Character Tested by Presence of the Less Fortunate

When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. Deuteronomy 24:19, NKJV.

I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character.

If we have the true religion of the Bible we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His children; and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for fellow believers who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments and the last six hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer who his neighbor was in the illustration of the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and who fell among thieves and was robbed and beaten and left half dead.

The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help he did not question whether he was a relative or was of his country or creed; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast, and carried him to an inn and made provision for his wants at his own expense.

This Samaritan, said Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class in the church who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy and help. This class, notwithstanding their position in the church, are commandment breakers. The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ and who are imitating His example in doing good. --Testimonies for the Church 3:511, 512.