Our Firm Foundation

The 7th Day Sabbath | Immutable Law of God | The Everlasting Gospel
Non-Immortality of the Soul | Three Angels’ Messages | The Sanctuary

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The Spirit of Prophecy
A Special Issue
Once, man walked with God in Eden. With open face he beheld the glory of the Lord, and talked with God and Christ and angels in Paradise, without a dimming veil between. Man fell from his moral rectitude and innocence, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and His holy angels. Moral darkness, like the pall of death, has since cast its shadows everywhere, and everywhere the blight and mildew of sin has been seen.

Amid the general gloom and moral wretchedness, man has wandered from the gates of Paradise for six thousand years, subject to sickness, pain, sorrow, tears and death. He has also been subject to the temptations and wiles of the devil, so much so, that it is the sad history of man, throughout the entire period of his fallen state, that Satan has reigned with almost universal sway.

When all was lost in Adam, and the shades of night blackened the moral heavens, there soon appeared the star of hope in Christ, and with it there was established a medium of communication between God and man. In his fallen state, man could not converse face-to-face with God, and with Christ, and with angels, as when in his Eden purity. But through the ministration of holy angels could the great God speak to him in visions. “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” Numbers 12:6

The manifestation of the spirit of prophecy was designed for all dispensations. The Sacred Record nowhere restricts it to any particular period of time from the Fall to the final restitution. The Bible recognizes its manifestation alike in the patriarchal age, in the Jewish age, and in the Christian age. Through this medium God communed with holy men of old. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied; and so extensive was the range of his prophetic vision, and so minute, that he could look down over long ages, and describe the coming of the Lord and the execution of the last judgment upon the ungodly. Jude 14–15

God spake to His prophets in the Jewish dispensation in visions and in dreams, and opened before them the great things of the future, especially those connected with the first advent of Christ, to suffer for sinners, and His second appearing in glory to destroy His enemies, and complete the redemption of His people. If the Spirit of Prophecy nearly disappeared from the Jewish church for a few centuries toward the close of that dispensation, on account of the corruptions in that church, it re-appeared at its close to usher in the Messiah. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, “was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.” Simeon, a just and devout man, who was “waiting for the consolation of Israel,” came by the Spirit into the temple, and prophesied of Jesus as “a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel.” And Anna, a prophetess, “spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” And there was no greater prophet than John, who was chosen of God to introduce to Israel “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

The Christian age commenced with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the manifestation of various spiritual gifts. Among these was the gift of prophecy. After commissioning His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, Jesus says to them, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” Mark 16:17–18. On the day of Pentecost, when the Christian dispensation was fully opened, some of these gifts were manifested in a wonderful manner. See Acts 2:1–11. Luke, in giving account of his travels with Paul and others, when a quarter of a century of the Christian age had passed, after speaking of entering into the house of Philip, the evangelist, says: “And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus.” Acts 21:9–10. Again, still later, we see the beloved John, in the Isle of Patmos, imbued with the spirit of prophecy in all its fullness. The wonderful Revelation...
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—Editors

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Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.
tion was given unto him when more than half a century of the Christian age had passed. And here the New Testament record leaves us without a single intimation that the gifts of the Spirit should cease from the church till the day of glory should be ushered in by the second appearing of Jesus Christ.

Since the great apostasy these gifts have rarely been manifested; and for this reason professed Christians generally suppose that they were designed to be limited to the period of the primitive church. But from the time of the primitive Christians to the present there have been manifestations among the most devoted followers of Jesus, which have been recognized by nearly all of the leading denominations as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Then should not the errors and the disbelief of the church be assigned as a reason why these manifestations have been so seldom, rather than that God has taken these blessings from the church? When the people of God attain to primitive faith and practice, as they most certainly will under the last message, the latter rain will be poured out, and all the gifts will be revived. The former rain was given at the commencement of the Christian age, in the time of the sowing of the gospel seed, to cause it to germinate and take good root. Then the church enjoyed the gifts. And when the latter rain shall be poured out at the close of the dispensation, to ripen the golden harvest for the garner of God, then will the gifts of the Holy Spirit be manifested in all their fullness.

To this agree the words of the prophet, as quoted by Peter: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.” Acts 2:17-20. The spirit of prophecy is here seen among the especial signs of the last days. Its revival in the last days was to constitute one of the most noted signs of the approaching end. This is evident from its being classed with the most prominent signs, in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and such wonders in the heavens above,

About This Issue

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself... And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” Luke 24:25–27, 32; Emphasis supplied in all texts

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” 1 Corinthians 10:11

Recent news reports concerning the self-proclaimed prophet in Waco, Texas, are causing the world to be increasingly suspicious of, and cynical regarding, modern-day prophets. Even within the Seventh-day Adventist Church there is growing embarrassment about, and apology for, those claiming that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has all the identifying marks of God’s remnant church, including the gift of prophecy.

Why is the gift of prophecy so inseparably linked to the remnant church? And why, also, was Jesus dependent upon this same gift to prove His messiahship? These are important questions which deserve careful consideration.

One principle of prophecy to keep in mind when considering these questions is that every prophet’s message was given to benefit God’s people, both in the prophet’s own time and at some future time when the present-day type would meet its future antitype. As evidenced in the days of Christ, the Old Testament prophets had written primarily for the benefit of those who, hundreds of years after the prophets’ deaths, found themselves facing a type/antitype transition. It was not supernatural phenomena that the disciples of Christ needed to confirm their faith in Him as Israel’s Messiah. Instead it was recognizing the fulfillment of Scripture in the life and death of Jesus that caused their “hearts to burn within” them. This recognition resulted in their being filled with energy and zeal for the proclamation of their newly found understanding of the gospel.

Yes, that which electrified those hopeless men on the road to Emmaus that Resurrection afternoon, was understanding how that day’s events were the fulfillment of yesterday’s prophecies; it was perceiving how all of the prophets had written for the admonition of those given the privilege of witnessing the very events of those last three days; and it was realizing that they were those witnesses.

How totally overwhelming it must have been when this realization fully sank in! Why, they must have wondered, had they been so slow to believe all that the prophets had said? What was once obscure was now beginning to be very obvious. Could it really be true that all of those prophets had written for their benefit? Why, of all the billions of humans to live since Creation, had they been called upon to witness and testify to the reality of
and in the earth beneath, as blood, and fire and vapor of smoke.

Of all the blessings which God has bestowed upon His people, none have been as sacred, and as important to their welfare, as His holy law, and His Holy Spirit. And none have been so well calculated to thwart the plans of Satan, and consequently, to stir his rage as these. And when that people should arise in the last generation of men, who should be observing all ten of the precepts of God's holy law, and should recognize the revival of the spirit of prophecy, they might expect to feel that bitterness from their opponents, which can arise only from the direct inspiration of Satan. “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,” said the angel to John, “is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10. It is the keeping of the commandments of God, and the recognition of the revival of the spirit of prophecy by the remnant of the church, or the Christians of the last generation, that stirs the ire of the dragon. This “war is inevitable, and let it come.”

The Jewish age, notwithstanding its apostasies, opened and closed with special manifestations of the Spirit of God. And it is not reasonable to suppose that the Christian age, the light of which, compared with the former dispensation, is as the light of the sun to the feeble rays of the moon, should commence in glory, and close in obscurity. And since a special work of the Spirit was necessary to prepare a people for the first advent of Christ, how much more so for His second advent!

God has never manifested His power to His people simply for their gratification; but according to their necessities has He wrought for them. Then we may safely conclude that as His people are passing the perils of the last days in the final struggle with the aroused powers of darkness, when false prophets were to have power to show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect, our gracious God will bless and strengthen His fainting people with the gifts, as well as the graces of the Holy Spirit.

James White
Review and Herald, January 25, 1870

these prophecies? Why had they been given the privilege of beholding their fulfillment? Brothers and sisters who believe in the great Advent hope, this experience of Christ's disciples is typical of another experience, of another blossoming of the bud of prophecy, of another transition of symbol into reality; and this time you and I are called upon to witness and to testify to it. For ultimately we are the ones upon whom the ends of the earth have come.

It is crucial that in our church today we allow the often enigmatic and cryptic messages of prophecy to blossom in our hearts into an intelligent understanding of present duty.

As is pointed out by Elder James White in this edition's "Guest Editorial," even though the "spirit of prophecy nearly disappeared from the Jewish church for a few centuries toward the close of that dispensation, on account of the corruptions in that church, it re-appeared at its close (referring to John the Baptist) to usher in the Messiah." Will those who are alive and remain to meet Christ in the clouds at His second coming receive less warning than did those who met Him at His first appearing?

Because of the need to prepare a people for His second advent Christ has a remnant church, a remnant church He predicted in prophecy. And to enable them to accomplish this great work He has entrusted to this remnant the gift of prophecy.

For this special issue we have selected a small sampling of the many thousands of pages penned through the gift of prophecy to this church and written most especially for those of us living in these last moments of earth's history. We present these messages in an attempt to rekindle, as did Jesus on the road to Emmaus, a deep study into the contemporary application of these prophecies. We believe this concept is particularly important as we daily see the fulfillment of these prophecies in developments, both in the church and in the world.

Far from being obsolete, these truths are just now making their rendezvous with their prophetic destiny, for it is primarily as they apply to you and me that these prophecies were given.

As these truths, latent with the same power that turned the world upside down two thousand years ago, begin to awaken a sleeping church, it is our prayer that you, too, will find your heart burning within. Then those words, spoken so many years ago, will have their complete fulfillment as they are applied to those of us upon whom the end of the world is come; those of us to whom Jesus could say: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."

With the exception of the editorial by Elder James White, and the introductory article by Elder F. M. Wilcox, the prophet for the remnant says it all. If you have not already done so, please pause just a moment before continuing and ask God to reveal through the truths you are about to read His specific will for your life.

THE EDITORS
CHRIST has said: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. The duty of searching the Scriptures is enjoined upon every son and daughter of Adam. Jesus says, "And they are they which testify of me." The Father was revealed in the Son, and in studying Christ we shall learn of the Father. Then let us come to search the Word of God with softened, subdued hearts, and read the testimony concerning our Lord and Master. Shall we not with intense interest seek to catch His spirit, copy His example, and breathe in the atmosphere of His presence, which is light and love? How eagerly should we study every lesson that fell from His divine lips! How we should cherish His instruction! How ardently we should seek to imitate His character and life, and press on to know more and more of the heavenly truths He taught! If we would but practice the truths He has given, we should perfect an experience that would be of the highest value to us, and to the world.

Jesus presented new views of truth to His disciples, and how much deeper was the meaning of His utterances than the meaning of any lesson ever taught by human lips! "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Timothy 3:16

How shall we search the Scriptures? Shall we drive our stakes of doctrine one after another, and then try to make all Scripture meet our established opinions, or shall we take our ideas and views to the Scriptures, and measure our theories on every side by the Scriptures of truth? Many who read and even teach the Bible do not comprehend the precious truth they are teaching or studying. Men entertain errors, when the truth is clearly marked out, and if they would but bring their doctrines to the Word of God, and not read the Word of God in the light of their doctrines, to prove their ideas right, they would not walk in darkness and blindness, or cherish error. Many give the words of Scripture a meaning that suits their own opinions, and they mislead themselves and deceive others by their misinterpretations of God's Word. As we take up the study of God's Word, we should do so with humble hearts. All selfishness, all love of originality, should be laid aside. Long-cherished opinions must not be regarded as infallible. It was the unwillingness of the Jews to give up their long-established traditions that proved their ruin. They were determined not to see any flaw in their own opinions or in their expositions of the Scriptures; but however long men may have entertained certain views, if they are not clearly sustained by the written Word, they should be discarded.

Those who sincerely desire truth will not be reluctant to lay open their positions for investigation and criticism, and will not be annoyed if their opinions and ideas are crossed. This was the spirit cherished among us forty years ago. We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnly characterized these councils of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to Heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed. If one brother rebuked another for his dulness of comprehension in not understanding a passage as he understood it, the one rebuked would afterward take his brother by the hand, and say, "Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus is with us; let us keep a humble and teachable spirit"; and the brother addressed would say, "Forgive me, brother, I have done you an injustice." Then we would bow down in another season of prayer. We spent many hours in this way. We did not generally study together more than four hours at a time, yet sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our
Let no one run the risk of interposing himself between the people and the message of heaven. The message of God will come to the people; and if there were no voice among men to give it, the very stones would cry out.

I am thankful that God is a wise ruler, and every one who is a true disciple of Christ will be humble, lift his cross, and meekly follow where the self-denying, self-sacrificing Jesus leads the way. Disappointment may prove to be the greatest of blessings to us. We must learn that others have rights as well as we have, and when any of our brethren receive new light upon the Scriptures, he should frankly explain his position, and every minister should search the Scriptures with the spirit of candor to see if the points presented on a new subject can be substantiated by the inspired Word. “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” 2 Timothy 2:24–25. Every soul must look to God with contrition and humility, that God may guide and lead and bless. We must not trust to others to search the Scriptures for us. Some of our leading brethren have frequently taken positions on the wrong side, and if God would send a message and wait for these older brethren to open the way for its advance, it would never reach the people. These brethren will be found in this position until they become partakers of the divine nature to a greater extent than ever they have been in the past.

sengers whom He shall send harmoniously to accomplish the work that He designs they should. The Lord has raised up messengers and endowed them with His Spirit, and has said, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Isaiah 58:1. Let no one run the risk of interposing himself between the people and the message of Heaven. The message of God will come to the people; and if there were no voice among men to give it, the very stones would cry out. I call upon every minister to seek the Lord, to put away pride, to put away strife after supremacy, and humble the heart before God. It is the coldness of heart, the unbelief of those who ought to have faith, that keeps the churches in futility.

I would rejoice with all my heart to see all who have been connected with the work take their places to hold high the banner of Jesus, that when their work shall be done, they may say as did Paul, “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 me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7–8

Review and Herald, vol. 2, 585–586 (July 26, 1892)
The great Second Advent movement, the movement which we as delegates represent at this General Conference, is a movement of prophecy. It has arisen and developed in fulfillment of the prophecies found in Daniel 7, 8, and 9, Revelation 7, 12, 13 and 14, and other scriptures. It is proclaiming the judgment-hour message, this great threefold message of Revelation 14, which develops a people keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. We constitute the remnant church. Against this church the forces of evil will be arrayed, and the reason for this is definitely revealed. “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 defined to be “the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10. This is the question for study at this devotional hour.

Long centuries ago the prophet Joel predicted that there would be manifested in the remnant church divine visions and dreams: “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in the mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” Joel 2:28–32

Spiritual Gifts

This prophecy met a partial or primary fulfillment in the apostolic church. These manifestations were also to be witnessed in the closing days of the gospel message, particularly in connection with the signs of Christ’s second coming. The gifts of the Holy Spirit belong to the church in every age. To the truth of this the apostle Paul bears witness: “And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 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 fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” Ephesians 4:11–14

The unity of the faith has not yet been fully attained by the church of Christ; she has not yet arrived unto the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, or unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. There is still need that she be saved.
from false winds of doctrine, from the slight of men and their cunning craftiness. Therefore the gifts of the Spirit of God are as greatly needed in the church today as ever before in her history.

The Testimony of Christ

That the gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of prophecy, should be manifested in the church, even until the coming of the Lord, the apostle Paul gives this testimony:

"I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 1:4–8

While this word of the apostle was spoken to the Corinthian church and evidently described the state of preparedness possessed by that church, we may also believe that the statement was of prophetic significance, that it describes the condition of the church which will actually be "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of this church the apostle declares, "The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.”

This gift of prophecy, we affirm, has been manifested in the life and work of Mrs. Ellen G. White, connected with this movement from 1844 until the year 1915, when she was laid to rest. This remarkable woman gave many evidences of her divine call, and confirmed in the minds of those who were acquainted with her experience, the definite belief that through her the gift of prophecy was manifest.

Founded on the Bible

In the thirty-eight volumes of which Ellen G. White is the author and her extensive public labors in North America, Australia, and Europe, she gave instruction on the various steps of Christian experience, family life, education, health, publishing, and practically every phase of the threefold message. It should be said, however, that our religious faith and doctrinal beliefs are based not upon her teaching but upon the Scriptures. The testimony of the great apostle of this movement, James White, is clear on this point. Referring to the subjects of the "two-horned beast, sanctuary, time to commence the Sabbath, and period of the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth," he declares, "it should be here understood that all these views as held by the body of Sabbathkeepers were brought out from the Scriptures before Mrs. White had any view in regard to them. These sentiments are founded upon the Scriptures as their only basis." Review and Herald, October 16, 1855

The work of Mrs White should not be judged by some detail, by the turn of a phrase or sentence, or by some seeming contradiction in her writings. It should be judged by the spirit which characterized her work through the years, by the fruit it has borne in connection with the great religious movement with which it was associated, and in the development of which it bore a prominent part and exerted a molding influence.

The Fruitage Borne

Of the fruit of her writings we have this fine statement written by C. H. Watson, at the time president of the General Conference, a statement read to, and unanimously approved by the Autumn Council held in Battle Creek, Michigan, October 1932:

"The fruit of these writings is such as to reveal that their origin is of God. They lead to the most perfect standard of morality.

Exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, These writings do verily 'speak forth the words of truth and soberness.'"

When God, by His Holy Spirit, calls men to the work of apostles or prophets, will they themselves recognize the source of their call? We believe they will. This has been demonstrated many times in the history of the church. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets of the Old Testament era well understood the work they were given to do and the authority by which they were to utter their messages of warning and reproof. This was also true of the apostle Paul, John the Baptist, and others.

Did Mrs. E. G. White recognize her call to holy office? She came with no high-sounding titles, with no vain-glorious pretensions, with no ostentatious show. She was instructed that she was the Lord's messenger. She recognized this call and proved true to her divine commission.

Recognizing the Divine Call

Are her claims as the Lord's messenger, to be accredited as the fulfillment of the scriptural testimony we have cited? They must be accredited in this manner or
be rejected altogether. Mrs. White was, as she claimed, a messenger of the Lord, and as the Lord’s messenger received divine revelations in visions and dreams, or she stands convicted as a base imposter. Her work must be accepted for what it purports to be or rejected altogether. No halfway position can be taken. The inspiration of her ministry is either from above or from beneath. It bears the credentials of heaven or the stamp of Satan. Regarding this she herself said:

"God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening human reasoning, but was to be received as the revelation of God to His church.

Unwarranted Distinctions

Some have made unwarranted distinctions between the various writings of Mrs. White. They have claimed that articles written by her for different periods should be regarded merely as we regard articles from any other writer, and that they should not be received with the same appeal as her printed books; that many of her communications should be classed

The Bible is the great gauge, or rule by which all other writings are tested and proved. To the truthfulness of these statements the Lord’s messenger bears decided testimony in her publications.

their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 671

They must be accepted or rejected as a whole. Before the inspired statements of the Divine Record human reasoning must fall and vain imaginations be cast down. And this is true of the writings which have come to us through the gift of prophecy.

It is very evident that when Samuel reached that place in his experience where “all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord,” each individual testimony he bore was not to be subjected to the divine test as to whether or not he was a prophet of the Lord. He had already given evidence of his prophetic call and the fruit of his ministry proved him to be a true prophet. His work was “established” and thus it must be with the writings of Mrs. E. G. White today. After the messenger of the Lord gave evidence of her divine call, when it was seen that her word and work bore the divine credentials and were in harmony with the requirements of divine revelation, then her testimony was to be accepted as truth. Each individual utterance, each witness she bore, was not to be subjected to human scrutiny and merely as letters. We have the utmost confidence in the honesty and sincerity of the one whom God appointed as His special messenger to His church. Assuredly, if she was true to her sacred trust, she would not write out her own personal ideas, and send these out as messages from the Lord. To credit her with doing this would be to charge her with rank dishonesty and gross misrepresentation.

Do the writings of Mrs. White constitute for the church of Christ a new Bible? We answer emphatically, No. Do they constitute an addition to the Sacred Canon? We answer again unqualifiedly, No, indeed. Not only should her writings be regarded as making no addition to the Bible, but only as they stand the test of the Sacred Canon can their claims be accepted. Indeed it is by the Bible that her writings and the writings of every other person claiming divine revelation are to be judged. The Bible is the great gauge, or rule by which all other writings are tested and proved. To the truthfulness of these statements the Lord’s messenger bears decided testimony in her publications.

Are the writings of Mrs. White verbally inspired? Was she given the exact words in which her thoughts are expressed? She never made any such claim. Indeed, she states very positively that such was not the case. Nor did the pioneers in this movement ever believe or teach verbal inspiration for the writings of the messenger of the Lord. In the Review and Herald of October 8, 1867, Mrs White says this regarding verbal inspiration, “Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.”

Thirty-nine years later in the Review and Herald of August 30, 1906, Mrs White makes this further statement regarding her writings. She is replying to a letter she had received from a brother who was concerned regarding the inspiration of her testimonies: “In your letter, you speak of your early training to have implicit faith in the Testimonies, and say, ‘I was led to conclude and most firmly believe that every word that you ever spoke in public or private, that every letter you wrote under any and all circumstances, was as inspired as the Ten Commandments.’ My brother, you have studied my writings diligently, and you have never found that I have made any such claims. Neither will you find that the pioneers in our cause have made such claims.”

God, in carrying on His work in the earth, does not leave men without occasion to reject His revelation. The psalmist declares that to the froward man God will show Himself froward, and to the righteous God will show Himself righteous. Psalm 18:25–26. Not that there is frowardness in God, but the froward man judges God by his own narrow vision and his own conception of right.

We cannot judge of divine revelation by mere details. We must judge by great underlying principles. We cannot judge the Book of God by isolated expressions or, by the things which form the groundwork of the cavilling unbeliever. We must judge the Book by the fruit it bears, by the spirit that accompanies it. And thus we must judge the writings of the messenger of the Lord to the remnant church.

A Divine Commentary

The writings of Ellen G. White constitute a great commentary on the Scriptures. Should they be regarded in the same light as other Bible commentaries in current use today? Assuredly not. The writings of the Spirit of Prophecy do not belong in this classification. They are commentaries—there is this much in common—but they are inspired commentaries, moti-
vated by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and this places them in a separate and distinct class, far above all other commentaries.

The one who fails to make this distinction reveals that he has little if any faith in the doctrine of spiritual gifts in their application to the church today, and to the manifestation of the testimony of Jesus in the remnant church in fulfillment of Revelation 12:17. This attitude of mind logically calls in question the historical background of this movement and the leadings of God in its development.

Ellen G. White made no claims to infallibility. She was compassed about with human limitations the same as all mankind. But notwithstanding her human frailties, God was pleased to choose her as His messenger to the church, and by His Holy Spirit endow her with the gift of prophecy.

In the great plan of salvation and in the work of God in the earth, there is a union of the human with the divine. God, in His wisdom, has seen fit to connect with Himself poor, fallible humanity, in the carrying out of His divine purpose. As the most valuable gems and jewels are sometimes placed in comparatively worthless caskets, so the Infinite One has seen fit to express His divine will through instruments of clay. And He has chosen this plan regardless of the frailties and limitations of the human agency. These human instrumentalities have been fallible men and women; sometimes even children, as in the case of Samuel; they have been men and women, as was Elijah of “like passions as we are.” But in the choice of such instruments the greater glory redounds to the High and Holy One.

**A Balanced Acceptance**

What relation does the work of Mrs. White bear to the work of the prophets of old? The Lord did not give to her long lines of symbolic prophecy, as He did to Daniel and to John the revelator; in these days, just before the coming of the Lord, these would not be indicated. He did not make her a judge and lawgiver as He did Moses, nor a ruler of state as He did David. Rather, she filled the position of a great teacher in Israel, as did Samuel; of a great reformer, as did Elijah; of a special messenger of God, as did John the Baptist.

There may be statements in the writings of Mrs. White difficult of understanding. Peter says there were some things hard to be understood in the epistles of Paul. The unlearned and unstable wrestled these hard things unto their own destruction. 2 Peter 3:16. We may well profit by this counsel.

Naturally in our study of either inspired or uninspired writings, we inquire, What application have the principles herein set forth to our day and generation? It is proper to make this inquiry in relation to the writings of Mrs. E. G. White.

To what extent should her writings be regarded as truth for the present hour? Did not many of them apply years ago, and have no application at the present time?

That some of the instruction to the church through Mrs. White was local in its primary application, we do not deny. This is true also of many prophecies found in the Bible. When one reads the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the lesser prophets, he must recognize that much of their instruction had first reference to the days in which they lived. By their warnings they were seeking to avert the judgments which threatened Israel of old. But the principles which they set forth not only applied to local conditions in the days in which they lived, but in many instances can be applied with great profit to conditions existing in the world and in the church at the present time.

**Vitiating the Instruction**

Unfortunately, there is a tendency on the part of some to use such portions of Mrs. White’s writings as they think can be made to serve their own ends, but immediately they raise questions as to the present-day application of instruction which cuts across their plans and purposes. Of this use of her writings we are told in the *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 688:

“Some who wish to strengthen their own position will bring forward from the *Testimonies* statements which they think will support their views, and will put the strongest possible construction upon them; but that which questions their course of action, or which does not coincide with their views they pronounce Sister White’s opinion, denying the heavenly origin and placing it on a level with their own judgment.”

One who accepts one portion of the Testimonies and rejects other portions places his influence directly against this gift in the church. His influence for evil is much more potent than if he openly and consistently opposed all the writings. Then there would be no question as to his attitude, and his influence would not be deceptive.

The sincere believer in the *Testimonies* will not be seeking continually to evade their just claims. His attitude will be that of Samuel of old, “Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.” And learning the way of the Lord he will be prompt to yield his own way and subordinate his own desires to the leadings of the Spirit of God. May God give to each of us this attitude of heart and mind.

We believe that today as never before our conference and institutional workers and the rank and file of our church membership have faith in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. But we all need to realize constantly that a theoretical faith is not sufficient. We need to believe and to practice what we believe. Obedience is the test of faith in all God’s requirements.

But, perchance, there should be some conference worker who never had faith or has lost his confidence in the gift of prophecy in the church. Should he continue to represent the denomination as a public teacher or leader? It would be most inconsistent for him to do so.

Closely identified as this gift has been with the church from the very beginning of this movement, how could such a worker properly represent the denomination? Not having faith in the gift, he would be unable to pass on to the church
Tempted in All Points Like

After the fall of man, Satan declared that human beings were proved to be incapable of keeping the law of God, and he sought to carry the universe with him in this belief. Satan's words appeared to be true, and Christ came to unmask the deceiver. The Majesty of heaven undertook the cause of man, and with the same facilities that man may obtain, withstood the temptations of Satan as man must withstand them. This was the only way in which fallen man could become a partaker of the divine nature. In taking human nature, Christ was fitted to understand man's trials and sorrows and all the temptations wherewith he is beset. Angels who were unacquainted with sin could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials. Christ condescended to take man's nature, and was tempted in all points like as we, that He might know how to succor all who should be tempted.

In assuming humanity Christ took the part of every human being. He was the Head of humanity. A Being divine and human, with His long human arm He could encircle humanity, while with His divine arm He could lay hold of the throne of the Infinite.

What a sight was this for Heaven to look upon! Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men. For our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. "The foxes have holes," He said, "and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matthew 8:20

Christ submitted to insult and mockery, contempt and ridicule. He heard His message, which was fraught with love and goodness and mercy, misstated and misapplied. He heard Himself called the prince of demons, because He testified to His divine Sonship. His birth was supernatural, but by His own nation, those who had blinded their eyes to spiritual things, it was regarded as a blot and a stain. There was not a drop of our bitter woe which He did not taste, not a part of our curse which He did not endure, that He might bring many sons and daughters to God.

The fact that Jesus was on this earth as a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that in order to save fallen man from eternal ruin, He left His heavenly home, should lay in the dust all our pride, put to shame all our vanity, and reveal to us the sin of self-sufficiency. Behold Him making the wants, the trials, the griefs and sufferings of sinful men His own. Can we not take home the lesson that God endured these sufferings and bruises of soul in consequence of sin?

Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement. Speaking through His servant He declares, "His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. It was sin that separated man from His God, and it is sin that maintains this separation.

The enmity referred to in the prophecy in Eden was not to be confined merely to Satan and the Prince of life. It was to be universal. Satan and his angels were to feel the enmity of all mankind. "I will put enmity," said God, "between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed;
it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15

The enmity put between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman was supernatural. With Christ the enmity was in one sense natural; in another sense it was supernatural, as humanity and divinity were combined. And never was the enmity developed to such a marked degree as when Christ became an inhabitant of this earth. Never before had there been a being upon the earth who hated sin with so perfect a hatred as did Christ. He had seen its deceiving, infatuating power upon the holy angels, and all His powers were enlisted against it.

The purity and holiness of Christ, the spotless righteousness of Him who did no sin, was a perpetual reproach upon all sin in a world of sensuality and sin. In His life the light of truth was flashed amid the moral darkness with which Satan had ensnared the world. Christ exposed Satan’s falsehoods and deceiving character, and in many hearts destroyed his corrupting influence. It was this that stirred Satan with such intense hatred. With his hosts of fallen beings he determined to urge the warfare most vigorously; for there stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father, One whose character and practices refuted Satan’s misrepresentation of God. Satan had charged upon God the attribute he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character—a compassionate, merciful Father, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Him in repentance, and have eternal life.

Intense worldliness has been one of Satan’s most successful temptations. He designs to keep the hearts and minds of men so engrossed with worldly attractions that there will be no room for heavenly things. He controls their minds in their love of the world. Earthly things eclipse the heavenly, and put the Lord out of their sight and understanding. False theories and false gods are cherished in the place of the true. Men are charmed with the glitter and tinsel of the world. They are so attached to the things of the earth that many will commit any sin in order to gain some worldly advantage.

It was on this point that Satan thought to overthrow Christ. He thought that in His humanity He could be easily overcome. “The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Matthew 4:8-9. But Christ was unmoved. He felt the strength of this temptation; but He met it in our behalf, and conquered. And He used only the weapons justifiable for human beings to use—the word of Him who is mighty in counsel—“It is written.” Matthew 4:4, 10

With what intense interest was this controversy watched by the heavenly angels and the unfallen worlds, as the honor of the law was being vindicated. Not merely for this world, but for the universe of heaven, was the controversy to be forever settled. The confederacy of darkness was also watching for the semblance of a chance to triumph over the divine and human Substitute of the human race, that the apostate might shout, “Victory,” and the world and its inhabitants forever become his kingdom.

But Satan reached only the heel; he could not touch the head. At the death of Christ, Satan saw that he was defeated. He saw that his true character was clearly revealed before all heaven, and that the heavenly beings and the worlds that God had created would be wholly on the side of God. He saw that his prospects of future influence with them would be entirely cut off. Christ’s humanity would demonstrate for eternal ages the question which settled the controversy.

In taking upon Himself man’s nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Matthew 8:17. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He knew no sin. He was the Lamb “without blemish and without spot.” I Peter 1:19. Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour’s head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. Christ and the church would have been without hope.

We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning Sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be ensnared in darkness. This holy Substitute is able to save to the uttermost; for He presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to all the requirements of God. Divine power is placed upon man, that he may become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. This is why repenting, believing man can be made the righteousness of God in Christ.

Selected Messages, book 1, 252-256

THE humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. Yet He was God in the flesh. When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Exodus 3:5. We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth.—Selected Messages, book 1, 244
Christ the Way of Life

Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Mark 1:14–15

Repentance is associated with faith, and is urged in the gospel as essential to salvation. Paul preached repentance. He said, “I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 20:20–21. There is no salvation without repentance. No impenitent sinner can believe with his heart unto righteousness. Repentance is described by Paul as a godly sorrow for sin, that “worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.” 2 Corinthians 7:10. This repentance has in it nothing of the nature of merit, but it prepares the heart for the acceptance of Christ as the only Saviour, the only hope of the lost sinner.

As the sinner looks to the law, his guilt is made plain to him, and pressed home to his conscience, and he is condemned. His only comfort and hope is found in looking to the cross of Calvary. As he ventures upon the promises, taking God at His word, relief and peace come to his soul. He cries, “Lord, Thou hast promised to save all who come unto Thee in the name of Thy Son. I am a lost, helpless, hopeless soul. Lord, save, or I perish.” His faith lays hold on Christ, and he is justified before God.

But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.

James writes of Abraham and says, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” James 2:21–24. In order for man to be justified by faith, faith must reach a point where it will control the affections and impulses of the heart; and it is by obedience that faith itself is made perfect.

Faith the Condition of Promise

Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted to the man, and works in mind and heart and character. It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature, and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation. Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin. Faith can present Christ's perfect obedience instead of the sinner's transgression and defection. When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then, according to His unfailing promises, God pardons his sin, and justifies him freely. The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his Substitute and Surety, has died for him, is his atonement and righteousness.

Ellen G. White
“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Romans 4:3-5. Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merit of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs ac-

Many are losing the right way, in consequence of thinking that they must climb to heaven, that they must do something to merit the favor of God. They seek to make themselves better by their own unaided efforts.

again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3. “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5. It is not a low standard that is placed before us; for we are to become the children of God. We are to be saved as individuals; and in the day of test and trial we shall be able to discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. We are saved as individual believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many are losing the right way, in consequence of thinking that they must climb to heaven, that they must do something to merit the favor of God. They seek to make themselves better by their own unaided efforts. This they can never accomplish. Christ has made the way by dying our sacrifice, by living our example, by becoming our great High Priest. He declares, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. If by an effort of our own we could advance one step toward the ladder, the words of Christ would not be true. But when we accept Christ, good works will appear as fruitful evidence that we are in the way of life, that Christ is our way, and that we are treading the true path that leads to heaven.

Selected Messages, book 1, 365-368

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May 1993 Our Firm Foundation 15
Obedience Is Sanctification

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 savour." Ephesians 5:2. In all the fulness of His divinity, in all the glory of His spotless humanity, Christ gave Himself for us as a full and free sacrifice, and each one who comes to Him should accept Him as if he were the only one for whom the price had been paid. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; for the obedient will be raised to immortality, and the transgressor will rise from the dead to suffer death, the penalty of the law which he has broken.

Obedience to the law of God is sanctification. There are many who have erroneous ideas in regard to this work in the soul, but Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, "Thy word is truth." John 17:17. Sanctification is not an instantaneous but a progressive work, as obedience is continuous. Just as long as Satan urges his temptations upon us, the battle for self-conquest will have to be fought over and over again; but by obedience, the truth will sanctify the soul. Those who are loyal to the truth will, through the merits of Christ, overcome all weakness of character which has led them to be moulded by every varying circumstance of life.

Many have taken the position that they cannot sin because they are sanctified, but this is a delusive snare of the evil one. There is constant danger of falling into sin, for Christ has warned us to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. If we are conscious of the weakness of self, we shall not be self-confident and reckless of danger; but we shall feel the necessity of seeking to the Source of our strength, Jesus our righteousness. We shall come in repentance and contrition, with a despairing sense of our own finite weakness, and learn that we must daily apply to the merits of the blood of Christ, that we may become vessels fit for the Master's use. While thus depending upon God, we shall not be found warring against the truth, but we shall always be enabled to take our stand for the right. We should cling to the teaching of the Bible, and not follow the customs and traditions of the world, the sayings and doings of men. When errors arise and are taught as Bible truth, those who have a connection with Christ will not trust to what the minister says, but, like the noble Bereans, they will search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. When they discover what is the Word of the Lord, they will take their stand on the side of truth. They will hear the voice of the true Shepherd saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Isaiah 30:21. Thus you will be educated to make the Bible the man of your counsel, and the voice of a stranger you will neither hear nor follow.

If the soul is to be purified and ennobled, and made fit for the heavenly courts, there are two lessons to be learned—self-sacrifice and self-control. Some learn these important lessons more easily than do others, for they are exercised by the simple discipline the Lord gives them in gentleness and love. Others require the slow discipline of suffering, that the cleansing fire may purify their hearts of pride and self-reliance, of earthly passion and self-love, that the true gold of character may appear, and that they may become victors through the grace of Christ. The love of God will strengthen the soul, and through the virtue of the merits of the blood...
of Christ we may stand unscathed amid the fire of temptation and trial; but no other help can avail to save but Christ, our righteousness, who is made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. True sanctification is nothing more or less than to love God with all the heart, to walk in His commandments and ordinances blameless. Sanctification is not an emotion, but a heaven-born principle that brings all the passions and desires under the control of the Spirit of God; and this work is done through our Lord and Saviour.

Spurious sanctification does not glorify God, but leads those who claim it to exalt and glorify themselves. Whatever comes in our experience, whether joy or sorrow, that does not reflect Christ and point to Him as its author, bringing glory to Him, and sinking self out of sight, is not true Christian experience. When the grace of Christ is implanted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, its possessor will become humble in spirit and will seek for the society of those whose conversation is upon heavenly things. Then the Spirit will take the things of Christ and show them unto us, and will glorify, not the receiver, but the Giver. If, therefore, you have the sacred peace of Christ in your heart, your lips will be filled with praise and thanksgiving to God. Your prayers, the discharge of your duty, your benevolence, your self-denial will not be the theme of your thought or conversation, but you will magnify Him who gave Himself for you when you were yet a sinner. You will say: "I give myself to Jesus. I have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." As you praise Him, you will have a precious blessing, and all the praise and glory for that which is done through your instrumentality will be given back to God.

The peace of Christ is not a boisterous, untamable element made manifest in loud voices and bodily exercises. The peace of Christ is an intelligent peace, and it does not make those who possess it bear the marks of fanaticism and extravagance. It is not a rambling impulse, but an emanation from God. When the Saviour imparted His peace to the soul, the heart will be in perfect harmony with the Word of God; for the Spirit and the Word agree. The Lord honors His Word in all His dealings with men. It is His own will, His own voice, that is revealed to men, and He has no new will, no new truth, aside from His Word to unfold to His children. If you have a wonderful experience that is not in harmony with the expressed directions of God's Word, you may well doubt it; for its origin is not from above. The peace of Christ comes through the knowledge of Jesus whom the Bible reveals.

If happiness is drawn from outside sources, and not from the Divine Fount, it will be as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend on any circumstance in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living waters, and happiness and peace drawn from Him will never fail, for He is a wellspring of life. Those who trust in Him can say: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." Psalm 46:1-4

We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by His perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam who will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression. Jesus regained heaven for man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure; for He obeyed the law perfectly, and all who have a right conception of the plan of redemption will see that they cannot be saved while in transgression of God's holy precepts. They must cease to transgress the law, and lay hold on the promises of God that are available for us through the merits of Christ.

Our faith is not to stand in the ability of men but in the power of God. There is danger of trusting in men, even though they may have been used as instruments of God to do a great and good work. Christ must be our strength and our refuge. The best of men may fall from their steadfastness, and the best of religion, when corrupted, is ever the most dangerous in its influence upon minds. Pure, living religion is found in obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Righteousness exalts a nation, and the absence of it degrades and ruins man.

From the pulpits of today the words are uttered: "Believe, only believe. Have faith in Christ; you have nothing to do with the old law, only trust in Christ." How different is this from the words of the apostle, who declares that faith without works is dead! He says, "But by the word of the mouth, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." We must have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Many seek to substitute a superficial faith for uprightness of life, and think through this to obtain salvation. The Lord requires at this time just what He required of Adam in Eden—perfect obedience to the law of God. We must have righteousness without a flaw, without a blemish. God gave His Son to die for the world, but He did not die to repeal the law which was holy and just and good. The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is an unanswerable argument showing the immutability of the law. Its penalty was felt by the Son of God in behalf of guilty man, that through His merits the sinner might obtain the virtue of His spotless character by faith in His name. The sinner was provided with a second opportunity to keep the law of God in the strength of His Divine Redeemer. The cross of Calvary forever condemns the idea that Satan has placed before the Christian world, that the death of Christ abolished not only the typical system of sacrifices and ceremonies but the unchangeable law of God, the foundation of His throne, the transcript of His character. Through every device possible Satan has sought to make of none effect the sacrifice of the Son of God, to render His expiation useless, and His mission a failure. He has claimed that the death of Christ made obedience to the law unnecessary, and permitted the sinner to come into favor with a holy God without forsaking his sin. He has declared that the Old Testament standard was lowered in the gospel, and that men can come to Christ, not to be saved from their sins but in their sins. But when John beheld Jesus he told His mission. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

To every repentant soul the message is, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The Signs of the Times, vol. 2, 383-384 (May 19, 1890)
As the Hand to the Body

December 10, 1871, I was again shown that the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel’s message as the hand is with the body. The law of Ten Commandments has been lightly regarded by man; but the Lord would not come to punish the transgressors of that law without first sending them a message of warning. The third angel proclaims that message. Had men ever been obedient to the law of ten Commandments, carrying out in their lives the principles of those precepts, the curse of disease now flooding the world would not be.

To Prepare a People

Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, and not violate the law of God. Therefore He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us, that we may see our sin in violating the laws which He has established in our being. All our enjoyment or suffering may be traced to obedience or transgression of natural law. Our gracious heavenly Father sees the deplorable condition of men, who, some knowingly but many ignorantly, are living in violation of the laws that He has established. And in love and pity to the race, He causes the light to shine upon health reform. He publishes His law, and the penalty that will follow the transgression of it, that all may learn, and be careful to live in harmony with natural law. He proclaims His law so distinctly, and makes it so prominent, that it is like a city set on a hill. All accountable beings can understand it if they will. Idiots will not be responsible. To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the third angel’s message, to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.

Adam’s Defeat—Christ’s Victory

Adam and Eve fell through intemperate appetite. Christ came and withstood the fiercest temptation of Satan, and, in behalf of the race, overcame appetite, showing that man may overcome. As Adam fell through appetite, and lost blissful Eden, the children of Adam may, through Christ, overcome appetite, and through temperance in all things regain Eden.

Aids in Discerning Truth

Ignorance is no excuse now for the transgression of law. The light shines clearly, and none need be ignorant, for the great God Himself is man’s Instructor. All are bound by the most sacred obligations to God to heed the sound philosophy and genuine experience which He is now giving them in reference to health reform. He designs that the great subject of health reform shall be agitated, and the public mind deeply stirred to investigate; for it is impossible for men and women, with all their sinful, health-destroying, brain-energizing habits, to discern sacred truth, through which they are to be sanctified, refined, elevated, and made fit for the society of heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory. . . .

Sanctified or Punished

The apostle Paul exhorts the church, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the
mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1. Men, then, can make their bodies unholy by sinful indulgences. If unholy, they are unfitted to be spiritual worshipers, and are not worthy of heaven. If man will cherish the light that God in mercy gives him upon health reform, he may be sanctified through the truth, and fitted for immortality. But if he disregards that light, and lives in violation of natural law, he must pay the penalty.

Work of Elijah and John a Type

For years the Lord has been calling the attention of His people to health reform. This is one of the great branches of the work of preparation for the coming of the Son of man. John the Baptist went forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to turn the people to the wisdom of the just. He was a representative of those living in these last days, to whom God has entrusted sacred truths to present before the people, to prepare the way for the second appearing of Christ. John was a reformer. The angel Gabriel, direct from heaven, gave a discourse upon health reform to the father and mother of John. He said that he should not drink wine or strong drink, and that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth.

John separated himself from friends, and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel’s hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite, and the glutony that everywhere prevailed. The prophet Malachi declares, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” Malachi 4:5–6. Here the prophet describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ, are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent.

The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things.

A Marked Contrast

The self-denial, humility, and temperance required of the righteous, whom God especially leads and blesses, is to be presented to the people in contrast to the extravagant, health-destroying habits of those who live in this degenerate age. God has shown that health reform is as closely connected with the third angel’s message as the hand is with the body. There is nowhere to be found so great a cause of physical and moral degeneracy as a neglect of this important subject. Those who indulge appetite and passion, and close their eyes to the light for fear they will see sinful indulgences which they are unwilling to forsake, are guilty before God. Whoever turns from the light in one instance hardens his heart to disregard the light upon other matters. Whoever violates moral obligations in the matter of eating and dressing, prepares the way to violate the claims of God in regard to eternal interests. . . .

The people whom God is leading will be peculiar. They will not be like the world. But if they follow the leadings of God, they will accomplish His purposes, and will yield their will to His will. Christ will dwell in the heart. The temple of God will be holy. Your body, says the apostle, is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

God does not require His children to deny themselves to the injury of physical strength. He requires them to obey natural law, to preserve physical health. Nature’s path is the road He marks out, and it is broad enough for any Christian. God has, with a lavish hand, provided us with rich and varied bounties for our sustenance and enjoyment. But in order for us to enjoy the natural appetite, which will preserve health and prolong life, He restricts the appetite. He says, Beware; restrain, deny, unnatural appetite. If we create a perverted appetite, we violate the laws of our being, and assume the responsibility of abusing our bodies and of bringing disease upon ourselves.

Give the Health Work Its Place

The indifference with which the health books have been treated by many is an offense to God. To separate the health work from the great body of the work is not in His order. Present truth lies in the work of health reform as verily as in other features of gospel work. No one branch,

For years the Lord has been calling the attention of His people to health reform. This is one of the great branches of the work of preparation for the coming of the Son of man.
man's power of self-control. Only as this power is regained, can there be real progress.

The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being. The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the domination of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death.

The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers.

The body is to be brought into subjection. The higher powers of the being are to rule. The passions are to be controlled by the will, which is itself to be under the control of God. The kingly power of reason, sanctified by divine grace, is to bear sway in our lives.

The requirements of God must be brought home to the conscience. Men and women must be awakened to the duty of self-mastery, the need of purity, freedom from every depraving appetite and deflecting habit. They need to be impressed with the fact that all their powers of mind and body are the gift of God, and are to be preserved in the best possible condition for His service.

Ministers and People to Act in Concert

One important part of the work of the ministry is to faithfully present to the people the health reform, as it stands connected with the third angel's message, as a part and parcel of the same work. They should not fail to adopt it themselves, and should urge it upon all who profess to believe the truth.

The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message, and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advance move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work to do for themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them. He has left this work for them to do. It is an individual work; one cannot do it for another.

A Part of, But Not the Whole Message

The health reform is closely connected with the work of the third message, yet it is not the message. Our preachers should teach the health reform, yet they should not make this the leading theme in the place of the message. Its place is among those subjects which set forth the preparatory work to meet the events brought to view by the message; among these it is prominent. We should take hold of every reform with zeal, yet should avoid giving the impression that we are vacillating, and subject to fanaticism.

The health reform is as closely related to the third angel's message as the arm to the body; but the arm cannot take the place of the body. The proclamation of the third angel's message, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, is the burden of our work. The message is to be proclaimed with a loud cry, and to go to the whole world. The presentation of health principles must be united with this message, but must not in any case be independent of it, or in any way take the place of it.

Its Relation to Medical Institutions

The sanitariums which are established are to be closely and inseparably bound up with the gospel. The Lord has given instruction that the gospel is to be carried forward; and the gospel includes health reform in all its phases. Our work is to enlighten the world; for it is blind to the movements which are taking place, preparing the way for the plagues which God will permit to come upon the world. God's faithful watchmen must give the warning. . . .

Health reform is to stand out more prominently in the proclamation of the third angel's message. The principles of health reform are found in the Word of God. The gospel of health is to be firmly linked with the ministry of the Word. It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of health reform shall be a part of the last great effort to proclaim the gospel message.

Our physicians are to be God's workers. They are to be men whose powers have been sanctified and transformed by the grace of Christ. Their influence is to be knit up with the truth that is to be given to the world. In perfect and complete unity with the gospel ministry, the work of health reform will reveal its God-given power. Under the influence of the gospel, great reforms will be made by medical missionary work. But separate medical missionary work from the gospel, and the work will be crippled.

Our sanitariums and our churches may reach a higher, holier standard. Health reform is to be taught and practiced by our people. The Lord is calling for a revival of the principles of health reform. Seventh-day Adventists have a special work to do as messengers to labor for the souls and bodies of men.

Christ has said of His people, "Ye are the light of the world." Matthew 5:14. We are the Lord's denominated people, to proclaim the truths of heavenly origin. The most solemn, sacred work ever given to mortals is the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages to our world. In our large cities there should be health institutes to care for the sick, and to teach the grand principles of health reform.

An Entering Wedge

I have been instructed that we are not to delay to do the work that needs to be done in health reform lines. Through this work we are to reach souls in the highways and the byways.

I can see in the Lord's providence that the medical missionary work is to be a great entering wedge, whereby the diseased soul may be reached.

To Remove Prejudice—Increase Influence

Much of the prejudice that prevents the truth of the third angel's message from reaching the hearts of the people, might be
removed if more attention were given to health reform. When people become interested in this subject, the way is often prepared for the entrance of other truths. If they see that we are intelligent with regard to health, they will be more ready to believe that we are sound in Bible doctrines.

This branch of the Lord’s work has not received due attention, and through this neglect much has been lost. If the church would manifest a greater interest in the reforms through which God Himself is seeking to fit them for His coming, their influence would be far greater than it now is. God has spoken to His people, and He designs that they shall hear and obey His voice. Although the health reform is not the third angel’s message, it is closely connected with it. Those who proclaim the message should teach health reform also. It is a subject that we must understand, in order to be prepared for the events that are close upon us, and it should have a prominent place. Satan and his agents are seeking to hinder this work of reform, and will do all they can to perplex and burden those who heartily engage in it. Yet none should be discouraged at this, or cease their efforts because of it. The prophet Isaiah speaks thus of one characteristic of Christ, “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.” Isaiah 42:4. Then let not His followers talk of failure or discouragement, but remember the price paid to rescue man that he might not perish, but have eternal life.

The work of health reform is the Lord’s means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church. Teach the people that they can act as God’s helping hand, by co-operating with the Master Worker in restoring physical and spiritual health. This work bears the signature of heaven, and will open doors for the entrance of other precious truths. There is room for all to labor who will take hold of this work intelligently.

Counsels on Diet and Foods, 69–77

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Pre-registration is required for the courses at Life Abundant Missionary Institute.
The Testimony of Jesus
Continued from 11

the Spirit of the instruction coming through that gift. It seems to me that a lack of faith on the part of a minister in this gift, even if it were unknown to his brethren, would lead him as an honest man to surrender his credentials and cease his labors in a representative relationship.

While a lack of faith in the subject of spiritual gifts might be excused in the rank and file of the membership, it cannot be justly condoned in the case of those chosen for responsible or official positions in the church. Leadership involves solemn responsibility and the church has a right to demand that those chosen for positions of trust and influence should be examples to the flock, not alone in life and character, but also in religious faith. The denomination that issues to its accredited representatives ministerial credentials has a right to expect that in this relationship they will stand for the principles of the people who send them forth and who support them in their work.

I never had the privilege of seeing Mrs. White while she was in vision. I did witness, however, a remarkable scene which strengthened my faith in her gift of prophecy. I was at an early morning workers' meeting in the old Battle Creek Tabernacle in 1891. O. A. Olsen, then president of the General Conference, had charge of the meeting. Mrs. E. G. White unexpectedly entered the gathering with a roll of manuscript in her hand. Elder Olsen inquired whether she had some message for the workers. She replied, "Indeed I have."

A Remarkable Experience

Permit me to state the background of what she was about to say. In Salamanca, New York, some months earlier, she was given one night a vision in which some startling things relating to our work were revealed to her. In succeeding days she stated several times to her associates that she must tell them what was shown her, but always her mind was led to other themes.

When she arose to speak at the meeting in Battle Creek she stated that the angel of the Lord had awakened her about three o'clock the night just passed, and told her to write out the instruction given her in Salamanca several months previously. This she had done, and she proceeded to read from the manuscript in her hand.

She stated that she had been taken in vision into a meeting of our workers where they were discussing the policy of The American Sentinel. It was felt that the paper could be popularized and its circulation greatly increased if it made little or no reference to any of the distinctive features of our faith. And that if this could not be done, another journal should be started. Mrs. White declared that this was worldly policy, inspired by Satan, to lead us to dissemble, to sail under false colors and to cover up and hold back the message we had for all classes.

When Mrs. White had finished, a deep hush fell upon the meeting. Finally a brother arose and said, "If Sister White had been in the meeting I attended last night she could not have described more accurately what occurred than she has just done."

"Last night?" Mrs. White surprisingly inquired. The speaker answered, "Yes, last night; the meeting closed about one o'clock." This was two hours before Mrs. White was awakened and told to write out the vision. Others spoke, acknowledging their wrong position, and accepting fully the instruction given.

It is not difficult to understand why Mrs. White had never before been able to relate what was shown her at Salamanca. The meeting into which she had been taken in vision had not then occurred. God overruled, and prompted her message at the right time for the right occasion.

This illustrates the manner in which Heaven inspired her to send other messages, sometimes over the seas from Australia, messages which arrived just at the right time to save our workers from decisions which would have seriously jeopardized our work.

Special Dangers

The Spirit of Prophecy has pointed out many other dangers threatening the church. I feel impressed to mention several of these:

1. The danger threatening our schools. I thank God for the fine educational institutions we have today, and for the loyal and godly teachers training our children and young men and women. Satan will seek to turn our schools into the ways of worldly policy, emphasizing the attainments of intellectualism as the chief object of study and the leading qualification for effective service. He has done this to schools of other denominations to their spiritual undoing. We have been warned in these words:

"Our people are now being tested as to whether they will obtain their wisdom from the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, or seek to the god of Ekron. Let us determine that we will not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments." Counsels to Teachers, 255

Only by frequent review of the educational blueprint of Christian education in the writings of Mrs. White, only by constant prayer and eternal vigilance, and only by the miracle of God's grace can we maintain our integrity and hold our schools to their high and holy objective.

2. Another danger is the subversive and seductive teaching of religio-political reformers threatening the destruction of civil and religious liberty. This will culminate in the fulfillment of Revelation 13. The warnings given us from the pen of inspiration, especially the closing chapters of the book The Great Controversy, should be faithfully studied and impressed on the minds of our dear people, that they may be prepared to meet loyally the crisis awaiting them in the near future.

3. The honeycombing, undermining influences threatening the home, as illustrated in the rapidly increasing divorce rate. The sanctity of the marriage relation needs new emphasis, and the evil of our young men and women forming marriages with unbelievers should be pressed home upon the hearts of our youth. The
Bible and the Testimonies sound faithful warnings against these unholy, unscriptural unions.

4. We live in a dying world. Disease of every kind and character will increase in coming days. How can we hope to possess clear minds and strong bodies and in faith seek Heaven's protection, if we fail to follow the instruction we have received in reference to health and temperance? We must carefully distinguish between faith and presumption. The test of faith is manifested in obedience.

Undoubtedly Satan's warfare against the remnant church because of their keeping the commandments of God will emanate from without, from open and avowed enemies of the truth. It is my belief that his warfare against the Spirit of Prophecy will be carried on within the church itself; by insinuation and subtle suggestion he will seek to create doubt and unbelief in this important phase of our truth. We are told this by Mrs. Ellen G. White in a letter written in 1890: "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Proverbs 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony." Selected Messages, book 1, 48

The attacks of modernistic philosophy against the Word of God are severely testing the faith of many Christian people in the fundamentals of Bible truth. Thousands are being led into rejection of divine revelation. Will our faith in the writings which have come to us from the Spirit of Prophecy be similarly tested? If so, may Heaven enable us to stand the test.

We cannot see how anyone can prayerfully read the messages which have come through the years and doubt their genuineness. They speak to one's heart. They carry with them the proof of their own inspiration.

We thank God that He gave a prophet to the remnant church. No Seventh-day Adventist should be ashamed of this blessed truth. Rather we should rejoice that the Lord has in this manner visited His people, and again and again warned them of their danger in the midst of the evils which threaten the church at the present time. Next to the Bible, and in connection with it, these messages should be read and studied. They throw a flood of light upon the Sacred Record. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chronicles 20:20

As Moses in his final instructions to Israel of old admonished them to remember all the way the Lord had led them, so the messenger of the Lord to the remnant church left us this faithfulness counsel: "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. 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, 196

Let us give good heed to this wise admonition.

Review and Herald, June 9, 1946

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Tape 10   • Spiritualism
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May 1993 Our Firm Foundation 23
God to Control His Heritage

I am unable to put away the anxious thoughts that fill my mind in regard to the work of God. I feel that to weep would be a relief. I am sure that a work must be done for those in positions of trust in Battle Creek. They will never be safe, trustworthy men until they are laborers together with God. The question often comes to me, “Has God chosen these men to devise and plan and execute in behalf of His work, when they have not a vital connection with Him?” The men God chooses to bear burdens in His work are to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn from Him how to repress their un-Christlike desires and inclinations. God has not given men power to interfere between a human being and his conscience.

The question of religious liberty needs to be clearly comprehended by our people in more ways than one. With outstretched arms men are seeking to steady the ark, and the anger of the Lord is kindled against them because they think that their position entitles them to say what the Lord’s servants shall do and what they shall not do. They think themselves competent to decide what shall be brought before God’s people, and what shall be repressed. The Lord inquires of them, “Who has required this at your hand? Who has given you the burden of being conscience for My people? By what spirit are you guided and controlled when you seek to restrict their liberty? I have not chosen you as I chose Moses—as men through whom I can communicate divine instruction to My people, I have not placed the lines of control in your hands. The responsibility that rested on Moses—of voicing the words of God to the people—has never been delegated to you.”

Moses was specially chosen to be the visible leader of the children of Israel. Through long years of discipline he learned the lesson of humility, and he became a man whom God could teach and guide. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. God trusted him—a daily learner in the school of Christ—with the leadership of the host of Israel. God talked with him face to face, as a man talketh with his friend. He was the meekest of all men. He did not seek to control the Holy Spirit, but was himself controlled by the Spirit.

Do the men who are today swayings and molding the work of God give evidence that they are swayed and molded by divine power? Do they give evidence that they have received the Spirit of God? Is truth enthroned in their hearts? Is Christ revealed in their daily experience? Is the law of kindness on their lips?

There is an evil, a great evil, that is to be rooted out of all council meetings and board meetings. We are living in perilous times. Men are striving for the control over their fellow men. God is dispelled and dishonored. Man is led to fear man rather than God. My brethren, has not the Word of God been dismissed from your councils? Have not the words of men had too much power? Has not religious freedom been excluded from your assemblies? Have you not censured your fellow men, when you yourselves were standing under the censure of God? Take your hands off your brethren. They are not to be under the control of any man or set of men. Men are not to league together to bind their fellow men by rules and restrictions. God knows the characters of men. He sees their weakness, and He has not put into their hands the power that belongs alone to Him. He has not given them the right to say what their fellow men shall do and what they shall not do.

It is the greatest presumption for man to assume the right of dictation and control over his fellow men. God is the owner of man. To his Maker, man stands or falls. To God he is responsible, not to his fellow men. Every man has an individuality of his own, which is not to be submerged in any other human being. The life of each one must be hid with Christ in God. Men are under God’s control, not under the control of weak, erring human beings. They are to be left free to be guided by the Holy Spirit, not by the fickle, perverse spirit of unsanctified men.

The encroachments made by men on the liberty of their fellow men are condemned by God. These encroachments, which are not seen in their true bearing, are inspired by the enemy of God, to cut off the opportunity for God to work on minds by His Spirit. Those who do not know God, who refuse to hear His voice or to be ruled by Him, will stand with cord in hand, ready to bind the Lord’s workers and trammel them in their efforts.

Let God be recognized as the supreme Ruler of His heritage. Let every man place himself under His control. Let Him be recognized in all our assemblies, in every business meeting, every council, every committee. He sees all that is done, and hears all that is said. “Thou God seest me.” Let these words be kept ever in mind. They will be a safeguard against impudent, passionate speeches, against all desire to dominate. They will repress words that should never be spoken, and resolutions that men have no right to make—resolutions that restrict the liberty of human beings.

Let God place restrictions on His workers, but let man beware how he places restrictions where God places none. If men are permitted to control the judgment of their fellow men, oppression will result. The cause of God will be bound about. Scheme after scheme that is unjust will be planned. Let not men take on themselves the responsibility of controlling the words and actions of their fellow men. Let our institutions give place to the working of God on human minds. Let God have opportunity to control. Should the principle obtain sway that in speaking and writing, men are to be under the control of human beings, deadly evils would be the result.

God calls upon men to act under His supervision, to accept His standard, to take all their decisions and plans to Him for approval. His holiness, His justice, is to keep them from unprincipled actions.

“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?” Isaiah 2:22

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DURING the past fifty years of my life, I have had precious opportunities to obtain an experience. I have had an experience in the first, second, and third angels’ messages. The angels are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming to the world a message of warning, and having a direct bearing upon the people living in the last days of this earth’s history. No one hears the voice of these angels, for they are a symbol to represent the people of God who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven. Men and women, enlightened by the Spirit of God and sanctified through the truth, proclaim the three messages in their order.

I have acted a part in this solemn work. Nearly all my Christian experience is interwoven with it. There are those now living who have an experience similar to my own. They have recognized the truth unfolding for this time; they have kept in step with the great Leader, the Captain of the Lord’s host.

In the proclamation of the messages, every specification of prophecy has been fulfilled. Those who were privileged to act a part in proclaiming these messages have gained an experience which is of the highest value to them; and now when we are amid the perils of these last days, when voices will be heard on every side saying, “Here is Christ,” “Here is truth,” while the burden of many is to unsettle the foundation of our faith which has led us from the churches and from the world to stand as a peculiar people in the world, like John our testimony will be borne: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us.” 1 John 1:1–3

I testify the things which I have seen, the things which I have heard, the things which my hands have handled of the Word of life. And this testimony I know to be of the Father and the Son. We have seen and do testify that the power of the Holy Ghost has accompanied the presentation of the truth, warning with pen and voice, and giving the messages in their order. To deny this work would be to deny the Holy Ghost, and would place us in that company who have departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits.

Confidence Assailed

The enemy will set everything in operation to uproot the confidence of the believers in the pillars of our faith in the messages of the last, which have placed us upon the elevated platform of eternal truth, and which have established and given character to the work. The Lord God of Israel has led out His people, unfolding to them truth of heavenly origin. His voice has been heard, and is still heard, saying, “Go forward from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from glory to glory.” The work is strengthening and broadening, for the Lord God of Israel is the defense of His people.

Those who have a hold of the truth theoretically, with their finger tips as it were, who have not brought its principles into the inner sanctuary of the soul, but have kept the vital truth in the outer court, will see nothing sacred in the past history of this people which has made them what they are, and has established them as earnest, determined, missionary workers in the world.

The truth for this time is precious, but those whose hearts have not been broken by falling on the rock Christ Jesus, will not see and understand what is truth. They will accept that which pleases their ideas, and will begin to manufacture another foundation than that which is laid. They will flatter their own vanity and esteem, thinking that they are capable of removing the pillars of our faith, and replacing them with pillars they have devised.

This will continue to be as long as time shall last. Anyone who has been a close student of the Bible will see and understand the solemn position of those who are living in the closing scenes of this earth’s history. They will feel their own inefficiency and weakness, and will make it their first business to have not merely a form of godliness, but a vital connection with God. They will not dare to rest until Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. Self will die; pride will be expelled from the soul, and they will have the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

No New Organization

After the passing of the time, God entrusted to His faithful followers the precious principles of present truth. These principles were not given to those who had had no part in the giving of the first and second angels’ messages. They were given to the workers who had had a part in the cause from the beginning.

Those who passed through these experiences are to be as firm as a rock to the principles that have made us Seventh-day Adventists. They are to be workers together with God, binding up the testimony and sealing the law among His disciples. Those who took part in the establishment of our work upon a foundation of Bible truth, those who know the waymarks that have pointed out the right path, are to be regarded as workers of the highest value. They can speak from personal experience, regarding the truths entrusted to them. These men are not to permit their faith to be changed to infidelity; they are not to permit the
Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established.

No Need for Fear

There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. If matters need adjusting at the head of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong. Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship which bears the people of God safely into port.

When I voyaged from Portland, Maine, to Boston, many years ago, a storm came upon us, and the great waves dashed us to and fro. The chandeliers fell, and the trunks were rolled from side to side, like balls. The passengers were frightened, and many were screaming, waiting in expectation of death.

After a while the pilot came on board. The captain stood near the pilot as he took the wheel, and expressed fear about the course in which the ship was directed. “Will you take the wheel?” asked the pilot. “The captain was not ready to do that, for he knew that he lacked experience.

Then some of the passengers grew uneasy, and said they feared the pilot would dash them upon the rocks. “Will you take the wheel?” asked the pilot; but they knew that they could not manage the wheel.

When you think that the work is in danger, pray, “Lord, stand at the wheel. Carry us through the perplexity. Bring us safely into port.” Have we not reason to believe that the Lord will bring us through triumphantly?

There are before me many who are old hands in the cause. I have known some of you for the last thirty years. Brethren, thought it is that the great controversy is nearing its end! In the closing work we shall meet with perils that we know not how to deal with; but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass. He will gather from the world a people who will serve Him in righteousness.

Fearful perils are before those who bear responsibilities in the Lord’s work—perils of which makes me tremble. But the word comes, “My hand is on the wheel, and in My providence I will carry out the divine plan.”

Judgments of God Abroad

Troubles times are before us. The judgments of God are abroad in the land. Calamities follow one another in rapid succession. Soon God is to rise out of His place to shake terribly the earth, and to punish the inhabitants for their iniquity. Then He will stand up in behalf of His people, and will give them His protecting care. He will throw His everlasting arms around them to shield them from all harm.

Selected Messages, book 2, 387-391

The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God’s people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels’ messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God’s law. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. —

Counsels to Writers and Editors, 30-31
And I saw a great white throne, and a book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. Revelation 20:11-12

Here is presented before us the great and solemn day when the judgment is to sit and the books are to be opened, and the dead are to be judged according to the things written in the books. We must all meet the unerring record of our lives written in the books on high. We are probationers, on trial. God is testing us to see what kind of characters we will develop in this life. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. Our heavenly Father has sent us a message warning us of the fast-hastening judgment, that we may prepare for that day of final reckoning.

I have questioned in my mind as I have seen men and women hurrying to and fro on matters of business or pleasure, whether or not they ever thought of the day of God, that is about to break upon us. We need not be in darkness as to what is coming on the earth. We cannot afford to meet that day without a preparation, and light has been given us from Heaven, that we may understand the requirements of God. "Search the Scriptures" is the command of Christ. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Mark 14:38. There is a witness that follows us in all our actions of life. Our very thoughts and the intents and purposes of our hearts are laid bare to His inspection. As the features are produced upon the polished plate of the artist, so are our characters delineated upon the books of record in heaven. Are you fitting up in the graces of Christ? Will your robe of character be white and spotless in the day of His appearing? Every interest should be shaped, and every action directed toward this all-important event. We should live daily in great humility before God, seeking the divine strength lest we fail of His grace and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life.

We should be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour 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." Titus 2:13-14

You cannot afford to be found a transgressor of God's great moral law. You are to be judged by its precepts. If God had no law, there could be no judgment, and the cases of men and women would not be called into the solemn tribunal, before the righteous Judge. If we have not been found in harmony with God's requirements in this life, we will be no more in harmony with His requirements in the future life. What excuse can we plead for disobedience to the law of God's Government? And what excuse can we render in the day when the motives of the heart will be tried? You may say now, "The whole world is out of harmony with God's precepts, and I cannot be singular," but in that day you will not venture to present this before the God of heaven and earth. When the books are opened, the character will be revealed, and every mouth will be stopped. You will be convicted of guilt before the revelation of your own life. Everyone unsaved will see where he departed from right, and will realize the influence his life of disobedience exerted to turn others from the way of truth. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God," and the quick and the dead shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. The secret things will be made

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known. There was an eye that saw and a hand that registered the hidden deeds.  

When Belshazzar had his great sacrilegious feast, there was present in the splendid halls a witness which he did not discern. The revelers were drinking its wine, and partaking of their luxurious feast, and praising the gods of silver and gold, extolling their own wisdom, magnifying their deeds, and dishonoring God, but right over against the wall, facing the king, a bloodless hand was tracing the terrible characters testifying of his true condition: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” Daniel 5:27  

The Lord is weighing character in the sanctuary today, and those who are careless and indifferent, rushing on in the paths of iniquity, will not stand the test. God has endowed us with reasoning powers, and He requires us to use them to His glory. He has given us this body, which He wishes us to preserve in perfect health, that we may render the best service to His cause. He has paid an infinite price for our redemption, and yet men and women dependent from day to day upon His mercies, for life, for health, for food, for all the blessings they enjoy, refuse to obey His laws, refuse to accept His Son as their Example and Saviour.  

It may seem to you that obedience to God’s law requires too much self-denial and sacrifice. Does it require more sacrifice than Jesus has made to save you? He has led the way, and will you follow? He says, “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” John 15:10. He left the royal throne of glory. He changed the kingly crown for a crown of thorns. He placed His feet in the blood-stained path which led the way to Calvary, and He has stated to us that those who are partakers with Him of His sufferings shall be partakers also with Him of His glory. We shall never have to endure the shame, the insult, the mockery, the agony of the crucifixion, and the depth of woe and temptation that the Author of our salvation has endured for our sake; but we should ever keep before us the scenes of His humiliation, and never exalt ourselves in pride and self-sufficiency.  

Christ was despised and rejected of men. Those He came to save could not see in Him anything desirable. Should He come unto our world today without earthly honor or princely power, who would receive Him as the King of glory? How many proud church members would be so ashamed of Jesus and the reproach that would be likely to be attached to them should they accept Him, that they would refuse to follow Him; but His matchless love led Him to endure infinite sorrow and reproach that He might bring many sons and daughters to glory. Who is willing today to be on the Lord’s side?  

It is here that we must enter the school of Christ and learn the precious lesson of meekness and lowliness of mind; and here it must be our aim and our earnest effort to be loyal to the God of heaven, by obeying all His commandments.  

We cannot wait until the judgment before we consent to deny self and to lift the cross. It will be too late then to form characters for heaven. It is here and now that we must take sides with the humble, self-denying Redeemer. It is here we must overcome envy, strife, selfishness, love of money, and love of the world. It is here that we must enter the school of Christ and learn the precious lesson of meekness and lowliness of mind; and here it must be our aim and our earnest effort to be loyal to the God of heaven, by obeying all His commandments.  

Our only safety is in constant communion with God. Our petitions should ascend in faith that He will keep us unspotted from the corruptions of the world. Did not Jesus tell us that iniquity would abound in the last days? But His grace will be granted to us who shall be on the earth when Christ shall come, who will be translated to heaven and never taste of death. It is fitting that we pray, as did David, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Psalm 119:18  

Many close their eyes, lest they shall see the truth. They do not want to see the defects in their life and character, and it disturbs them if you mention to them anything about God’s law. They have discarded God’s standard and have chosen a standard of their own. Their hearts are not inclined to keep the way of the Lord, for it runs in an opposite direction from the path they had marked out. But we want to warn you: Be not deceived by the first great adversary of God’s law. When the judgment is set and the books opened, your life and mine will be measured by the law of the Most High. Those who have washed their robes of character and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, will be found keeping the commandments of God; and when every man is judged according to the things written in the books, they will receive the commendation of Heaven and an eternal inheritance.

Hope International Camp Meeting Dates:  
Loudenville, Ohio: . . . . June 10–13  
Callistoga, California: . . . . July 8–11  
Eatonville, Washington: . July 28–August 1  
Yucaipa, California: . . . . September 22–26  
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The Signs of the Times, vol. 2, 174–175 (December 29, 1887)
AN APPEAL

The entire appeal from which this article is condensed was written at Healdsburg, California, May 30, 1882, to be read at the 1882 camp meetings. It presents warnings and instruction which Ellen White felt urged to give to the church. We urge the reader to read the entire chapter, contained in Testimonies, vol. 5, 217-235.—EDITORS

I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. The testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His Word and from the testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us.

Let each put the question to his own heart: “How have we fallen into this state of spiritual feebleness and dissension? Have we not brought upon ourselves the frown of God because our actions do not correspond with our faith? Have we not been seeking the friendship and applause of the world rather than the presence of Christ and a deeper knowledge of His will?” Examine your own hearts, judge your own course. Consider what associates you are choosing. Do you seek the company of the wise, or are you willing to choose worldly associates, companions who fear not God and obey not the gospel?

Are your recreations such as to impart moral and spiritual vigor? Will they lead to purity of thought and action? Impurity is today widespread, even among the professing followers of Christ. Passion is unrestrained; the animal propensities are gaining strength by indulgence, while the moral powers are constantly becoming weaker. Many are eagerly participating in worldly, demoralizing amusements which God’s Word forbids. Thus they sever their connection with God and rank themselves with the pleasure lovers of the world. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today—not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man. If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.

And what has caused this alarming condition? Many have accepted the theory of the truth who have had no true conversion. I know whereof I speak.

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May 1993 Our Firm Foundation 29
There are few who feel true sorrow for sin, who have deep, pungent convictions of the depravity of the unregenerate nature. The heart of stone is not exchanged for a heart of flesh. Few are willing to fall upon the Rock and be broken.

No matter who you are or what your life has been, you can be saved only in God's appointed way. You must repent; you must fall helpless on the Rock, Christ Jesus. You must feel your need of a physician and of the one only remedy for sin, the blood of Christ. This remedy can be secured only by repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Here the work is yet to be begun by many who profess to be Christians and even to be ministers of Christ. Like the Pharisees of old many of you feel no need of a Saviour. You are self-sufficient, self-exalted. Said Christ: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17. The blood of Christ will avail for none but those who feel their need of its cleansing power.

What surpassing love and condescension, that when we had no claim upon divine mercy, Christ was willing to undertake our redemption! But our great Physician requires of every soul unquestioning submission. We are never to prescribe for our own case. Christ must have the entire management of will and action.

Many are not sensible of their condition and their danger; and there is much in the nature and manner of Christ's work averse to every worldly principle and opposed to the pride of the human heart. Jesus requires us to trust ourselves wholly to His hands and confide in His love and wisdom.

We may flatter ourselves, as did Nicodemus, that our moral character has been correct and we need not humble ourselves before God like the common sinner. But we must be content to enter into life in the very same way as the chief of sinners. We must renounce our own righteousness and plead for the righteousness of Christ to be imputed to us. We must depend wholly upon Christ for our strength. Self must die. We must acknowledge that all we have is from the exceeding riches of divine grace. Let this be the language of our hearts: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Psalm 115:1

Genuine faith is followed by love, and love by obedience. All the powers and passions of the converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His Spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it. It makes me sad to say that this experience is understood by but few who profess the truth. Very many follow on in their own ways and indulge their sinful desires and yet profess to be disciples of Christ. They have never submitted their hearts to God. Like the foolish virgins they have neglected to obtain the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps. I tell you, my brethren, that a large number who profess to believe and even to teach the truth are under the bondage of sin. Base passions wanting in nothing, waiting for the appearing of our Lord. Are you ready? Have you the wedding garment on? That garment will never cover deceit, impurity, corruption, or hypocrisy. The eye of God is upon you. It is a dispen sar of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We may conceal our sins from the eyes of men, but we can hide nothing from our Maker.

God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him to death for our offenses and raised Him again for our justification. Through Christ we may present our petitions at the throne of grace. Through Him,

Experience is knowledge derived from experiment. Experimental religion is what is needed now. "Taste and see that the Lord is good."
sin, but do not use it. They know the right, but have no relish for it. All their knowledge will but increase their condemnation. They have never tasted and learned by experience that the Lord is good.

To become a disciple of Christ is to deny self and follow Jesus through evil as well as good report. Few are doing this now. Many prophesy falsely, and the people love to have it so; but what will be done in the end thereof? What will be the decision when their work, with all its results, shall be brought in review before God?

The Christian life is a warfare. The apostle Paul speaks of wrestling against principalities and powers as he fought the good fight of faith. Again, he declares: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Hebrews 12:4. Ah, no. Today sin is cherished and excused. The sharp sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, does not cut to the soul. Has religion changed? Has Satan's enmity to God abated? A religious life once presented difficulties and demanded self-denial. All is made very easy now. And why is this? The professed people of God have compromised with the power of darkness.

There must be a revival of the strict testimony. The path to heaven is no smoother now than in the days of our Saviour. All our sins must be put away. Every darling indulgence that hinders our religious life must be cut off. The right eye or the right hand must be sacrificed if it cause us to offend. Are we willing to renounce our own wisdom and to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child? Are we willing to part with self-righteousness? Are we willing to give up our chosen worldly associates? Are we willing to sacrifice the approbation of men? The prize of eternal life is of infinite value. Will we put forth efforts and make sacrifices proportionate to the worth of the object to be attained? ...

What can I say to you, my brethren, that shall arouse you from your carnal security? I have been shown your perils. There are both believers and unbelievers in the church. Christ represents these two classes in His parable of the vine and its branches. He exhorts His followers: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except ye abide in me; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:4-5. . . .

My brethren, beware of the evil heart of unbelief. The Word of God is plain and close in its restrictions; it interferes with your selfish indulgence; therefore you do not obey it.

When this intimacy of connection and communion is formed, our sins are laid upon Christ; His righteousness is imputed to us. He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We have access to God through Him; we are accepted in the Beloved. Whoever by word or deed injures a believer thereby wounds Jesus. Whoever gives a cup of cold water to a disciple because he is a child of God will be regarded by Christ as giving to Him. . . .

Will we put forth most earnest efforts to form this alliance with Christ, through which alone these blessings are attained? Will we break off our sins by righteousness and our iniquities by turning unto the Lord? Skepticism and infidelity are widespread. Christ asked the question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. We must cherish a living, active faith. The permanence of our faith is the condition of our union.

A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols.

After the union with Christ has been formed, it can be preserved only by earnest prayer and untiring effort. We must resist, we must deny, we must conquer self. Through the grace of Christ, by courage, by faith, by watchfulness, we may gain the victory . . . .

Many who have been placed upon the walls of Zion, to watch with eagle eye for the approach of danger and lift the voice of warning, are themselves asleep. The very ones who should be most active and vigilant in this hour of peril are neglecting their duty and bringing upon themselves the blood of souls.

My brethren, beware of the evil heart of unbelief. The Word of God is plain and close in its restrictions; it interferes with your selfish indulgence; therefore you do not obey it. They who seek to lessen the faith of God's people in these testimonies, which have been in the church for the last thirty-six years, are fighting against God. It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproves . . . .

Jesus took upon Himself man's nature, that He might leave a pattern for humanity, complete, perfect. He proposes to make us like Himself, true in every purpose, feeling, and thought—true in heart, soul, and life. This is Christianity. Our fallen nature must be purified, ennobled, consecrated by obedience to the truth. Christian faith will never harmonize with worldly principles; Christian integrity is opposed to all deception and pretense. The man who cherishes the most of Christ's love in the soul, who reflects the Saviour's image most perfectly, is in the sight of God the truest, most noble, most honorable man upon the earth. . .
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