, everything in our lives that might hinder Him in answering our prayer. If we knowingly have violated the laws of health, which are God’s laws, we should confess our wrongdoing and resolve by God’s help to work in harmony with His plans. Perhaps we have violated these laws ignorantly. Hence, we should study the laws of our being. We should become acquainted with the principles of physiology, and hygiene. We should study the uses of foods and their combinations, discarding the foods which are unwholesome and eating moderately of those which are suitable for use.

We should study also to see whether there are other sins which separate us from God. Are we violating His law of Ten Commandments? Do we have other gods before the Lord? Have we set up in our hearts idols which, instead of our Creator, are receiving our first love? Are we taking God’s name in vain, or do we hold it in holy reverence? Are we keeping the Sabbath of the Lord in harmony with the commandments—not speaking our own words, not finding our own pleasure, not doing our own ways? (See Isaiah 58:13). Are we observing the other commandments? Are we observing the one which says, “Thou shalt not kill,” remembering that hatred of our brother is a violation of this righteous requirement, because the fruit of hatred is murder? There is another commandment which says, “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” This prohibits not only falsehoods regarding others but misrepresentations and unkind criticisms. One or all of these things will shut out God’s blessing from our lives.

Having prepared our hearts in these ways to seek the Lord for healing, it is our privilege to carry out in our own cases or in the cases of our friends the instruction given in the fifth chapter of James:

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availed much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” Verses 14-18.

Subject to God’s Will

Every request, of this kind should be made subject to the Lord’s will. God in His great wisdom may see that it is best for us to suffer awhile to learn needed lessons, before He brings us back again to life and health. The apostle Paul, with his power of working miracles, says in his epistle, “Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.” Evidently for some reason the Lord did not see fit to raise up Trophimus at that time in answer to prayer.

Sometimes the loving Father feels that it is best for His weary children to go to their rest. And upon this class there rests this divine benediction: “I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.” Revelation 14:13. This class will be saved from passing through the storm and tempest of the last days. And while they rest from their labors, their works follow them. The seed they have sown in Christian ministry continues to bear fruit until the final harvest.

I have known of many instances in which the Lord has raised up His people from the very verge of the tomb to life and health. He is just as willing to hear prayer today as He was when He walked this earth nineteen hundred years ago, and He has the same power to heal. We have the same blessed Christ who healed the leper, who raised Lazarus from the grave, who stilled the tempest, and who cast out devils. He is glad to have us bring to Him, in the arms of faith, the sick and the suffering. Sometimes it pleases Him to raise them instantly to health. At other times the process is a gradual one. They improve from day to day; and finally they are given perfect restoration.

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Co-operating With God

While this process is going forward, it is right and proper that the sick one should co-operate with the Lord in bringing about an answer to his prayer. It would be unfortunate for him to fill his system with drugs. There are natural remedies which may be employed, such as pure food and water, abundance of sunshine, rest, and recreation. There is the employment of hydropathic remedies. There is no denial of faith on the part of the sick one in employing these agencies as long as he feels their need. The Lord works through such means the same as He wrought for Hezekiah when He gave instructions that a plaster of figs should be placed upon the carbuncle afflicting the king.

The divine promise is that when prayer is offered for the sick, if the afflicted one has committed sin, the Lord will forgive him. And so the afflicted should seek from the Lord, not alone a physical blessing, but even a greater spiritual blessing. Nothing will contribute so much to the desired blessing, both physically and spiritually, as will the spirit of complete surrender and resignation to the divine will. As the afflicted commit their cases to the hands of God, believing that He knows best and that as their loving and merciful Friend He will do for them what He sees to be for their good, there will come peace of mind and joy of heart even in the midst of pain. And this spirit of submission we need to exercise in every experience of life. Having done the best we know, and failed, we may be saved from sorrow and disappointment by believing that in all our affairs God has overruled for the best.

All Shall Be Well

All shall be well
The darkest, night encircles me about,
And not a ray of cheering light appear;
His promise shall preserve my faith from doubt;
“Fear not, My child; in darkness I am near.”

All shall be well,
When hard the battle grows against sin and wrong,
And victory seems to turn on evil’s side;
Then is the time to sing faith’s glorious song,
And fearlessly in His great power confide.

All shall be well;
Though dearest friend may turn to bitter foe,
And love may change to hate and cruel sneer;
He still is true, and this my soul does know,
His love divine brings to me helpful cheer.

All shall be well;
The arrow may not reach its destined end;
Our plans may fail to win the longed-for prize;
But in the failure He may choose to send
may be the way which leads to the skies.

All shall be well;
In pleasure or in pain, in death or life,
His hand is on the helm in good or ill;
In calm, sweet peace, or hard and trying strife,
There comes to me what He shall wisely will.

All shall be well;
Then trust Him in the stormy ocean wild,
As well as on the calm and peaceful shore;
He ever cares for His trusting child,
He safe shall keep me now and evermore.

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F. M. W.

G. Loyalty to God and to Caesar

FEAR GOD AND HONOR THE KING

TO FEAR God and honor the authorities of the state is the duty of every Christian. Christ enunciated this principle when He said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Matthew 22:21.

And the apostle Paul, commenting on this principle, declares: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." "Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Romans 13:1, 5-7. There are certain duties and obligations which belong to the great Creator of the heavens and the earth. To this relationship every other relationship is subordinate. His law and requirements stand supreme.

There are certain relationships which pertain to civil government. It is the duty of every Christian to support the government under which he lives, in so far as its requirements do not run counter to the commands and requirements of God. He should pay taxes, even though he cannot approve of the objects to which the taxes are appropriated. There are semi-governmental agencies with which he may heartily cooperate. He should render willing support to the Red Cross in its great and efficient humanitarian work for the destitute and suffering in every land.

A Loyal People

Seventh-day Adventists have always been a law-abiding people. They have never taken part in mutiny or rebellion. They have promoted the peace and prosperity of the countries in which they live. They have held throughout their history to the principle of not combating. Their consciences have not permitted them in times of war, as in times of peace, to take the lives of their fellow men. And they have been recognized by various governments as possessing a noncombatant status. This was true at the time of the American Civil War. It was true also of the first and second world wars. Many of our boys who were called to the colors in the United States and in other countries, were given noncombatant work, and they rendered faithful and loyal service to their country.

The world now is in a state of agitation. As never before, every kind of question and subject is being discussed. There is much idle speculation about many things. Particularly is this true regarding the political situation. We have come to a time when we should think much and talk little. We believe that there will be fulfilled in this our day prophecies of the Word of God in relation to certain nations. We cannot safely predict just how these prophecies will be fulfilled in detail. We should patiently wait and watch and pray, seeking God for divine wisdom that we may recognize the fulfillment of His word when it does take place.

Through the-years there have been men who felt that by juggling figures and dates they could determine just when the Lord would come. Seventh-day Adventists have placed their hearty disapproval upon these methods. The messenger of the Lord tells us:

"You will not be able to say that He will come in one, two, or five years, neither are you to put off His coming by stating that it may not be for ten or twenty years. It is the duty of the people of God to have their lamps trimmed and burning, to be as men that wait for the Bridegroom, when He shall return from the wedding." - Review and Herald, March 22, 1892.

"Letters have come to me asking if I have any special light as to the time when probation will close; and I answer that I have only this message to bear, that it is now time to work while the day lasts, for the night comes in which no man can work. Now, just now, it is time for us to be watching, working, and waiting."-Ibid., October 9, 1894.

We received some time ago a letter from a good but misguided brother who felt that he could figure out from the Bible and the Testimonies just when the investigative judgment would begin on the

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living. Neither the Bible nor the Testimonies affords any data whereby any such conclusion can be reached. Let us keep idle speculation out of our hearts. But let us remember the admonition of the Savior, "Be you also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes."

Pray for Rulers

In our own native lands we should refrain from censure of rulers of state. Rather we should follow the Bible injunction to pray for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." 1 Timothy 2:2, 3.

And we should also refrain from holding up to ridicule and scoffing the rulers of other lands. Particularly should we in the North American field guard ourselves in this matter. So far as the races of men are concerned, this country is the great melting pot of the world. Its citizenry is made up in part of those who have come from other lands. The very large majority of these peoples have become assimilated into the American system of government, and are strong supporters of the principles of democracy. We who are American born should be careful in our criticism of the countries from which these citizens have come. In the very nature of the case they must ever regard with kindly consideration the lands of their nativity.

If we live in some country of which we are not citizens, we should be particularly guarded to make no criticism of the government or its rulers, and we should avoid singing the praises of our home country or making invidious comparisons as between different kinds of government.

Loyalty to Government

We who live in various lands should prove our loyalty to our governments by living well-ordered lives, by obeying the laws of our country, by giving proper honor and respect of its constituted authorities. We should honor our flag and the principles for which it stands. So long as the flag is not associated with any act of religious worship, it is highly proper that we should be willing to salute this emblem and on appropriate occasions display it at our own homes and our institutions. And this principle of loyalty should actuate every member of our church, under whatever government he may live, provided that this relationship to the state does not violate his relationship to God.

We should not engage in partisan strife, and we should keep out of our hearts all racial animosities. As citizens we must be true to our own country, honoring its flag, its laws, its institutions, but at the same time we must always bear in mind that as Christians we owe paramount honor and respect to Christ, our Savior. He died for the whole human family. The apostle Paul declares that He has made of one blood all nations of men.

One Human Family

When those of various tribes and races come to Christ the Lord, and have their carnal natures changed, and become new men in Christ Jesus, they will recognize that in God's sight and in spiritual fellowship "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor non circumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all!" Colossians 3: 11.

The apostle here enunciates a principle that is just as applicable today as at the time he stated it. The citizens of North America are no more precious in the sight of God than the aboriginal Indians whom they found here. Christ died for the South Sea Islander just as much as He died for the civilized Australian. When Christ died He tasted death for every man. (Hebrews 2:9.)

By nature all men are without God and without hope in the world. If one man today is better than another, it is only through God's grace. This was well expressed by John Bunyan, when he was a prisoner in Bedford jail. A drunken man stumbled by his window. Bunyan remarked to a friend, who was visiting him, "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bunyan." And so it is not becoming for any man today, we care not what may be his citizenship, his education, his position in the world, to glory over another. If in any wise he is better than his neighbor, perhaps his environment was responsible, the early Christian or civilizing influences with which he came in contact left their impress upon his character.

It is right, as we have said, that as citizens we should support our government, and do all that we can to promote its peace and prosperity. But as Christians we must ever bear in mind that in common with every other Christian, regardless of his nationality, we are citizens of the heavenly country, and have one common Savior and one common Father. When we recognize this, it will keep out of our hearts racial animosity and jealousy. We will recognize that, as Christ's representatives, the world is our parish, and we

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will cherish in our hearts love for our fellow men of every race and color. Only as we do this can we exemplify the spirit of the Master, and labor for those who know Him not with the same love that brought Him to this world to give His life for poor, lost humanity.

QUIT YOURSELVES LIKE MEN

An Open Letter to Our Young Men in Camp and Field During the Last War

AS MY thoughts go out from day to day over the great world field, I think of you who are in the service of your country. Some of you are in training camps preparing for service in the field; others are already at the front. I think of how you have left home and friends; of how your life plans have been sacrificed—at least temporarily—and of how you face a future of danger and uncertainty. You are brought into new and strange environment, under conditions which will prove trying alike to your patience and to your endurance. These changes in your life have entailed real sacrifice in feeling and in temporal interest: a sacrifice to you, a sacrifice to your fathers and mothers, your brothers and sisters, and perhaps to wives or sweethearts, whom you have left at home. Only those who have formed a part of such family circles can sense the sadness of the separation. Let this bond of love and affection encircle you during the separation, and turn your thoughts to the old home and to those who pray for you in your absence and who, on the conclusion of peace, will eagerly and joyfully await your return.

Although your leaving home required the sacrifice of home associations and blessings, it did not require the sacrifice of your qualities of heart and life, or of your relationship to Christ. Indeed, the sacrifice of the former, may, by your co-operation with the great Architect of your life, serve to enhance and ennoble and strengthen the latter qualities. You may carry Christ with you to the camp, to the field, to the earth's remotest bounds. You may find in your loneliness, in your trials, in times of imminent danger, a communion with Him, sweeter and more satisfying than any communion you might enjoy with earthly friends. In that communion, with your broader opportunities for Christian labor, with your new viewpoints of observation and study, you may find enlargement of heart, clearer perspective of earth's values as compared with the things of God, growth in grace, and perfection of life. This will be possible only as you keep your purposes pure, your motives true, and your life loyal to Christ and to His truth.

Be true to Christ. Make His service first. Your obligations to Him are paramount. Take His holy law as the standard of your conduct. Daily study His Word and listen to His voice speaking to you through its instructions. The help you may be able to pass on to others will be the help, you, yourself, will receive from Christ through His Holy Spirit, from day to day in your own personal experience. Take time to pray. Cultivate the spirit of prayer so that even when you cannot assume the physical attitude of prayer your heart can ascend to God and your faith can grasp His promises. Remember that you stand as representatives of Christ and of His church. Others will judge, and they will have a right to judge, by your conduct, the denomination you represent. Be true to the faith of that denomination. Do not parade your religion. Do not make it obnoxious to those around you. On the other hand do not be ashamed of it. Do not cover it up. Do not be afraid to kneel down and pray and to let your companions know that Christ is your Savior.

Be true to yourself. Keep your conscience clear. Keep yourself up to the level of your own self-respect. Do not do in the dark what you would not do in the light. Do not do among strangers what you would not do back in the old home circle. As you walk about, as you associate with your companions, do so with the consciousness in your own heart that you are what you profess to be, true in purpose, in motive, and in thought to your highest ideals. Live as you will wish you had lived as you look back upon your experience after you return home. We would say to you in the words of the great apostle to Timothy, "Keep thyself pure." Safeguard the morals and virtue of every woman you meet as you would wish others to safeguard the virtue of your mother, sisters, wife, or sweetheart. Remember that the path to the house of the harlot leads down to death, and in the great majority of cases to utter and final separation from God. See Proverbs 7.

You will find many leisure hours. Do not permit this time to go to waste. Do not spend it in revelry, frivolity, or trifling, but rather in self-improvement. The Master has a work for you to do in His great army in the days to come. Improve every opportunity to fit yourself for efficient service. Follow definite lines of reading and of study, making up as far as possible the loss you will sustain in not being able to engage in regular schoolwork.

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Be true to your fellow men. Do not betray the confidence they repose in you. Do not disappoint their expectations. Live among them as did Daniel in Babylon, as did Joseph in Egypt, an example of loyalty to truth, of purity of heart, of sobriety of conduct. See in those with whom you associate the purchase of Christ's sacrifice, judgment-bound souls, and recognize that Christ's providence has brought you in touch with them that you may represent His character. Be true to the trust He commits to you. Though you cannot engage in wild revelry, in smoking and drinking and gambling, as some of your companions may, in your personal associations be companionable. Do not hold yourself aloof from your associates. Be a friend, a brother, a kind, generous-hearted, genial Christian man.

Be true to your country. Next to your duty to God comes your duty to your country in your present relationship. Seek to perform that duty as true men. The United States Government has made liberal provision for those whose religious convictions will not permit them to take part in active warfare. In this it has shown a high consideration for the conscientious convictions of a small minority of its citizens. It proves the earnest purpose of our lawmakers to preserve even in times of national crisis and war the high principles of civil and religious liberty upon which this nation was founded. As members of the Seventh day Adventist Church you naturally will be entitled to this exemption provided your personal convictions are in harmony with noncombatant principles which have been held by the church through its history. This will entitle you to assignment to some noncombatant corps or hospital service.

Whatever may be the work to which you are assigned, be true to your trust. Do cheerfully and heartily the tasks which fall to your lot. Christians ought to be subject to those in authority "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Romans 13:5. Perform your duties as unto God and not unto men. If at times things are not so pleasant or agreeable as you might wish, remember that the Government is engaged in a life-and-death struggle; that it has great and insuperable difficulties with which to cope. Therefore do not find fault or criticize, but rather pray for those in authority, in harmony with the exhortation of the apostle. (1 Timothy 2:1-3.)

Be courteous, respectful, and deferential to those who are placed in authority over you. If you have requests to prefer for special religious privileges, make them, not in a spirit of demand, but in meekness and humility. Be so circumspect in your deportment, in the discharge of your duties, that it may be said of you as it was said of Daniel, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."

So live and labor from day to day that you will be able to hold in your heart continually the consciousness of Christ's abiding Spirit. You will face situations which will try your faith to the utmost. Any hour may bring to you problems which only divine wisdom can help you to solve. Oftentimes in your personal relationships it will be a question not alone of what you should do but as well of how you should do it. God in His overruling providence has permitted you to come into the position in which you find yourself today. Believe that He in His great power is able to work every experience out for good. (Romans 8:28.) Perhaps He has brought you into the position where you are today in order to represent through your life the qualities of His character, the principles of His saving truth.

Remember daily that the prayers of your relatives and of your brethren and sisters in the church are ascending to God in your behalf. In the consciousness of this great concert of prayer find hope and courage. Keep in close touch with home and church folks. Write them as freely as your environment will permit, of your experiences, of your tests and trials. Write them words of courage and of strength, for in seeking to pass on to others the spirit of courage, you will find that this spirit reacts in your own lives.

Safeguard your health. Your work will necessarily be strenuous and exacting. But excesses which undermine health, you can avoid. It is unthinkable that you will ever drink alcoholic beverages. As far as possible obtain regular rest and sleep. Think purely, live nobly. Be an optimist. Think, talk, and act courage. Radiate good cheer to others. These habits and this spirit will go far to keep you healthy and happy.

Some in the environment in which you are placed will grow weak. They will lose their bearings. They will drift with the tide. They will take on the form and feature, the mold and coloring, of the unusual associations and circumstances which come into their lives. Conversely, you may grow strong in the same environment. The very discipline which at times will appear exacting and perhaps in some instances overbearing, if submitted to in the right spirit will broaden and develop your Christian manhood.

In closing, let me give you the words of the Lord to Joshua, when he was called upon to face a new and untried world, and to shoulder heavy and exacting responsibilities: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou may observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou may prosper whither so ever thou goes. This

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book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou may observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shall make thy way prosperous, and then thou shall have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whither so ever thou goes.” Joshua 1:7-9.

In the bonds of Christian love and fellowship, Very sincerely your friend and brother.
FRANCIS M. WILCOX

MEN WANTED!

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men. Men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for right though the heavens fall.”-Education, p. 57.

My Heart's Desire

I'm journeying on to the Promised Land,
The templed hills and walls of fire;
To the jasper sea, the gates of pearl-
The land of my heart's desire.

I am hoping to reach the goodly land
By the mercy and power of God;
To walk in places glorious and fair,
Where the feet of angels have trod.

But the stretch is long and the darkness deep,
And many the feet that miss the way;
Still fixing my eyes on the distant scene,
I'm led by the heavenly ray.

Sometimes I go singing beneath Jerusalem's shades
And pause to drink from its waters sweet;
And sometimes I stagger through burning sands
Till sandals are scorched by the heat.

But it matters not whether cooling shade
Or burning deserts await my feet,
Or whether I can always see the way
That leads to the blest retreat.

Faith questions not. Its victory is sure;
And though scalding tears may blind the sight,
It pierces the heaviest night of gloom
And still glimpses afar the light.

I am nearing my rest, O friend and foe;
My glad eyes are beginning to see
A glimmer of light from the "domes afar,"
Through the gates that are swinging free.

And then comes the glory, and then the praise,
And shouts as we meet our King,

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Till heaven is astir with ecstasy,
And its portals and arches ring.

So I journey on, and my step grows light,
With my heart abound and my soul afire
To reach the land, for I have journeyed long,
The land of my heart's desire.

MARY VALLIANT NOWLIN

H. The Coming of the Lord

THE AFTERMATH OF THE 1840-1844 MOVEMENT

THE effect of the great disappointment experienced by the Advent believers in 1840-44 can be better imagined than described. Thousands had sincerely believed that the Lord was indeed coming to take them from this world of sin. They had demonstrated their faith by their works-in disposing of their property, in laying their all upon the altar of service and sacrifice. From their unbelieving friends and neighbors they had received much opposition and even persecution. In some instances they were counted insane, and were regarded as objects of ridicule and of pity.

The day they had so fondly anticipated and so eagerly looked for had dawned at last. Anxiously they watched and waited, but the Lord did not appear. They kept vigil through the long hours of the night. No celestial glory dispelled either the darkness of night or the gloomy foreboding which were beginning to fill their own hearts. They looked out the next morning upon a cold and desolate world.

The awakening was fearful, and it required a living, practical Christian experience to stand the test; but we are thankful to say that thousands proved loyal to God. They could not go back upon the experience in which they knew Heaven had led. They recognized that in some way they had made a mistake, but the character of that mistake they could not discern. They only knew that the mistake was on their part, and that God still remained true.

Praying for Divine Guidance

Many turned against their former brethren and derided the hope they had once cherished. Others engaged in idle speculation, continuing to set times for the Lord to come. But there were others who earnestly reviewed their interpretation of Scripture, to determine wherein they had been in error. To these praying students of the Word, God showed Himself gracious, and in a short time light began to break in upon the Advent believers. They could find no error in their computation of the prophetic period. They found that they were right in their conclusion that the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 began in 457 BC and ended in 1844. Then they discovered that the sanctuary was not the earth, but rather the temple of God in heaven, and that the so-called cleansing of the sanctuary was the work of the investigative judgment, the closing work of Christ's ministry, preparatory to His Second Advent. This judgment work began in 1844.

Light Breaks

This new view of the sanctuary brought in a flood of light. There were revealed the claims of the law of God, as the divine measuring rule in the work of judgment. The study of that law led to a consideration of the claims of the fourth commandment. In contrast with the seal of God as found in the fourth commandment the believers were led to a consideration of what constitutes the mark of the beast, and to a study of the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Revelation.

It was seen that whereas William Miller and his associates gave the first angel's message of Revelation 14, there were a second and a third message to follow the first, and as a result of the third message there would be developed a people not alone holding the faith of Jesus but also keeping the commandments of God, even as Christ Himself kept them. It was this line of study which developed the denomination known as Seventh-day Adventists.

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“Of That Day and Hour Knows No Man”

Had William Miller and his associates apprehended fully the significance of Christ’s instruction to His church, it is altogether probable that they would not have taught the coming of the Lord in 1844. They would have looked for the application of the sanctuary to something other than this earth, because the instruction which the Lord gave during His earthly ministry was very specific in relation to His Second Advent. Immediately preceding His ascension the disciples came to Him with the query, “Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Acts 1:6. Their minds were upon the time when the kingdom was to be established, rather than upon the work they were to do preparatory to the establishment of that kingdom. Christ, in His answer, emphasized the work to be done rather than the time.

He replied:

“It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:7,8.

This in principle was the same instruction He had, given to them repeatedly before, but instruction which they had failed to comprehend fully. One has only to read the great prophetic discourses of our Lord as recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 to see how pointedly Christ taught His disciples that they were not to know the day or the hour when He would return to the earth. They might know by certain conditions in the world when His coming was near, even at the doors, just as they might know when summer was nigh by the fig tree’s putting forth its leaves in the spring, but beyond this they could not go. The day and hour of His coming had not been revealed to the church.

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” Matthew 24:32-36.

“At an Hour When You Think Not”

Christ is equally emphatic in His statement relating to the time of the close of probation. This will come upon the world in an unknown hour. He says:

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and you yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he comes and knocks, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he comes shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be you therefore ready also: for the Son of man comes at an hour when you think not.” Luke 12:35-40.

The admonition Christ gives to His church is for them to watch and be ready. The apostle Paul instructs the church that it is not necessary for him to write regarding the times and the seasons. They may know by the signs that the Lord has placed on record when the day of the Lord is near. Regarding thus the times and seasons, and holding themselves in a state of constant preparedness for the return of their Master, they would not be taken off their guard. But upon the wicked, unbelieving world, that day—the close of probation—would come as a thief in the night.

“Of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden, destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4.

Watchful, Prayerful Waiting

Again and again we are admonished in the Scriptures of truth to be ready, to keep awake, to be watchful; and when it is recognized that the precise time of the Lord’s coming may not be known to His church, there is special point in this instruction.

If we knew that a long-expected friend was to come at a certain date, why would we need to watch before the expected hour? Why not take our accustomed rest and sleep, so long as we kept in mind the precise hour of his coming? Why need we worry over eventualities? But if he writes us that he is about to

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come, that we may expect him soon, that he may arrive any day on any train, then we know that we must maintain a spirit of constant watchfulness. We must be ready always to receive him. His entertainment must be prepared. In heart and in home we must stand ready to welcome our coming guest.

Waiting for the Tarrying Vision

Thus must it be with the church of Christ. The vision has tarried long beyond the expected time. For many years the hearts of God's waiting children have been throbbing with the hope of greeting their Lord. He tells us that if the vision tarries, we are to wait for it; and He tells us not to grow weary or lose heart in this waiting period.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:35-37.

JESUS IS COMING AGAIN

WILL Jesus return to this earth? Will He come the second time, personally, visibly, even as He came at His first advent? These are questions which have concerned the church of Christ through the ages. Many at different times have thought the Lord was about to appear. Some even thought this in the days of the apostle Paul. But these expectant ones have been disappointed.

Have we any evidence today that the church has not had in past ages that the second coming of Christ is near? These are interesting questions for the consideration of every sincere disciple, because all true children of God long for the presence of their Lord. They long for personal association with Him the same as they long for personal association with absent friends.

That Christ will come the second time we have positive assurance in the Word of God. Declares the apostle Paul, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28.

Christ came the first time as a sin offering. He will come the second time to complete the work which He so well began, to bring to a glad and glorious fruition the plan of salvation. The gospel message today is gathering out of all nations a people for His name. This is the work of the kingdom of grace. When the kingdom of glory is established at the coming of the Lord, then will the true Israel of God be gathered from every nation and kindred to dwell with the Lord forever.

That Christ will come the second time we are assured by His own statement. The evening of His betrayal He told His disciples that He was about to go away. Sorrow filled their hearts. They grieved sorely that they were to be deprived of that blessed companionship that had meant so much in their experience. The Savior in loving sympathy ministered the balm of healing. Listen to His words:

"Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also." John 14:1-3.

In What Manner Will Christ Return?

How will Jesus return to this earth? In what manner will He come back to take His children home to the mansions which He has gone to prepare? Some teach that He comes in the spiritualistic seance. Others tell us that He will come in some remote section of the earth. This is not the teaching of His Word. In fact, He warns us against these false theories: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Matthew 24:26.

We are told by some that Christ comes at death to take His children home; by others that He comes at conversion. He does indeed come near to the believer at conversion, but He comes in the presence of the blessed Holy Spirit, His representative, the Comforter whom He promised to send to make up in His church the lack of His own personal presence. But this is not the coming of Christ.

He comes near to His children in the hour of death. How many blessed deathbed scenes have been witnessed! In the hour of darkness, when human help has failed of its endeavor, when earthly scenes are fading from the dimming vision of the afflicted one, the presence of Christ by His Holy Spirit has been felt. Some have seen angel forms about their bed. Some have seen the face of the Master bending over them in pity and tenderness. We do not doubt the reality of these experiences. They are assurances of divine

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acceptance. But these visitations do not constitute the second coming of Christ.

The Coming of Christ Will Be a Personal Coming

He will not come in the person of a representative, as He manifests Himself to His children through the presence of the Holy Spirit. He will come in person. He emphatically declares, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." The personal Christ will return to earth the second time, literally, personally, even as He came two thousand years ago.

The Coming of Christ Will Be a Literal Coming

Some have thought to spiritualize away this blessed truth, claiming that the promise was symbolical, and was not to be believed literally. This idea is entirely contrary to the plain, positive teachings of the Scripture. This is the inspired testimony of the great apostle to the Gentiles:

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

How comforting is this precious promise, comforting to the church in every age to whom it has been a living hope, comforting to us who live today.

The Coming of Christ Will Be a Visible Coming

He will come even more openly than He came the first time. His first advent was in comparative isolation. For the first thirty years of His life He lived quietly among men, and His public ministry covered only a small portion of the habitable world. But when He returns the second time, all nations will take cognizance of His Advent. He will come in all the glory of His Father, attended by the shining angelic host. This is His own word: "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27.

The promise is that Christ will return to earth even as He went away. How did He go away? This is the inspired record: "While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1: 9.

We suppose this was a cloud of angels which constituted His bodyguard, His royal escort to the courts of glory. Two of these angels remained behind to minister comfort to the sorrowing and disappointed disciples, who stood gazing into the heavens; and this is the assurance which these angels gave: "You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1: 11.

So Christ is to come in like manner as He went away. This testimony of the angels is echoed by the beloved disciple, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in his vision upon the isle of Patmos. "Behold, he comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kingdoms of the earth shall wail because of him." Revelation 1:7.

The Purpose of Christ's Coming

For what purpose will Christ return to the earth the second time? This is already indicated in part by the scriptures which we have read. We may say briefly:

1. He comes to reward every man according to his works; those who have done good, with everlasting life; and those who have done evil, with everlasting destruction. (John 5:28, 29.)
2. He comes to give life to the righteous dead. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.)
3. He comes to translate, without their seeing death, the righteous living. (1 Corinthians 15:51-55.)
4. He comes to take His children home. (John 14:1-3)
5. He comes to destroy the finally impenitent. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.)
6. He comes to cleanse this earth from sin, thus constituting it the everlasting home of the redeemed. (2 Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 21:1-7.)
7. He comes to establish His kingdom, in which everlasting righteousness shall exist throughout the endless ages of eternity. (Matthew 16:27; 25:31; Daniel 7:27.)

The Time of Christ's Coming

We cannot tell the hour nor the day nor the year when Christ will come. The Master definitely

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warns us against setting a time for His return. "Of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matthew 24:36.

If this warning had been heeded, how many disappointments and heartaches would have been saved some of His misguided followers! But though we may not know the day or the hour when Christ will come, we may know when He is near, "even at the doors." We are given certain signs or conditions by which we may know that the coming of Christ is near, even as when the trees put forth their leaves in the spring we know that summer is nigh. (Matthew 24:32,33.) These signs we may briefly enumerate as follows: In the heavens (Matthew 24:29, 30), in the physical world (Hebrews 1: 11, 12), in the social world (Luke 17:26-30), in the industrial world (James 5:1-8), in the political world (Joel 3:9-16; Luke 21:25-27), in the religious world (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 1:7), spread of gospel message (Matthew 24:14).

Great Chains of Prophecy

In addition to these evidences which we see all around us that the coming of the Lord is near, we have great lines of prophecy which unmistakably and unerringly declare the same great truth. The prophecies contained in Daniel 2, Daniel 7, Daniel 8 and 9, Daniel 11 and 12, Revelation 1 to 3, Revelation 6, Revelation 8 and 9, Revelation 11 and 12, Revelation 13 and 14, and other prophecies which might be enumerated, bring us down the stream of time step by step, and culminate in their fulfillment in our own day. These all point, as with a great finger, to one focal point-the coming of the Lord-and declare that that coming is near at hand.

Preceded by a Warning Message

When Heaven has visited the earth with judgments in the past, these judgments have been preceded by a warning message, giving a call to repentance. Such a message was given by Noah preceding the flood waters. Jonah was sent to give a message of warning to Nineveh. John the Baptist came as the messenger of Christ's first advent. In like manner Christ's second coming will be heralded to the world.

The Master declares that "this gospel of the kingdom [of the establishment and setting up of the kingdom] shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14. Joel, the prophet, declares that a trumpet shall be blown in Zion, and an alarm shall be sounded in the holy mountain, and that all the inhabitants of the land shall tremble, "for the day of the Lord comes, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1.

This warning message is given in more minute detail in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. It is a message which calls men away from the worship of self and of the world to the worship of Christ the Lord. It is a message which sounds a warning against the wicked principles and influences which are at work in the world. It is a message which proclaims that the hour of God's judgment is come. It is a message which exalts the law of God as the standard of that judgment, as the rule of life. It is a message which exalts the Lord Jesus Christ and His righteousness as the one power that can transform character and give entrance to the courts of glory. And this message, we believe with all our hearts, is going to the world today. By tongue and pen, by the power of the printing press, the telegraph and telephone, the radio, the living preacher, this message is being heralded in many different languages and dialects to the nations of men. And as soon as it has accomplished its work, Christ the Lord will come.

Are We Prepared to Meet Him?

Are we prepared to greet in peace the Master of life and glory? Can we look up in that day and say with glad acclaim in the words of the prophet, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation"? Isaiah 25:9.

This will be indeed our blessed privilege if we avail ourselves today of the provisions of His grace. The door of mercy stands open. We are invited to enter that door. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

Will you not come to Jesus today? Will you not accept His love? Will you not yield your will to Him, and allow Him to come into your heart and transform your life? Will you not take Him as your example, and let the righteousness of His life be exemplified in you? If we learn to live with Him here, we shall love to live with Him through eternity. If we will but take Him as our Friend today, He will be our Friend in the day of judgment. "To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

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IF CHRIST SHOULD COME TODAY

IF CHRIST should come today, would you be prepared to welcome His return? Could you look up and in the words of the prophet exclaim, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation”? This is the song of triumph which will arise from the lips of the redeemed in that great day, whenever it shall occur.

Could you sing this song today? Is your experience in the Lord of such a character, are you living before Him continually with such a spirit, are your sins so covered with His blood, that you could take part in this glorious anthem?

It is well for us sometimes in our life to face the inevitable. God in His all-wise providence has brought many a man face to face with death at times in his experience, possibly to awaken him to a consciousness of his own condition and of his real unpreparedness to meet the issues of eternity. If we are not actually brought through some crisis like this in our lives, it is well for us in thought to face such a crisis. It will prove most profitable for us to sit down and consider well what we would do if this day were our last on earth, if this were our last day of probation, and tomorrow we had to face the inevitable judgment of God.

We cannot tell when the Lord will come. This has not been revealed in His Word. We cannot tell when probation will close. We cannot say that it will be this year, or next year, or five years hence; nor can we say that it will not be this year, or next year, or five years hence. We know nothing about the precise time. All speculation regarding it is futile. But because we do not know the time, because that event is clothed with uncertainty, we have this earnest admonition from the lord: “Therefore be you also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes.” Matthew 24:44. What can this mean other than constant preparedness for that great event? What can it mean other than that you and I should be prepared today, tomorrow, every day, for the inevitable in our experience? It can mean nothing else, and the child of God who reads anything else into this admonition and similar admonitions in the Word, is putting off the day of salvation, is rejecting for the present the provisions of God’s mercies. “To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” And so we go back again to the question with which we started, If Christ should come today, are you prepared to meet Him?

Serving Christ in Our Business

Are you conducting your business in His fear? Are you honest in your dealing with your fellow men? Do you pay your debts? Do you keep your promises? Do you render an equivalent for the service you receive from your fellow men? Or do you drive sharp bargains? Do you take advantage of others? Do you cheat and lie and steal when you have opportunity to do so without detection? This is what many in the world are doing at the present time. Thousands are amassing fortunes by just such methods as these. Indeed, some of these methods have become so common that the child of God adopts them almost unconsciously. But there is an all-seeing God who takes account of our business relations. He knows the motives and purposes that prompt our acts, and He will take account of these in the judgment when He passes upon your case and mine.

Following Christ’s Example in Social Life

If Christ should come today, would His coming bring you any pangs of conscience, any regrets as to your social relationships? With what spirit have you mingled with your neighbors and with your associates? Have you been one with them for a good time, bent on draining the cup of pleasure, with little thought of God and little regard for the proprieties which belong to ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ? If Christ should come today, would He find you in a theater, at a moving-picture show, at a card party, at some social gathering where, in excess of pleasure, God is forgotten?

It is absolutely inconceivable that a child of God could emerge from a theater, or a picture show, or from some ungodly social sport, to welcome His Savior whom he might see coming in the clouds of heaven. Nor can we conceive how one who finds his chief pleasure in pastimes of this character could find pleasure in the association of his Savior and of the holy angels. To him heaven would be a place of dead monotony, a place of excruciating agony, because its very atmosphere would be foreign to his desires and purposes.

The time will come, and it must come speedily, when every child of God must make a definite decision between the god of this world and the God of heaven, between the pleasures of this world and the pleasures of eternity. And we believe that the time has fully come when everyone who is looking for the

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coming of the Lord should make that decision, and should no longer delay it. If God be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him. The Lord will accept no halfhearted service. No one who is saved in the kingdom of God can hang onto this world while he lays hold of heaven.

The Spirit of Christ in the Church Relationship

If Christ should come today, would He find you prepared so far as your church relationships are concerned? Think you that the differences with your brethren, which possibly you have nourished through the years, fit you to meet the Lord in peace? Do you feel that the old grudges and animosities which you have cherished, that the evil words you have spoken, the gossip in which you have indulged, the rankling and the discord which you have brought into the church of Christ, give you a fitting for a home in the kingdom of God? Nay, verily. If you have been guilty of these things, be assured that they have been the snares of the enemy to unfit you for the peace and the harmony and the love of heaven.

When you find that peace, and when there comes to your vision that enlarged view which a true estimate of eternal values will give, then you will see how insignificant are some of the paltry things that have held you down and engaged your mind. Then you will begin to think the thoughts of God after Him, and your heart will lay hold of eternal verities, and you will desire the treasures of love and of faith, and count them far above the selfish considerations which have moved you in the past.

The Home Life a Great Test of Christianity

If Christ should come today, would it bring to you any regrets as to your life in your own home? It is here in this relationship, after all, that the great test of your Christianity comes. Many a man can manifest a fair exterior. He can appear to his brethren and to his neighbors all that makes up respectability and nominal Christianity; but the question is, How does he appear in his own home, to his wife, to his children, who know him best, before whom he acts his own self, to whom he speaks when he is not on guard, to whom he reveals the purposes and the motives that move his life? How does his religion appear to them? Have they confidence in his profession? Sad, indeed, if there be any Seventh-day Adventist homes today lacking this love and confidence.

Some time ago we were asked to pray for a sick woman. In arranging the service, she said, I want my husband to engage in this prayer season, because I have confidence in his religion." It was a great compliment that this woman paid her husband. Has your wife confidence in your religion? Has your husband confidence in your Christian experience? Do your children believe that you have true faith in God, and that you are making an earnest, determined struggle for a home in His kingdom? I do not ask, Do you have perfection of character? This does not exist in any human being. We all fail and make mistakes in every one of life's relationships. But I do ask, Do we impress those who know us best with our sincerity? Do they know that even regardless of our imperfections, our chief thought, our great purpose in life, our business, is to serve the Lord? And if we have made mistakes, if we have sinned against our loved ones, have we made those things right, or will these sins rise up to condemn us in the last great day?

The Personal Heart Relationship

Finally, if you knew Christ was coming today, would you possess the consciousness in your own inmost soul that, aside from every human relationship, in that close, personal, intimate relationship existing between every man's soul and God, you were doing the best you knew, that so far as your motives and purposes were concerned, you were true to the outward profession you made? The judgment of God at the last day will reveal the terrible deception into which some have fallen. It will reveal the terrible hypocrisy that some professed Christians have practiced. It will bring to view the double lives that some are living. It will show the selfish motives and wicked purposes in contrast with the outward life of apparent respectability.

If the devil has ensnared us in this deception, may God awaken us before it is forever too late. May He lead us to sit down today, and by the aid of the Spirit, look at ourselves as God sees us, facing the inevitable, facing what we know will come sometime; and then as we see ourselves in our sin and our impurity, in our unrighteousness, may God help us to cry mightily unto Him for deliverance. And oh, thank God, there is deliverance in the Lord Jesus Christ; there is power in Him to take us out of the pit; there is power in Him to change the current of our thoughts, to create within us clean hearts, to renew right spirits within us. The records of the ages past testify to this fact.

God rescued David from the terrible sins of murder and adultery. He rescued Solomon from his wicked idolatry. He brought Manasseh, the wicked king of Israel, who sold himself to unrighteousness, to a

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realizing sense of his great need, and bestowed upon him the power of deliverance. Why has God left such records as this in His Word? It is to speak comfort to you and me. It is to tell us that God's infinite mercy can save the vilest of sinners. It is to assure us that infinite power will save us, even as it saved them.

"To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." God is pleading with us today. By His Holy Word, through the divine influence of His Holy Spirit, through the admonition of His servants, by the advice and counsel of our friends, by life's experiences, even by the judgments of God which we see abroad in the earth, the Lord is entreating us to turn to Him with all our hearts. May we respond to the divine invitation, so that when Christ shall come, or when our probationary period shall have ended, we may be found clothed with His righteousness and prepared by His grace for a home in His eternal kingdom.

"BE YE ALSO READY"

"In Such an Hour as You Think Not the Son of Man Comes"

WE HAVE fallen upon evil days. In every part of the world we see the forces of iniquity combining for the last great conflict. The signs of Christ's coming, as given in the Sacred Word, are rapidly meeting their fulfillment. We know not what a day may bring forth. We often wonder, as we turn to the morning paper, what has happened during the night-what fair region of the earth has been brought to desolation through flood or earthquake or fire. What new pestilence has broken forth, taking its toll of human life; what outbreak of hostilities has occurred between nations. What great steamship has gone to the bottom of the sea; what bread riots have occurred in some of our great cities. It is a pleasant surprise indeed when the newspaper records none of these untoward happenings, but it is seldom that this is so. We are faced with a recital of terrible disasters, of horrible crimes. And these are not always featured in glaring headlines, because they are becoming so frequent that they are little thought of, and oftentimes some terrible casualty occupies but a small, unimportant space in the paper.

In the very commonness of these conditions lies our danger. We are coming to regard them so much in the light of the natural course of events that happenings which would have startled and aroused us fifteen or twenty years ago, make but little impression upon us today. And conditions in the world which we recognize as startling signs of the end of all things, have grown so commonplace that we do not think of them in their connection with prophecy.

Recognizing this danger, the Master has given us faithful and definite warning. That warning is sounded in the text which constitutes the heading of this chapter. The last days are likened to the days of Noah, when men were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage. It has never been wrong to eat and drink, or buy and sell, or to form the marriage relationship. The fault is this that men's hearts would be so set upon these things that God would be forgotten; their whole objective would be the satisfaction of worldly, selfish, carnal desire. To the church is given this solemn warning, "Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Lord does come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes."

"Take You Heed, Watch and Pray"

This warning, only in different words, is sounded in the Gospel by Mark: "Take you heed, watch and pray: for you know not when the time is. Watch you therefore: for you know not when the master of the house comes, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:33-37.

Through Luke the same warning is given in these words: "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. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

And how greatly these admonitions are needed by the church of Christ at the present time! Some of our dear people are losing their Christian perspective. Having waited long and patiently for many years for the fulfillment of their hopes, they are beginning to reason, "My Lord delayed His coming." The cares of this life, the pleasures of the world, the spirit of sleep and indifference, are possessing their hearts. Their great danger is that the day of the Lord will come upon them unawares.

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It might appear at times that the gathering forces in the last final conflict between truth and error are no longer advancing. But such is not the case. If we could look beneath the surface and see as God sees, we would recognize the active processes that are going on, the increasing intensity of passion indicating that at any moment the volcanic eruption may come which will bring the climax.

Working of the Gospel Leaven

And this is true of the progress of the work of God. We are too much inclined, as was David, to number Israel. We sometimes feel that we can sit down and figure out mathematically and geographically just where the gospel message has gone, what has been accomplished, and the work yet to be done. But we cannot in reality do this. While God is recognizing organization in the carrying forward of His work, He is working outside of and beyond the bounds of any organized effort, not in one instance, but in many at the present time. Constantly our workers are finding isolated believers or groups of believers who, by the study of their Bibles, have come to the same conclusions relative to the truth for this time that is held by the church at large.

We can form no conception ourselves as to when the work of God will be completed. We can make no calculation as to when the world will have filled up its cup of iniquity. We cannot tell when the generation of the last message will end. We receive every little while, from some foolish and unwise speculator, a computation as to when probation is to end, when the Lord is to come. All this calculation is idle and foolish. God holds the time of Christ's coming within His own keeping. It is for us to be ready, "for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes."

"Time to Awake Out of Sleep"

In the writings of the apostles this truth is emphasized again and again. Declares the apostle Paul, speaking of this waiting time: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Romans 13:11-14.

Again the apostle sounds this solemn warning: "Of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8.

The apostle Peter sounds the same warning note: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of, him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:10-14.

The Real Test

Will we be admonished? Will we prepare our hearts for the eventualities of the future? Will we put our lives in readiness to welcome the Lord? It is in this that the real test will come in our Christian experience. Persecution tests the church; trials of various sorts come into our lives to test us; but as we regard it, the supreme test of the church of Christ today is to be found in this season of quietness, in this lull before the storm, in this day when apparently things are going on as they have been going for months and years. The inspired penman declares that this is the day of danger. It is the day in which the devil will lull us, if possible, into the sleep of carnal security, the day in which we shall hug to our hearts the delusive hope that all is well. But unless we arouse from our slumber and watch unto prayer, and work as we pray

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for the salvation of others, we shall find that the day of the Lord will come upon us and find us unprepared, and we shall cry in bitter anguish, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Again we say, we know not what the future has in store for us. We know not how soon the significant events taking place in the world may culminate in the end of all things. "Therefore be you also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes."

How Long?

How long, O Lord, ere night shall cease,
And glorious day be ushered in,
Before shall end the reign of sin,
And truth shall wield the scepter peace?

How long shall error forge her chain,
Deceiving men with subtle lies?
How long shall fools be counted wise,
And truth and right be counted vain?

How long shall war, with martial tread,
With cannon roar, with fire and dearth,
Destroy sweet peace from off the earth,
And claim as trophies countless dead?

How long shall poverty and woe,
And lordly wealth and mammon bold,
Make slaves of men through power of gold,
Make each to be his brother's foe?

How long shall death with whitened face
Defeat fond hope and cherished plan,
Destroy the light and life of man,
Before the winning of his race"?

How long? Not long; 'tis shortly now
Before He comes to reign in might,
The hosts of sin be put to flight;
To own His rule shall nations how.

And sorrow soon, and bitter strife,
And war and death, shall have an end;
Glad heaven to earth's sad sons shall lend
The joys of years in endless life.

Then courage take; earth's long, dark night
Gives way before the heaven of day,
The signs of God point out the way,
That upward leads to truth and light.

F. M. W.

I. The Sabbath Message

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WHY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS?

WHAT reason has the Seventh-day Adventist denomination for an existence? Why was it necessary, with numerous churches and religious organizations on every side, to inaugurate a new movement and add one more cult to those already in the field? Why could not the men and women making up the membership of this church have found in connection with other religious bodies abundant opportunities for the exercise of Christian activity?

An answer to these questions may be found in a consideration of the character of the message which this people bears to the world. In God's order the time has come when this earth's history is about to close. The kingdoms of this world are soon to give place to the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

Fulfilling prophecies and signs-conditions existing in the social, political, industrial, educational, scientific, and even the religious worlds plainly indicate that the time has been reached when events of a significant, startling, and most stupendous character are about to take place; that the long reign of sin is soon to be cut short, and that the generation now living will witness the appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven.

The Great Christian Church

A message, the burden of which is to call men's attention to these events and to bring about a reformation of life in all who will heed it, is due the world. As heaven's professed light bearer, the great Christian church should be able to recognize the times and seasons, and sound the message of Christ's coming. But this it is not doing. The great Episcopal Church is not doing it, nor the Methodist, nor the Baptist, nor the Lutheran, nor the Presbyterian, nor the Disciple, to say nothing of the smaller divisions of the so-called Protestant church, and the Greek and Roman Catholic churches.

Some of these denominations have done excellent work in the past. Among their communicants today are many devoted Christian people. But their stereotyped creeds preclude the acceptance of advanced light. They have no place in their system of religious belief for the doctrines comprehended in this movement.

Nor, it must be confessed, would these churches welcome to their fellowship men and women who might proclaim the special truths of this message. For this there is a reason. The truths due the world today are diametrically opposed to much of the teaching and practice of these churches.

The message for this generation, to prepare a people to stand in the day of Christ's coming, is a message of reform. The great Christian church for long years has slowly but surely been drifting away from the great principles of Bible truth. The deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is denied; the Scriptures of truth are no longer regarded as the revelation of God to men. Such cardinal Bible doctrines as the virgin birth of Christ, the manifestation of His miracle-working power, His resurrection, and His ascension to glory, are rejected by many religious teachers. The purpose of this movement is to call men back to the simplicity of Bible faith and living.

This message the great Christian church itself needs. It has grown worldly and careless and indifferent. Form and ceremony, show and ostentation, rites and rituals, have supplanted simplicity and vital godliness. It is bound about by creed and precedent. It has no time for the proclamation of God's special, testing truths for this generation. In consequence, God calls into being a new movement for the giving of this message to the world.

Seventh-day Adventists exist for the same reason that Noah was called to proclaim the impending doom in his day; that Jonah was sent to warn Nineveh of its overthrow. That John the Baptist was made the voice crying in the wilderness in preparation for the first advent; and that, later, upon Luther, Zwingli, and the Wesleys was placed the burden of a great spiritual awakening in the ages in which they lived. Heaven had truth to give to men, and it used those, humble though they might be, who were willing to become the messengers.

Not a Selfish Choice

To act the part of Heaven's messengers to the people of this generation, proclaiming the special truths now due the world, is the only excuse Seventh-day Adventists have for an existence as a separate denomination. They are not separate from their fellows as the result of whim or caprice or from selfish choice. The separation entails trial, opposition, misunderstanding, monetary loss, and great inconvenience. But they must be true to what they recognize as the call of God, at whatever cost or personal sacrifice.

Seventh-day Adventists cannot consistently cover up or compromise the distinctive characteristics

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of their faith. They may and do unite with others in the promotion of moral reforms. They have been pleased to stand shoulder to shoulder with their brethren of other churches in fighting the great evil of strong drink. They stand as the uncompromising and inveterate foes of the accursed liquor traffic in every form; of the white slave traffic; of the divorce evil; and of all allied curses of the human family. But they are not free to form any union, or permit any influence to control, which will lead to a compromise of the distinctive features of their faith, or to abate one iota from their freedom in proclaiming the message of which Heaven has made them the conservators. To do this would be to prove recreant to their sacred trust.

The message with which Seventh-day Adventists are charged—the good news of the soon coming of the Lord Jesus, and the necessary preparation of heart and life for that great and important event—in the very nature of the case, concerns the whole world. That coming involves the judgment of the whole human family, the apportionment of final awards, the close of earth's history, and the ushering in of the eternal state. To everyone, then, who will be affected by these momentous changes, to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, the message must be carried.

To this statement of fact the words of Holy Scripture bear witness. Says the prophet Joel, in speaking of this time in the world's history, "Blow you the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord comes, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1. To Zion, the church, the professed people of God, the message is to be given, and then to all the inhabitants of the land. Of the same import are the words of the Master Himself. Speaking of the signs that should precede His return to earth, He says, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

In striking fulfillment of these predictions, this gospel of the soon-coming kingdom is now encircling the earth. Starting in weakness, it has increased in volume and grown in power, until its ramifications extend to practically every nation under heaven. Strong bases of operation exist in all leading Protestant countries.

A great movement is on. A great concert of worldwide activity is going forward. Thousands of earnest Christian men and women believe that we have reached the closing days of earth's history, and that soon the opening heavens will disclose the glory of the coming King, and that the Master has commissioned them to tell the good news of His soon coming to their fellows. To this call they have responded, and to this purpose they are dedicating their earthly possessions, their sons and daughters, and their own lives. Weak and humble of themselves, they represent great truths and eternal principles. No wisdom or genius of theirs will suffice to carry the work forward to its ultimate triumph. He who has called them to the work, and whose own the work is, will see that its purposes are accomplished.

These, in short, are the reasons why Seventh-day Adventists exist as a separate people, and are carrying forward their work in the manner indicated. To do otherwise would be to deny their Lord, discredit His Word, and bring upon themselves everlasting condemnation. In the words of one of old, we say to those to whom this message shall come, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good. For the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Numbers 10:29.

ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE SABBATH

THERE came a time in God's great plan and purpose when this earth was brought into existence. We have the divine record of His creative act in the first chapter of Genesis. Says the psalmist: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Psalm 33:6-9.

It was a beautiful earth that came from the hand of the great Creator. No marks of sin had dimmed its appearance, and as the angels of God looked upon that which their Creator had wrought, they were filled with inexpressible joy. To the patriarch Job the Lord puts this question: "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:6, 7. And the Creator Himself, as He looked upon His finished work, "saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Genesis 1:31.

It seemed most fitting that there should be a memorial of this great creative act on the part of God. The memorial which was established was the institution of the Sabbath. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day,

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and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3.

It was by three definite steps that the Sabbath institution was brought into existence: The Lord Himself rested on that day. This made it His rest day, His Sabbath. He rested and was refreshed. The Creator was not wearied physically, but He was refreshed in spirit as He contemplated the great work He had done. After resting upon the seventh day, God blessed the day. This made the seventh day holy time. Upon no other day of the week did this special blessing of God rest. In the third and final step He sanctified the day. He set it apart for holy use, not for His own sake, but for the sake of the human family. In the words of Christ, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27.

Thus the Sabbath became the birthday, the great memorial, of creation, and as long as this earth continues and the human family exists, the Sabbath will continue as that memorial. Had the Sabbath been observed through the centuries by the whole human family, it would have proved a continual reminder of the great Creator, the one and only supreme God deserving of worship and adoration.

Note then ten great facts about the Sabbath:

1. The Sabbath institution was given to Adam and Eve, the father and mother of the human family. It was thus designed for all their descendants.

2. The Sabbath was given to mankind before sin entered the world. It was therefore originally given to a holy race. It is interesting to contemplate in this connection that if sin had never entered, those living upon the earth today would all be keeping the Sabbath of the Lord. But sin did its deadly work, alienating man from God.

3. After that alienation came about, as a part of the great plan of salvation, the Sabbath observance was reaffirmed. When God gave His law from Mount Sinai, the Sabbath commandment was a part of that law, and its memorial character was again stated: “The Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:11.

4. The Sabbath institution having been given before sin entered the world, had therefore no organic connection with the sin offerings or the sacrificial system, which were given to Israel as a result of sin.

5. The Sabbath was given to mankind centuries before the Jews existed. Therefore it was not, as some contend, a Jewish institution. The Jews as God’s chosen people during their national existence kept the Sabbath, as many Christian people do today.

6. The Sabbath was in no sense Egyptian in its origin. It was observed by Abraham, who kept God’s commandments, statutes, and laws (Genesis 26:5); and by Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants before they entered the land of Egypt. There, in consequence of their hard bondage, many undoubtedly gave up Sabbath observance, but Moses evidently called them back to the observance of the Sabbath, because Pharaoh charged Moses with making the people rest. Because of their resting on that day, their burdens were increased. (Exodus 5:4-9.)

7. The Sabbath was not merely a seventh part of time, but one definite day of the weekly cycle; namely, the seventh day. This was demonstrated in the falling of the manna, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. The manna fell for the first six days of the week and the Israelites were permitted every morning to go out and gather a sufficiency for food, but on the seventh day the manna was withheld. The double portion which they gathered on the sixth day was miraculously preserved and kept fit for eating on the seventh day; whereas, if more than necessary was gathered on any other day of the week, it spoiled and became unfit for food. Some of the Israelites disregarded the divine instructions, and went out on the seventh day to gather manna. They found none, but their violation of the Sabbath command brought this rebuke from the Lord: “How long refuse you to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord has given you the Sabbath, therefore he gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.” Exodus 16:28-30. This statement reveals that Israel possessed a knowledge of God’s laws and the Sabbath commandment before their exodus from Egypt and previous to the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, as recorded in Exodus 20.

8. When God, with His own voice spoke the law of Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai, the Sabbath commandment was embedded in the center, or heart, of these great moral principles. This shows that the Sabbath institution is not a civil requirement but is moral in its nature.

9. The Sabbath is not alone a memorial of creation. It is also declared to be a sign of sanctification: “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths you shall keep: for it is a sign

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between me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I am the Lord that does sanctify you. The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:13-17.

God’s true Israel is not confined to the God-fearing in the Jewish race but includes the children of God of all races throughout the history of the world. “He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly. Neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Romans 2:28, 29. “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.” Romans 3:28, 29.

Indeed, the Sabbath can become a sign of sanctification only to the Christian believer. The formal professor of religion may refrain from physical work on the Sabbath, but only by Christ’s indwelling life can he observe the Sabbath in the spiritual sense. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.” Galatians 2:20.

10. The Sabbath was of universal application. It was designed for all nations of men in this world, and its observance will be continued over into the world made new. “As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me said the Lord.” Isaiah 66:22, 23.

Thus the Sabbath of the Lord spans the centuries like a grand triumphal arch, from Paradise lost to Paradise restored. By the Holy Spirit’s enabling power may we share its blessings, both in this world and in the great hereafter.

IF THE FOUNDATION BE DESTROYED, WHAT CAN THE RIGHTEOUS DO?

THE world is filled today with the spirit of unrest. Particularly in the religious world and in the channels of religious thought and investigation, there is a breaking away from old positions and standards, and the creation of new ideals. This spirit of study and investigation is commendable in so far as it keeps within the limitations of sound logic and does not become wise above that which is written. When, however, the very foundations of Christian faith are assailed, and the great standard for testing truth is discounted, and men are left to their own vain imaginings, the result is that false philosophy and idle speculation are substituted for the vital truth of God. Error takes the place of truth, and men walk in the sparks of their own kindling rather than in the guiding light of divine revelation.

This is the marked tendency of the world around us. We need to guard ourselves that this spirit does not in some measure come into our experience. There is danger that while we deplore the assaults of higher criticism upon the Scriptures of truth, unconsciously the same spirit will affect in some degree our study of the Scriptures and our interpretation of Bible doctrine.

The truth of God never loses anything by honest investigation. Every position of truth will be fortified and strengthened by faithful, conscientious study. The spirit, however, which we bring to the study of the Bible-oftentimes determines in our own estimation the worth of evidence. It is one thing to study a recognized and established position with a view to strengthening the same, and quite another thing to study the subject with a view to undermining and weakening the position that has been held. There is a wide range in the prophecy of the Scriptures. There are many coincidences in history. Before we decide to reject an old interpretation and substitute therefore a new one, let us be sure that we have studied the question so deeply and broadly, and that the preponderance of evidence is so great on the side of the new view, that we are justified in making the change.

Our Pioneers

We confidently believe that the great fundamental principles of truth upon which this message is based, and upon which this cause has been built up, are impregnable. They were developed not as a result of speculation, but of long and faithful Bible study and earnest pleading with God for light and leading. The pioneers in this message were fallible men. They had access to no resources of wisdom or power which are denied to us. They, as are we, were compassed about with human limitations. But they were men of prayer and faith and Bible knowledge; and because of this, they found in the Scriptures of truth a great system of

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symmetrical doctrine.

This system we accept today, not because of the wisdom or piety of the instruments whom God used in its development, but because of its foundation in the Word of the living God. It was in this manner that the Thessalonians received the message of Paul, not because it came from Paul, even though he stood as the great apostle of the Gentile world. He says in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when you received the word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectively works also in you that believe."

We, as did the apostles, as did the fathers in this message, have the same access to the great mine of truth. If we have accepted the faith of the fathers for the fathers' sake, and have failed to find for that faith authority in the Scriptures as they found it, it will be no wonder if we are shaken loose from our anchorage and find ourselves adrift, the prey of every fanciful theory. But if we have accepted truth for truth's sake, and because we ourselves see it as the word of God and not as the opinion of man, we shall not be easily moved from our moorings or turned aside to false interpretations.

Strange it would now seem if further study on our part made it appear necessary for us to change our past bases of reckoning, readjusting prophetic periods, and receding from positions which in the past we have deemed as impregnable as Gibraltar. This we believe will never become necessary in the history of this movement, for the reason that this message has for its authority the Scriptures of truth, and not the theories of men.

This is not saying that we have by any means reached the end of investigation or the fullness of gospel light; nor does it say that our position on every detail of truth has been correct. Whenever it is demonstrated that we are in error, we should change our way, not unwillingly but gladly, because error, however hoary-headed or honored and revered, must never take the place of the truth of God. We need a conservatism that will not reject the new if it is demonstrated to be truth, and a progressiveness that will not discount the old because it is old.

But we have that confidence in this message and this movement, and in the great principles of truth by which this people have been developed, that we believe further investigation will only serve to strengthen the vital positions of the past, and that new rays of light and new details of truth which may be developed will naturally take their place as a part of the setting in the great truths which have been enunciated, and will serve to strengthen our faith in the positions that are already held.

Idle Speculation

We have reached, as has been stated, a period of great unrest in the religious world. Idle speculation abounds. Specious theories are proclaimed on every side. We ourselves will be tempted by the great destroyer of truth to wander off into side issues, and unduly magnify unimportant details. We shall need in the times before us great wisdom. We shall need to keep sober judgment, humble hearts, and teachable spirits, guarding against mistaking emotion or impulse for the leading of the Spirit. It is the study of a lifetime to know not only what is truth but how to present truth in the spirit of the Master and place the emphasis where God would place it.

We may differ on many details of interpretation. Wherein we do let us maintain a kindly spirit. Let us love as brethren, being pitiful and courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; and let us above all else be careful that we are not tempted to turn from the beaten track, from the old paths, till we are sure of their dangerous trend, and in a new and better way can see the trail blazed out plainly before us. Let us make the great principles of God's everlasting truth our anchor, and refuse to be moved from them by the logic of human reasoning unattested by unequivocal Scriptural statement or plain historical fact. This is our only safety in the days before us. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Psalm 11:3.

THE TYRANNY OF WORDS

BECAME a Seventh-day Adventist seventy years ago. The humble, godly preacher who brought the message to our neighborhood carefully instructed us in the fundamental principles held by this denomination. I believed then as sincerely in the near coming of the Lord as I do today, although many developments in fulfilling prophecy during these seventy years have strengthened my faith.

This dear brother preached to us the law of God, with special reference to the Sabbath

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commandment and the priestly ministry of Christ in the sanctuary above as represented by the earthly sanctuary service. By use of his prophetic chart he led us through the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation in the same way that they are preached today. The prophetic periods and dates were indelibly stamped upon my mind.

The great threefold message of Revelation 14, which proclaims the hour of God's judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the warning against the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name, came to us as a great revelation. It was very interesting to see this good man figure out on the blackboard the number of the beast. His exposition of this point in the prophecy seemed reasonable then, and I have seen no reason through the years to change my viewpoint regarding the accuracy of his exposition. The part which this country was to play in the closing history of the world thrilled us through and through. These and other associated truths inducted us into the faith of this people, and I have cherished this faith up to the present day. Belief in these great fundamental principles constitutes, to my mind, true orthodoxy for Seventh-day Adventists.

“An Offender for a Word”

But there is danger that in defending these principles we shall mistake some little detail for the major principle itself, and that if some brother does not agree with our interpretation of the detail, we shall make him “an offender for a word,” that we shall “watch for iniquity,” that we shall “lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate.” Isaiah 29:20, 21.

There is a tyranny in the use of words as they are sometimes employed to express convictions regarding someone thought to be in error. It is a terrible thing to apply the term heretic to one of our brethren simply because his reasoning does not lead him to the same conclusions regarding every little detail of Bible truth as that to which our reasoning brings us.

The spirit of the old-time Inquisition led to the apprehension of men and women upon the slightest pretext. An envious neighbor called into question their loyalty to the church. They were regarded as heretical even before a formal investigation was made.

The history of the Christian church through the centuries reveals many differences and discussions over what appeared at the time to be very important questions, but as we look back upon them now, they seem very insignificant. Oftentimes they pertained to little technicalities, to a play upon some word. The disputants felt that great principles were involved, when in many instances it was demonstrated later that personal animosity was the real actuating motive in the discussion. And this spirit of jealousy and envy led some to clothe their animosity with a robe of so-called religious zeal, and seek the downfall of the one they disliked. This should be a warning to us. Such principles and procedure should never dominate the life and the reasoning of any Seventh-day Adventist.

The Old Landmarks

We have been admonished by the Spirit of prophecy that we are to be true to the old landmarks, to the principles of truth which were wrought out in the early days of this movement with much study and prayer, and attested to by the Spirit of prophecy. But some have a very mistaken idea as to what constitutes an old landmark.

At the Minneapolis General Conference, back in 1888, the Lord inspired certain men to preach on the subject of “Righteousness by Faith.” While this subject was under discussion, there came a telegram from a prominent leader who was detained at home by sickness, in which he earnestly entreated that the message of righteousness by faith be rejected, and urged that the delegates “stand by the old landmarks.” His interpretation of the old landmarks led him to reject vital and important truth.

Let us be careful today, that, in the discussion of the details of some of our doctrines, we do not, through a lack of Scriptural proof or logical argument to sustain our contention, resort to the same cry that was raised by the brother at Minneapolis, “Stand by the old landmarks.”

The messenger of the Lord declares in Early Writings, pages 258, 259: “O was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angels’ messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.’”

Frequently through the years have we seen some good and well-meaning brother quote this statement when it had absolutely no reference whatever to the topic he was discussing. He had failed to sustain his position by Scriptural proof, and had then fallen back upon this statement to cover his retreat from the field of argument.

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Defenders of the Faith

Through the years we have seen some who prided themselves on being defenders of the faith, whose spirit of heroism was manifested in defending some little detail of difference between them and some of their brethren. They degraded this noble term to serve their own ends.

When we think of “defenders of the faith,” we think of men who have stood heroically for great principles when their advocacy of their faith led them to face certain death. To this class belong Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. To this class belong the apostle Paul and those whom he enumerates in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. To this class belong those who sealed their testimony with their blood during the Dark Ages. To this class may belong some who read these words, who by their defense of the great fundamental principles of this message may sacrifice their all.

A perverted idea of what it means to be the defender of the faith may lead to extreme fanaticism. It may lead to apostasy from the church. Indeed, some of the elements opposing the church today pose as great defenders of the faith. Let us be careful in the use of this term.

The Pharisees of old drew a circle around their little group and decided that everyone outside their circle was unorthodox. It was this Pharisaical prejudice which led them to reject the Savior of the world, because He rejected some of their traditions and presented the gospel truth in a spirit and phraseology unknown to them. May God keep us from forming little cliques and circles which we count the only orthodox group in the denomination.

The Pioneers of This Movement

I have always entertained a high regard for the pioneers of this movement. James White and Ellen G. White, with such associates as Joseph Bates, J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and others, accomplished a great work. Under God they laid the foundations of this message broad and deep. It rests upon the everlasting rock of eternal verities as revealed in the Scriptures of truth. All the assaults of the enemy through the years have failed to weaken the pillars of its superstructure. It is a pleasure to hark back to my younger years when I personally met some of these leaders and had the privilege of listening to their instruction.

But while God used these pioneers to do a mighty work, they never claimed infallibility. The message did not come to them in a day as one great revelation. It was developed point by point as the result of prolonged study. They sometimes had differences among themselves, but they lived and loved and labored together notwithstanding. They were not agreed in the beginning as to the question of organization. They argued the question back and forth earnestly for many days. Some thought that to organize a church would take the movement back again into Babylon, under the condemnation of the second angel’s message. They were not agreed as to the time of the beginning of the Sabbath, as to the legal holding of church property, as to the Bible method of supporting the gospel ministry. The denominational attitude in respect to non combating was determined only after much and varied discussion.

How did they harmonize their differences? They did this, not by personal criticism and recrimination, but by friendly counsel. They took time for study and for earnest prayer. God graciously responded to their united petitions, and the Holy Spirit led them in their final conclusions.

Minimizing and Ignoring Our Differences

We may always have in our minds little differences of opinion which can never be dissipated by even the most kindly discussions. In the church of Christ, as in the family relationship, men and women must learn to bear and forbear. If the husband and wife come to recognize that there are certain questions upon which they differ widely, and a calm, composed, kindly discussion of the differences will not bring them together, their better judgment will teach them to avoid these questions in the future. Through failure to do this, many inmates of the home have grown apart, and their differences finally have become so grievous that they have found peace only in separation.

A Contentious Spirit

Several years ago I was discussing this very principle with one of our ministers, a man of Christian character, who has now gone to his rest. Regarding the details of a certain line of prophecy, he held views contrary to those held by his ministering brethren and taught by the church. And he felt that it was his duty to express his views over these differences on every occasion. I tried to show him that his brethren had come to look upon him as a contentious man, and that this very spirit of contention on his part created

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prejudice against the view he held, even if there were no other reasons for its rejection. He came to realize this in his later days. His feelings toward his brethren became greatly softened. His spirit mellowed even unto the end of his life.

It is not necessarily the one who questions some detail of doctrine who becomes the greatest menace to the work of God and the progress of the movement. The one from whom emanates continually the spirit of criticism of the brethren, a questioning of their motives and purposes, who by instigating a whispering campaign calls into question the wisdom of leadership, this man is doing more to injure the cause with which he is connected and more to tear down the faith of the believers than the one who may call in question some detail of belief.

The Spirit of Christ

The loving heart of Jesus Christ led Him to wash the feet of Judas even when He knew that in a short time he would betray Him. His heart went out in such love to the impulsive Peter, who denied Him with cursing and swearing, that this apostle was one of the few to whom Christ appeared on the resurrection morning.

I believe in contending unwaveringly “for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” but I do not believe in sitting in the judgment seat and condemning some brother because he may differ in some little detail from me in the views he holds. His soul is as precious in the sight of the Lord as is mine, and in my relationship to him I should seek to win him. I can never win him by the cultivation of distrust or by unkind criticism.

The Master, in that wonderful prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, prays for the unity of His disciples. They were to be one in purpose, in objective, in faith, in hope, even as Christ and the Father are one. And He told them on another occasion, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.” John 13:35.

Love as Brethren

This love needs to be cultivated in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It needs to be cultivated among the workers of the church. And when this love of which Christ spoke dwells in the heart, it will cast down imaginations. It will not place a wrong construction upon every word and act of our brethren. We will not judge their Christianity by some impulsive word, by some act on their part which we do not understand, but we will judge their loyalty by their general course of life, by the faithfulness which has marked their service, by their sacrifice in sustaining the work of God. Love “suffers long, and is kind; . . . thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-6.

Upon the great principle enunciated here the apostle Peter makes the following comment: “Finally, be you all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.” 1 Peter 3:8, 9.

The relations we sustain to our brethren, particularly to those with whom we differ, constitute one real test of our religion. Christ loved us even when we were in sin and rebellion against Him. We will love our brethren because they are the purchase of Christ’s blood. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Romans 8:9.

Judging Justly

Sometime in the coming kingdom, if we are so fortunate as to be there, we shall see that our judgment of men in this life was far from the divine standard. Some who we have thought would reach the kingdom of God will not be found there, and others who we thought would be ruled out, judging them by our own narrow standards, will be found basking in the sunlight of God’s love.

We cannot understand, as does the Master, the hereditary tendencies which affect the experience of some brother, the environment that helped to mold his character, but God will measure all these factors. This is expressed by the psalmist. “I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was horn in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writes up the people, that this man was born there.” Psalm 87:4-6.

God will take into account all the influences which shape the life of each individual. He will remember the pit from which each has been dug. He will recognize the progress made and the growth in grace against opposing obstacles. We cannot understand this, and so the Lord says to us, “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will

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make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”

NUMBERING ISRAEL

THE kingdom of Israel had become rich and populous. David’s long and successful reign had been attended with material prosperity. This prosperity, instead of turning the hearts of the people to God in grateful remembrance, had engendered pride and self-confidence. This spirit affected alike the king and his subjects, and filled them with ambitious designs.

“David determined to increase his army by requiring military service from all who were of proper age. To effect this, it became necessary to take a census of the population. It was pride and ambition that prompted this action of the king. The numbering of the people would show the contrast between the weakness of the kingdom when David ascended the throne, and its strength and prosperity under his rule. This would tend still further to foster the already too great self-confidence of both king and people. The Scripture says, ‘Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.’ The prosperity of Israel under David had been due to the blessing of God rather than to the ability of her king or the strength of her armies.” - Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 747.

God did not look with favor upon this work of His servant. Even Joab, unscrupulous as he was in other respects, protested against David’s command. But the objection was overruled, and David’s officers proceeded with their work. Soon after its completion, the judgments of God began to fall upon the nation, and the king, who gloried in his strength and greatness, was brought low in sorrow as the plague of the Lord carried off thousands of his subjects. Through this terrible disaster, through prayer and humiliation, David learned of his own finite weakness, and recognized that it was only of God’s mercy that his own life was preserved, and the hand of the destroying angel stayed from further destruction of the people.

This lesson is for God’s people in every age, and none the less for us today, both in our personal experiences and in our denominational work. Prone indeed is the heart of man to reason when prosperity attends his path, that by his might and genius he has secured for himself that which he possesses. We forget that the silver and gold are God’s, and that His are the cattle on a thousand hills; that He it is who gives power to acquire education, influence, or whatever wealth we may possess.

Recognizing the Principle

The same principle is true as applied to our own denominational work. We are the advocates of a rapidly progressing cause. God has given prosperity to His church. Believers have multiplied wherever the gospel seed has been sown. Institutions have been planted, giving character and stability to the movement. God has led this people on until the influence of the principles they represent is felt throughout the world.

Even as Miriam, with the voice of inspiration, sang of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as Moses and David and Paul and others recounted the workings of God in behalf of His people, it is well for us to recount signal experiences in this work, and bear them ever fresh in our memories. But in doing so, it is for us to recognize that all the success and prosperity have come through God, and not through ourselves. When we view the progress of this work from the standpoint of what we have accomplished, emphasizing what has been wrought through our efforts, then, like David, we are numbering Israel, and the glory of man, and not of God, is the object of the comparison.

We would not see one whit less reported of the splendid advance of the message. We would not see less recounted of the workings of God in connection with it. We would not desire less published of facts and figures relating to its material progress. Only let us keep self out of the comparison, and not think in our hearts, even if we do not utter it in words, “My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.”

The strength of this cause is not in the numbers of its adherents, its system of organization, the worldly influence of its advocates, or the size or number of its institutions. Its vitality and power cannot be computed in figures or measured by mathematical equations. Its power is of God; its true manifestation, the life of Christ in the lives of His disciples.

The needs of this hour are for men and means to proclaim the message to earth’s remotest bounds. But even above these needs, as great as they are, is the demand for a deeper consecration. Three hundred earnest, consecrated men in the days of Gideon could accomplish more than forty-two thousand who were irresolute and ease-loving. The spirit of consecration then turned the victory on the side of Israel; the same spirit of consecration today will accomplish wonders in this closing work. Only let us be humble.

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An abiding sense of our own weakness and unworthiness will keep us from boasting, and enable us to exalt God instead of self. We shall be lost in amazement that Providence, in spite of our mistakes and failures, could use us in some humble way in connection with this closing work. "For you 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; that no flesh should glory in his presence. That, according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord."

J. The Grand Consummation

THE GLAD RESURRECTION

IN AN eastern city I visited a cemetery in which sleeps my daughter, our only child. At her birth her parents dedicated her to the Lord. She was given a training for Christian service. Finishing college, she chose the work of teaching. She gave promise of a useful and successful life. But after four years of service she was stricken with a deadly disease; and thus were blasted her hopes and ours.

Many times we sought to reason out why Providence permitted her to end so early her earthly career. We could find no solution to the problem. We were forced to realize that, according to the words of Holy Writ, in this life we "know in part" only, and "see through a glass darkly." 1 Corinthians 13:12. And we endeavored to believe that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Romans 8:28.

We must wait for the revelation of God's will and ways to understand fully His wise leading in this life. There will come a time when all will be made plain, and we shall understand in fuller measure His plans and purposes.

Death Will Be Destroyed

And there will come a time when death shall be destroyed. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4. Lord, hasten that joyous hour! What a happy reunion will then take place!

How will this reunion be effected? This question concerned the patriarch Job in an hour of great affliction. He inquired, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Job 14:14. He answered his own question: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." The appointed time is the day of the resurrection. Addressing his Maker, Job declared, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of your hands." Verse 15.

Beautiful and comforting is this thought! just the same as we desire to see again our loved ones who have passed away, so our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven desires to see again the work of His hands, the ones whom He has loved and for whose salvation He made His great sacrifice on the cross. In the following scriptures read the manner in which the great miracle of the resurrection is wrought:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

Is there not, indeed, comfort in these precious promises? On an old tombstone in a New England cemetery is inscribed in effect these words: "An inn for the weary pilgrim stopping over night on his way to the Holy City."

Christ likens death to a sleep. He said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake

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him.” John 11:11. In perfect sleep all consciousness is suspended. And so it is with those who sleep the sleep of death. “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.

Of the dead Job declares, “His sons come to honor, and he knows it not; and they are brought low, but he perceives it not of them.” Job 14:21. The psalmist sounds this warning: “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 146:3,4.

The death of the righteous is brightened with the hope of the resurrection. To this grand and glorious event the church of God has looked forward for the consummation of their hopes through all the centuries.

And to the silent sleepers in the cities of the dead their sleep in the tomb will be as a night’s rest after a weary day. They close their eyes in death, and the next conscious moment they look into the face of the blessed Life giver, their truest and dearest Friend. To us who live and grieve the days are long and weary, but to our loved ones it will be as though they passed at the moment of death into the presence of their Lord.

The glad day of deliverance and restoration and reunion hastens on apace. Soon “he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:37. In concluding His message to John, the Life giver declares, “Surely I come quickly.” To this the apostle responds, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Revelation 22:20. This may well be our prayer today.

And when Christ shall come, “the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10. We shall clasp glad hands with our loved ones, never, never more to part. And this glad and happy reunion will be unbroken throughout the endless ages of eternity. A poet has said:

“When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun.”

By Christ’s enabling grace may we so live that we shall have part in that joyous home-coming.

THE GLORIOUS TRANSFORMATION

THE hope of a golden age has long been indulged by mankind. But it is still a world of doubt and uncertainty. Men still grope in darkness, not knowing whither their steps are tending. The great world problems are still far from solution. The living conditions of the great masses of mankind have been but slightly ameliorated. It is still a world of sorrow and pain and suffering.

The present picture is not altogether dark. These very conditions which we see around us are the omens of a brighter day, and of a really new world soon to be ushered in. No heart need sink in discouragement over the situation which exists. There is no occasion for disbelief in divine revelation or in the leading of the divine hand. On the contrary, the world situation affords striking evidence of the authenticity of the Scriptures of truth and, the inspiration of the Holy Word. We are seeing today the exact fulfillment of what the prophets of God centuries ago foresaw would take place.

The index finger of these great prophecies points with unmistakable evidence to the second coming of Christ. And what does the second coming of Christ mean to the world? It means-

1. The end of strife and war. The kingdoms of this world will soon give place to the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. And when that time comes, the scepter of peace will bear rule over the nations of men. No more will the fair flower of youth, the bravest and best, be called upon to defend their national colors because of some real or fancied affront to their country. No more will the armies of earth be marshaled in battle array. No more will children be rendered fatherless and wives widows by war’s ruthless carnage. No more will the earth be drenched with the blood of the slain. No more will fertile fields be desolated, cities wrecked and ruined, or men and women driven from their homes. The Prince of Peace will sit upon the throne of universal dominion, and the joy of peace will fill every heart.

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2. Christ's coming means the end of sickness, pain, and death. Pain of body and pain of heart will have an end. In the blessed reign of our Christ no one will say, "I am sick." "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." Isaiah 35:5. The bloom of health will rest upon every cheek, and in the freshness and vigor of eternal youth will the nations of men delight themselves in the abundance of peace. They "shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10.

3. Christ's coming means the end of poverty. No longer will there exist the extremes of society; no longer will men labor for a pittance of bread. The struggle to keep the wolf from the door and to eke out a miserable existence-at present a struggle which thousands of earth's inhabitants are compelled to make-will be forever past. This is the blessed comfort which the Master holds out to the downtrodden and oppressed. He exhorts them to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, to endure kindly and cheerfully the servitude which earth's conditions impose, to cherish no spirit of retaliation or resentment, and to find hope in the untoward circumstances which surround them, seeing in them a sign of coming deliverance.

4. Christ's coming means release from the power of death and from all the fear of death. When the Deliverer comes, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4. In that blessed state we shall witness no more tearful eyes, no more heaving breasts or hearts bursting with grief, no more open graves or yawning sepulchers. The fear of death and disease will be forever banished from every heart, for death itself will be destroyed, and life, abounding life, will fill God's fair universe and be the inspiration of all its inhabitants.

5. Christ's coming means that we shall see our blessed Lord. We shall see face to face Him whom we have learned to love having never seen. We shall clasp His hand and walk by His side. We shall hear the melody of His voice and feel the thrill of His beaming eyes of love. In His presence we shall find fullness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures forevermore. To the disciple of the Master there is satisfying joy in the communion which he holds with his absent Lord, but this will not compare with the joy he will feel in His personal presence. In this life we love our friends. We cannot separate this love from the love of their personal presence. How we love to meet them after separation, to sit by their side and tell them of our experiences and listen to theirs! This but feebly represents the joy of association with the Lord, the one who through earth's dark night has proved our guide, our counselor, our friend; who has comforted us in sorrow, protected us in danger, who in His great love died for our salvation. In His presence we shall find satisfying joy. To this association every child of God may look forward with longing anticipation.

6. Christ's coming means we shall greet once more our loved ones who are sleeping in the tomb. At the sound of the last trump they will come forth from their dusty beds, shouting victory over death and the grave. We shall see them no longer weak and emaciated from disease. We shall look into their faces no longer disfigured by pain. They will come forth in the freshness of eternal youth, changed by the power of God from mortality to immortality. In their bodies will no longer dwell the seeds of death. They will be raised to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, which shall never pass away. We shall clasp glad hands before the throne of God, and take part in that triumphal song of praise which will arise from the rejoicing hearts of the redeemed hosts. In God's eternal purpose we may separate for a while. We may wander far apart through limitless space, but every moment of that time we shall have the positive assurance that the separation is but for a moment in the great eternity of heaven, and that we shall meet once more before the great white throne to mingle our voices together in praise and adoration to our Benefactor and Redeemer.

7. Christ's coming means to the children of God that the restricted privileges and opportunities of this mortal life will be exchanged for the unlimited opportunities and exalted privileges of immortal life. Here our best efforts fail of the perfect measure of success, and are but feeble attempts to compass the infinite. In the life to come we shall not be limited in our study or in the achievement of God's eternal purpose. We shall sit at the feet of angels as our instructors. We shall listen to the wisdom which falls from the gracious lips of the King of kings and Lord of lords. just as long as God Himself endures, we shall endure also, and with unfettered feet and untrammelled minds shall be able to pursue the path of progress which His providence has marked out for us.

It is these considerations that bring joy in the midst of earth's sorrow, that surround even the present night of sin with a halo of light.

Such is the true new world, the golden age, the better tomorrow, the glorious transformation, to which we may look forward with settled confidence and assurance. It is the heavenly Canaan which has been placed before the church of Christ in every age as the goal of all their strivings. It is the world promised to Abraham and to his seed. (Genesis 13:14, 15; Romans 4:13.) That seed, the apostle Paul tells

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us, was Jesus Christ the Lord (Galatians 3:16), and included with Christ the faithful of every age and every nationality (verse 29). It is the world of which the earthly Canaan was the miniature, or type, the world which would be ruled over by the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David -Jesus Christ the Lord. (Luke 1:31-33.) It is a world whose territory is to be this earth renewed by the cleansing fires of the last great day and brought back to its Edenic purity, the same as it was when given to Adam before sin entered. (2 Peter 3:7-13) It is a world, the capital of which will be the New Jerusalem, which shall descend from God out of heaven. (Revelation 21:1, 2.)

Into this new and better world everyone who reads these words may enter. It is well worth the struggle to obtain. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." 1 Corinthians 2:9; Romans 8:18.

Let us never forget this earnest admonition from Ellen G. White: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." - Life Sketches, p. 196.