

THE
TESTIMONIES
TO THE CHURCH,
Testimonies Nos. 23-24

BY ELLEN G. WHITE.

"For the Testimony of Jesus is the
Spirit of Prophecy."
- REV. 19:10.

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Testimony
For The Church

No. 23

By Ellen G. White

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The Laodicean Church

The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and True Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

A Practical Message.

The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to his people by ministers whom he has called to warn the people, is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical, in every particular. The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments.

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"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest^[#23.p4] not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." #4

What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong. The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true situation of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and his testimony must be correct.

It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, who are believing themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

I was shown that many were flattering themselves that they were good Christians who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God, before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit of God.

God leads his people on, step by step. The Christian life is a constant battle, and a march. There is no rest from the warfare. It is by^[#23.p5] constant, un- #5
ceasing effort that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. We are, as a people, triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain scriptural testimony. But we are very

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much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and spirit of sacrifice. We need to cultivate Bible holiness. Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received. Many cling to their doubts and their darling sins, while they are in so great a deception as to talk and feel that they are in need of nothing. They think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for, or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment, that they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge. They lack almost every essential qualification necessary to perfect Christian character. They have not a practical knowledge of Bible truth, which leads to lowliness of life, and a conformity of their will to the will of Christ. They are not living in obedience to all God's requirements.

It is not enough to merely profess to believe the truth. All the soldiers of the cross of Christ virtually obligate themselves to enter a crusade against the adversary of souls, to condemn wrong, and sustain righteousness. But the message of the True Witness reveals the fact that a terrible deception is upon our people, which makes it necessary to come to them with warnings, to break their spiritual slumber, and arouse them to decided action. [#23.p6]

In my last vision, I was shown that even this decided message of the True Witness had not accomplished the design of God. The people slumber on in their sins. They continue to declare themselves "rich, and having need of nothing." Many inquire, Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and grievous sins? We love the truth. We are prospering. We are in no need of these testimonies of warning and reproof. But let these murmurers see their hearts, and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible; let them humble their souls before God; let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales

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will fall from their eyes, and they will sense their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character, made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer, and eye salve, which is the grace of God, which will give clear discernment of spiritual things, and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.

The People Unwilling To Receive Correction.

I have been shown that the greatest reason why the people of God are now found in this state of spiritual blindness, is because they will not receive correction. Many have despised the reproofs and warnings given them. The True Witness condemns the lukewarm condition of the people of God, which gives Satan great power over them in this waiting, watching time.^[#23.p7] The selfish, and proud, and lovers of sin, are ever assailed with doubts. Satan has ability to suggest doubts and devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue and mark of intelligence in them to be unbelieving, and questioning, and quibbling. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind, and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence. #7

Eternal life is of infinite value, and will cost us all that we have. I was shown that we do not place a proper estimate upon eternal things. Everything worth possessing, even in this world, must be secured by effort, and sometimes by most painful sacrifice. And this is merely for a perishable treasure. Shall we be less willing to endure conflict and toil, and to make earnest efforts and great sacrifices for the infinite treasure, which passes all estimate with the Infinite? Can Heaven cost us too much?

Faith and love are golden treasures, elements

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that are greatly wanting among God's people. I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof, is shutting away the light from God's people. Unbelief is closing their eyes, so that they are ignorant of their true condition. The True Witness thus describes their blindness in these words: "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning.
#8 [#23.p8] "My Lord delayeth his coming" is said not only in the heart, but expressed in words, and most decidedly in works. Stupidity in this watching time is sealing the senses of God's people as to the signs of the times.

The terrible iniquity abounding calls for the greatest diligence, and for the living testimony, to keep sin out of the church. Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree. Faith can only increase by exercise.

Want Of A Spirit Of Sacrifice.

In the first rise of the third angel's message, those who engage in the work of God had something to venture. They had sacrifices to make. They started this work in poverty, and suffered the greatest deprivations and reproach. They met determined opposition, which drove them to God in their necessity, and kept their faith alive.

Our present plan of systematic benevolence amply sustains our ministers. And there is no want and no call for the exercise of faith as to a support. Those who start out now to preach the truth have nothing to venture. They have no risks to run, no especial sacrifices to make. The system of truth is made ready to the hand. Publications are provided for them, vindicating the truths they advance.

Some young men start out with no real sense of the exalted character of the work. They have not privations, and hardships, and severe conflicts, to

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meet, which call for the exercise of faith. They do not cultivate practical self-denial, and cherish a spirit of sacrifice. Some are becoming proud and lifted up, and have no real burden of the work^[#23.p9] upon them. #9 The True Witness speaks to these ministers, "Be zealous, therefore, and repent." These ministers are some of them so lifted up in pride, that they are really a hindrance and a curse to the precious cause of God. They do not exert an influence which is saving upon others. There is need of these men being thoroughly converted to God themselves, and sanctified by the truths they present to others.

Very many feel impatient and jealous because they are frequently disturbed with warnings and reproofs which keep their sins before them. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." The motives, the purposes, and the unbelief, suspicions, and jealousies, may be hid from men, but not from Christ. The True Witness comes as a counselor: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, that has spoken to save them from ruin. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived.^[#23.p10] #10

Those who heed the testimony of warning, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them, in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. This class you will

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ever find in perfect harmony with the testimony of the Spirit of God.

Ministers Should Present This Warning.

Ministers who are preaching present truth should not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans. The testimony of the True Witness is not a smooth message. The Lord does not say to them, You are about right, you have borne chastisement and reproof that you never deserved, you have been discouraged unnecessarily by severity, you are not guilty of the wrongs and sins of which you have been reproved.

The True Witness declares that when you suppose you are really in a good condition of prosperity you are in need of everything. It is not enough for ministers to present theoretical subjects. They should present practical subjects. They need to study the practical lessons Christ gave his disciples, and make a close application of the same to their own souls and to the people. Because Christ bears this rebuking testimony, shall we suppose that he is destitute of tender love to his people? Oh, no! He who died to redeem man from death loves with a divine love. He rebukes those he loves. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." But many will not receive the message Heaven in mercy sends them. They cannot endure to be told of their wrongs, and of their neglect of duty, of their selfishness, their pride, and love of the world. [#23.p11]

#11

I was shown that God has laid upon my husband and myself especial work, to bear a plain testimony to his people, and to cry aloud and spare not, to show the people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins. But there is a class who will not receive the message of reproof, and they raise their hands to shield those whom God would reprove and correct. They will ever be found sympathizing with those whom God would make to feel their true poverty.

The word of the Lord, spoken through his ser-

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vants, is received by many with questionings and fears. And many will defer their obedience to the warning and reproofs given, waiting till every shadow of uncertainty is removed from their minds. The unbelief that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to the evidence God is pleased to give. God requires of his people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not perfect knowledge. The followers of Jesus Christ, those who accept of the light God sends them, must obey the voice of God speaking to them, when there are many other voices crying out against it. It requires discernment to distinguish the voice of God.

Those who will not act when the Lord calls upon them, waiting for more certain evidence, and more favorable opportunities, will walk in darkness, for the light will be withdrawn. The evidence given one day, if rejected, may never be repeated.

Many Doubt Our Work.

Many are tempted in regard to our work, and are calling it in question. Some, in their tempted [#23.p12] condition, charge the difficulties and perplexities of the people of God to the testimonies of reproof we have given to them. The trouble they think is with the ones who bear the message of warning, pointing out the sins and correcting the errors of the people. I was shown that many are deceived by the adversary of souls. They think that the labors of Bro. and Sister White would be acceptable if they would not be continually condemning wrong, and reproving sin. I was shown that this work God had laid upon us. When we are hindered from meeting with the people of God, and bearing our testimony, and counteracting the surmisings and jealousies of the unconsecrated, then Satan presses in his temptations very strongly. Those who have been ever on the questioning, doubting side, feel at liberty to suggest their doubts, and will insinuate, their unbelief. Some have sanctimonious, apparently conscientious and very pious, doubts, which they will cautiously drop, which has tenfold

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more power to strengthen those who are wrong and to lessen our influence and weaken the confidence of God's people in our work, than if they came out more frankly. These poor souls, I saw, were deceived by Satan. They flatter themselves that they are all right, and in favor with God, rich in spiritual discernment, when they are blind, poor, and wretched. They are doing the work of Satan, and thinking they have a zeal for God.

#13 Some will not receive the testimony God has given us to bear, flattering themselves we may be deceived, and they are right. They think the people of God are not in need of plain dealing and of reproof, and that God is with them.^[#23.p13] These tempted ones, whose souls have ever been at war with the faithful reproving of sin, would cry, Speak unto us smooth things. What disposition will these make of the message of the True Witness to the Laodiceans? There can be no deception here. This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. This message must arouse the people of God from their security and dangerous deception in regard to their real standing before God. This testimony, if received, will arouse to action, and lead to self-abasement, and confessions of sins. The True Witness says, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." And again, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." Then comes the promise, "Beloved, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, ever as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

These wrongs and sins, which have brought the people of God in their state of wretchedness, blindness, and poverty, must be seen, and they arouse to zealous repentance, and a putting away of these sins which have brought them into such a deplorable condition of blindness and fearful deception.

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I have been shown that the pointed testimony must live in the church. And this alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be re-proved, sins must be called sins, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people. [#23.p14] #14

Fighting The Spirit Of God.

Those who have a spirit of opposition to the work we have been pressed by the Spirit of God to do for twenty-six years, and who would break down our testimony, I saw, were not fighting against us, but God, who has laid upon us the burden of a work that he has not given to others. Those who would question and quibble, and think it a virtue to doubt, and who would discourage those who have been the means of making our work hard, and of weakening our hopes, faith, and courage, have been the ones to surmise evil, to insinuate suspicious charges, and watch with jealousy for occasions against us. They take it for granted that because we have human weaknesses it is a positive evidence we are wrong, and they are right. If they can find a semblance of anything that they can use to injure us, they do it with a spirit of triumph, and are ready to denounce our work of re-proving wrong and condemning sin, as a harsh, dictatorial spirit.

But while we do not accept of their version of our case as the reason of our afflictions; while we maintain that God has appointed us to a more trying work than any others; we acknowledge with humility of soul, and with repentance, that our faith and courage have been severely tried, and that we have failed sometimes in trusting wholly in God, who has appointed us our work. When we gather courage again, after sore disappointment and trials, we deeply regret that we ever distrusted God, and gave way to human weaknesses, and permitted discouragement to cloud our faith, and lessen our confidence in God. [#23.p15] #15

I have been shown that God's ancient ser-

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vants suffered disappointments and discouragements as well as we poor mortals have. We were in good company; nevertheless this did not excuse us.

As my husband has stood by my side to sustain me in my work, and as he has had a plain testimony to bear in unison with the work of the Spirit of God, many have felt that it was my husband who was injuring them personally, when it was the Lord that laid upon him the burden, and was, through his servant, reproving them, to bring them where they would repent of their wrongs, and have the favor of God.

Those whom God has chosen for an important work have ever been received with distrust and suspicion. Anciently, when Elijah was sent with a message from God to the people, they did not heed the warning. They thought Elijah unnecessarily severe. He must, they thought, have lost his senses, that he would denounce them, the favored people of God, as sinners, and their crimes, so aggravating, that the judgments of God would awaken against them.

Satan and his host have ever been arrayed against those who bear the message of warning and reprove sins. The unconsecrated will be united with the adversary of souls, to make the work of God's faithful servants as hard as possible.

#16 If my husband has been pressed beyond measure, and has become discouraged and desponding; if we have at times seen nothing desirable in life that we should choose it, this is nothing strange or new. Elijah, one of God's great and mighty^[#23.p16] prophets, as he fled for his life from the rage of Jezebel, an infuriated woman, a fugitive, weary and travel worn, desired to die rather than to live. His bitter disappointment in regard to Israel's faithfulness crushed his spirits, and he felt that he could no longer put confidence in man. In the day of Job's affliction and darkness, he utters these words: "Let the day perish wherein I was born."

Those who are not accustomed to feel to the very depths; who have not stood under burdens as a

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cart beneath the sheaves; who have never had their interest identified so closely with the cause and work of God that it seems to be a part of their being, and dearer to them than life, cannot appreciate the feelings of my husband, any more than Israel could appreciate the feelings of Elijah. We deeply regret being disheartened, whatever the circumstances might be.

Ahab's Case A Warning.

When Ahab ruled Israel, the people departed from God and corrupted their ways before him under his perverted rule. "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all of the kings that were before him."[#23.p17]

#17

Ahab was weak in moral power. He did not have a high sense of sacred things. He was selfish and unprincipled. His union by marriage with a woman of decided character, and positive temperament, devoted to idolatry, made them both special agents of Satan to lead the people of God into idolatry and terrible apostasy. The determined spirit of Jezebel molded the character of Ahab. His selfish nature was incapable of appreciating the mercies of God to his people, his obligation to God, as the guardian and leader of Israel. The fear of God was daily growing less in Israel. The blasphemous tokens of their blind idolatry were to be seen among the Israel of God. There were none who dared to expose their lives by openly standing forth in opposition to the prevailing blasphemous idolatry. The altars of Baal, and the priests of Baal who sacrificed to the sun, moon, and stars, were conspicuous everywhere. They had conse-

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crated temples, and groves, wherein was placed the work of men's hands to worship. The benefits which God gave to this people called forth from them no gratitude to the Giver. For all the bounties of Heaven, the running brooks, and streams of living waters, the gentle dew, and showers of rain to refresh the earth, and to cause their fields to bring forth abundantly, they ascribed to the favor of their gods.

Example Of Elijah.

#18 Elijah's faithful soul was grieved. His indignation was aroused, and he was jealous for the glory of God. He saw that Israel was plunged into fearful apostasy. He was overwhelmed with amazement and grief at the apostasy of the^[#23.p18] people when he called to mind the great things that God had wrought for them. But all this was forgotten by the majority of the people. He went before God, and with his soul wrung with anguish, plead for him to save his people if it must be by judgments. He plead with God to withhold from his ungrateful people dew and rain, the treasures of heaven, that apostate Israel might look in vain to their idols of gold, wood, and stone, the sun, moon, and stars, their gods, to water the earth and enrich it, and cause it to bring forth plentifully. God told Elijah he had heard his prayer. He would withhold from his people dew and rain, until they should turn unto him with repentance.

God had especially guarded his people from mingling with the idolatrous nations around them, lest their hearts should be deceived by their attractive groves and shrines, temples and altars, all of which were arranged in the most expensive, alluring manner, to pervert the senses, so that God would be supplanted in their minds.

Jericho was a city devoted to the most extravagant idolatry. The inhabitants were very wealthy. All the riches that God had given them they accredited to the gifts of their gods. Gold and silver were in abundance. Like the people before the flood, they

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were corrupt and blasphemous. They insulted and provoked the God of Heaven by their wicked works. God's judgments awakened against Jericho. It was a stronghold. But the Captain of the Lord's host came himself from Heaven to lead the armies of Heaven in the attack upon the city. Angels of God laid hold of the massive walls and brought them to the ground. God had said that the city of Jericho should be accursed, and that all should perish except Rahab and her household. They should be saved because of the favor that Rahab showed the messengers of the Lord. The word of the Lord to the people was, "And ye in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it." "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." Josh. 6:18, 26. #19

God was very particular in regard to Jericho, lest the people should be charmed with the things that the inhabitants had worshiped, and their hearts be diverted from God. He guards his people by most positive commands. Notwithstanding the solemn injunction from God by the mouth of Joshua, Achan ventured to transgress. His covetousness led him to take the treasures God had forbidden him to touch, because his curse was upon it. And because of this man's sin, the Israel of God was as weak as water before their enemies.

Achan's Case Shows How God Regards Sin.

Joshua and the elders of Israel were in great affliction. They lay before the ark of God in most abject humility, because the Lord was wroth with his people. Joshua and the elders of Israel prayed and wept before God. The Lord spoke to Joshua, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath

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#20 sinned, and they_[#23.p20] have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you."

I have been shown that God has here illustrated how he regards sin among those who profess to be his commandment-keeping people. Those whom he has especially honored with witnessing the remarkable exhibitions of his power, as did ancient Israel, and that will venture to disregard his express directions, will be subjects of his wrath. God would teach his people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to him, and not to be lightly regarded. He shows us that when his people are found in sin, they should at once take decided measures to put the sin from them, that his frown should not rest upon all his people. But if those in responsible positions pass over the sins of the people, his frown will be upon them, and the people of God as a body, will be held responsible for the sins that exist in their midst. God, in his dealings with his people in the past, shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs that exist among them. One sinner may diffuse darkness which will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, then they should earnestly seek God in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve_[#23.p21] God's Spirit are searched out and put away from among them.

Responsibility For Sins We Do Not Reprove.

The prejudice which has arisen against us because we have reprovved wrongs that God has shown me existed, and the cry that has been raised of harshness

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and severity, is unjust. God bids us speak, and we #21 will not be silent. If wrongs are apparent among his people, and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are guilty alike with the sinner, and will receive the displeasure of God just as surely as the sinner; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty. I have been in vision pointed to many instances where the displeasure of God has been incurred by a neglect on the part of his servants to deal with the wrongs and sins existing in their midst. Those men who have excused wrongs have been thought by the people to be very amiable, and of lovely disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain and scriptural duty. The task was not agreeable to their feeling; therefore they avoided it.

The spirit of hatred which has existed with some because the wrongs among God's people have been reprov'd, has brought blindness and a fearful deception upon their own souls, making it impossible for them to discriminate between right and wrong. They have put out their own spiritual eyesight. They may witness wrongs, but they do not feel as did #22 Joshua, and humble their [#23.p22]souls in humiliation because the danger of souls is felt by them.

The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God's professed people. This is forcibly set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work under the figure of the men, each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. "And the

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Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."

#23 Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God, and murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them, and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! These, unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work, and holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of all the wicked, represented by the^[#23.p23] five men bearing slaughter weapons. Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those "that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done" in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in an agony, even sighing and crying. Read Ezekiel, chapter nine.

But the general slaughter of all those who do not thus see the wide contrast between sin and righteousness, and do not feel as those do who stand in the counsel of God and receive the mark, is described in the order to the five men with slaughter weapons: "Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary."

God said to Joshua (in the case of Achan's sins), "Neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you." How does this instance compare with the course pursued by those

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who will not raise their voice against sin and wrong; but whose sympathies are ever found with those who trouble the camp of Israel with their sins? Said God to Joshua, "Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." He pronounced the punishment which should follow the transgression of his covenant.

Joshua then began a diligent search to find out^[#23.p24] the guilty one. He took Israel by their tribes, and then, by their families, and next, individually. Achan was designated as the guilty one. But that the matter might be plain to all Israel, that there should be no occasion given them to murmur, and to say that the guiltless was made to suffer, Joshua used policy. He knew that Achan was the transgressor, and that he had concealed his sin, and provoked God against his people. Joshua discreetly induced Achan to make confession of his sin, that God's honor and justice should be vindicated before Israel. "And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me." #24

"And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they^[#23.p25] brought #25 them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them

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with stones."

God said to Joshua, that not only had Achan taken the things which he had positively charged them not to take, lest they be accursed, but had stolen, and also had dissembled. The Lord said that Jericho and all its spoils should be consumed, except the gold and silver, which was to be reserved for the treasury of the Lord. The victory obtained in taking Jericho was not through warfare, or the exposure of the people. The Captain of the Lord's host had led the armies of Heaven. The battle was the Lord's. The children of Israel did not strike a blow. It was the Lord who fought the battle. The victory and glory were the Lord's. The spoils were his. He directed it all to be consumed, except the gold and silver which he reserved for his treasury. Achan understood well the reserve made, and that the treasures of gold and silver which he coveted were the Lord's. He stole from God's treasury for his own benefit.

Covetousness Among God's People.

I saw that many who profess to be keeping the commandments of God are appropriating to their own use the means which the Lord has entrusted to them, and which should come into his treasury. They rob God in tithes and in offerings. They dissemble, and withhold from God to their own hurt. They bring leanness and poverty upon themselves, and darkness upon the church, ^[#23,p26]because of their covetousness, and in dissembling, in robbing God in tithes and in offerings.

I saw that many souls will sink in darkness because of their covetousness. The plain, straight testimony must live in the church, or the curse of God will as surely rest upon his people as it did upon ancient Israel, because of their sins. God holds his people, as a body, responsible for sins existing in individuals among them. If there is a neglect with the leaders of the church, to diligently search out the sins which bring the displeasure of God as a body,

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they become responsible for these sins. But this is the nicest work that men ever engaged in, to deal with minds. I have been shown that all are not fitted to correct the erring. They have not wisdom to deal justly, while loving mercy. They will not be inclined to see the necessity of mingling love and tender compassion with faithful reproof of wrongs. Some will ever be needlessly severe, and will not feel the necessity of the injunction of the apostle, "And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." There are many who do not have the discretion of Joshua, and who have no special duty to search out wrongs, and to deal promptly with the sins existing among them. Let not such hinder those who have the burden of this work upon them. Let them not stand in the way of those who have this duty to do. Some make it a point to question, and doubt, and find fault, because others do the work that God has not laid upon them. These stand directly in the way to hinder those upon whom God has laid the burden of reproof, and of correcting the sins that^[#23.p27] are prevailing, that his ^{#27} frown may be turned away from his people. Should a case like Achan's be among us, there are many who would accuse those who might act the part of Joshua in searching out the wrong, as having a fault-finding, wicked spirit. God is not to be trifled with, and his warnings disregarded with impunity by a perverse people.

I was shown that the manner of Achan's confession was similar to the confessions that some have made, and will make, among us. They hide their wrongs and refuse to make a voluntary confession, until God searches them out, and then they acknowledge their sins. A few persons pass on in a course of wrong, until they become hardened. They may even know that the church is burdened, as Achan knew that Israel were made weak before their enemies because of his guilt. Yet their consciences do not condemn them. They will not relieve the church by hum-

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bling their proud, rebellious hearts before God, and put away their wrongs. God's displeasure is upon his people, and he will not manifest his power in their midst while sins are existing among them, and fostered by those in responsible positions.

Those who work in the fear of God to rid the church of hindrances, and to correct grievous wrongs, that the people of God may see the necessity of abhorring sin, and that they may prosper in purity, and the name of God be glorified, will ever meet with resisting influences from the unconsecrated. Zephaniah describes the true state of this class, and the terrible judgments that will come upon them.

#28 [#23.p28] "And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees; that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil." "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."

Confessions Made Too Late.

When finally a crisis comes, as it surely will, and God speaks in behalf of his people, those who have sinned, those who have been a cloud of darkness, who have stood directly in the way of God's working for his people, may become alarmed at the

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length they have gone in murmuring and in bringing discouragement upon the cause, they will be terrified, and, like Achan, acknowledge that they have sinned. But their confessions will be too late. They are not of the right kind for themselves, although they may relieve the cause of God. Their confessions are not made^[#23.p29] because of a conviction of their true state, #29 and a sense of how displeasing their course has been to God. God may give this class another test, another proving, and let them show that they are no more prepared to stand free from all rebellion and sin than before their confessions were made. They are inclined to ever be on the side of wrong. And when the call is made for those who will be on the Lord's side to make a decided move, to vindicate the right, they will manifest their true position. Those who have been nearly all their lives controlled by a spirit as foreign from the Spirit of God as Achan's, will, when the time comes for decided action from all, be very passive. They will not claim to be on either side. The power of Satan has so long held them that they seem blinded, and have no inclination to stand in defense of right. If they are not taking a determined course on the wrong side, it is not because they have a clear sense of the right, but because they dare not.

I have been shown that God will not be trifled with. It is time of conflict when the true colors should be flung to the breeze. It is then the standard-bearers need to be firm and let their true position be known. It is then the skill of every true soldier for the right is tested; shirks can never wear the laurels of victory. Those who are true and loyal will not conceal the fact, but will put heart and might in the work, and venture their all in the struggle, let the battle turn as it will. God is a sin-hating God. And those who will encourage the sinner, saying, It is well with thee, God will curse.

Confessions of sin made at the right time to^[#23.p30] relieve the people of God will be accepted of #30 him. But there are those among us who will make

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confessions, as did Achan, too late to save themselves. God may prove them and give them another trial, for the sake of his people to evidence to them that they will not endure one test, one proving of God. They are not in harmony with right. They despise the straight testimony that reaches the heart, and they would rejoice to see everyone silenced that gives reproof.

The people of Israel had been gradually losing their fear and reverence for God, until his word through Joshua had no weight with them. "In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun."

While Israel was apostatizing, Elijah was a true prophet of God. He remained loyal and true to God. His faithful soul was greatly distressed as he saw that unbelief and infidelity were fast separating the children of Israel from God. Elijah prayed that God would save his people. He entreated that the Lord would not wholly cast away his sinning people, but by his judgments, if necessary, arouse them to repentance, and not permit them to go on to still greater lengths in sin, and thus provoke him to destroy them as a nation.

The message of the Lord came to Elijah to go to Ahab, with the denunciations of his judgments, because of the sins of Israel. Elijah traveled day and night until he reached the palace of Ahab. He solicited no admission, and waited not to be formally announced. All unexpectedly to Ahab,^[#23.p31] Elijah stands before the astonished king of Samaria in the course garments usually worn by the prophets. He made no apology for his abrupt appearance, without invitation. He raised his hands to heaven, and solemnly affirmed by the living God, who made the heavens and the earth, the judgments which would come upon Israel: "There shall be neither dew nor rain

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these years, but according to my word."

This startling denunciation of God's judgments because of the sins of Israel fell like a thunderbolt upon the apostate king. He seemed to be paralyzed with amazement and terror; and before he could recover from his astonishment, Elijah without waiting to see the effect of his message, left as suddenly as he came. His work was to speak the word of woe from God, and he instantly withdrew. His word had locked up the treasures of heaven, and his word was the only key which could open them again.

The Lord knew that there was no safety for his servant among the children of Israel. He would not trust him with apostate Israel; but sent Elijah to find an asylum among a heathen nation. He directed him to a woman that was a widow, who was in such poverty that she could barely sustain life with the most meager fare. A heathen woman, living up to the best light she had, was in a more acceptable state with God than the widows of Israel who had been blessed with especial privileges, and great light, and who did not live according to the light which God had given them. As the Hebrews rejected light, they were left in darkness. God would not trust his servant among his people who had provoked his divine anger.^[#23.p32]

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Now there is an opportunity for apostate Ahab and pagan Jezebel to test the power of their gods, and to prove the word of Elijah false. Jezebel's prophets are numbered by hundreds. Against them all, stands Elijah, alone. His word has locked heaven. If Baal can give dew and rain, and cause the vegetation to flourish, if he can cause the brooks and streams of water to flow on as usual, independent of the treasures of heaven, in the showers of rain, then let the king of Israel worship him, and the people say he is God.

Elijah was a man subject to like passions as ourselves. His mission to Ahab, and the terrible denunciation to him of the judgments of God, required courage and faith. On his way to Samaria, the perpetually flowing streams, the hills covered with ver-

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ture, the forests of stately, flourishing trees, everything his eye rested upon, flourishing in beauty and glory, would naturally suggest unbelief. How can all these things in nature so flourishing be burned with drought? How can these streams that water the land, and that have never been known to cease their flow, become dry? But Elijah did not cherish unbelief. He went forth on his mission at the peril of his life. He fully believed that God would humble his apostate people, and through the visitation of his judgments would bring them to humiliation and repentance. He ventured everything in the mission before him.

When Ahab recovers in a degree from his astonishment at the words of Elijah, the prophet was gone. He made diligent inquiry for him, but no one had seen him or could give any information respecting him. Ahab informed Jezebel^[#23.p33] of the word of woe that Elijah had uttered in his presence, and her hatred against the prophet was expressed to the priests of Baal. They unite with her in denouncing and cursing the prophet of Jehovah. The news of the prophet's denunciations are spread all through the land, arousing the fears of some and the wrath of many.

After a few months, the earth, unrefreshed by dew or rain, becomes dry, and vegetation withers. The streams of water that have never been known to cease their flow, decrease, and the brooks of water dry up. Jezebel's prophets offer their sacrifices to their gods, and call upon them night and day to refresh the earth by dew and rain. But their incantations and deceptions formerly practiced to deceive the people do not answer the purpose now. The priests have done everything to appease the anger of their gods, and with a perseverance and zeal worthy of a better cause, have they lingered around their pagan altars, while the flames of sacrifice burn on all the high places, and the fearful cries and entreaties of the priests of Baal are heard night after night through doomed Samaria. But the clouds do not appear in the

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heavens to cut off the burning rays of the sun. The word of Elijah stands firm, and nothing that Baal's priests can do will change the word spoken by Elijah.

An entire year passes, and another has commenced, and yet there is no rain. The earth is parched, as though a fire had passed over it. The flourishing fields become as the scorching desert. The air becomes dry and suffocating, the dust storm blinds the eyes, and nearly stops the breath. The groves of Baal are leafless, and the forest trees^[#23.p34] #34 give no shade, but appear as skeletons. Hunger and thirst are telling upon man and beast with fearful mortality.

The Impenitent People Unsubdued By Judgments.

All this evidence of God's justice and judgment does not awaken Israel to repentance. Jezebel is filled with insane madness. She will not bend nor yield to the God of Heaven. Baal's prophets, Ahab, Jezebel, and nearly the whole of Israel, charged their calamity upon Elijah. Ahab had sent to every kingdom and nation in search of Elijah, and he required an oath of the kingdoms and nations of Israel, that they knew nothing in regard to the strange prophet. Elijah locked heaven with his word, and had taken the key with him, and he could not be found.

Jezebel then decided, as she could not make Elijah feel her murderous power, that she would be revenged by destroying the prophets of God in Israel. No one who professed to be a prophet of God should live. This determined, infuriated woman executed her work of madness in slaying the Lord's prophets. Baal's priests, and nearly all Israel, were so far deluded that they thought if the prophets of God were slain the calamity under which they were suffering would cease.

But the second year passes, and the pitiless heavens give no rain. Drought and famine are doing their sad work, and yet the apostate Israelites do not humble their sinful, proud hearts before God. But

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#35 they murmur and complain against the prophet of God who has brought this dreadful state of things upon them. Fathers and^[#23.p35] mothers see their children perish with no power to relieve them. And yet they were in such terrible darkness that they could not see that the justice of God was awakened against them because of their sins, and that this terrible calamity was sent in mercy to them, to save them from fully denying and forsaking the God of their fathers.

It will cost Israel suffering and great affliction to bring them to that repentance necessary in order to recover their lost faith, and a clear sense of their responsibility to God. Their apostasy was more dreadful than drought or famine. Elijah waited, and prayed in faith through the long years of drought and famine, that the hearts of Israel, through their affliction, might be turned from their idolatry, to allegiance to God. Notwithstanding all their sufferings, they stood firm in their idolatry, and looked upon the prophet of God as the cause of their calamity. And if they could have had Elijah in their power they would have delivered him to Jezebel, that she might satisfy her revenge by taking his life. Because Elijah dared to utter the word of woe which God had bidden him, he had made himself the object of their hatred. They could not see God's hand in the judgments under which they were suffering because of their sins. They charged them to the man, Elijah. They abhorred not the sins which had brought them under the chastening rod, but hated the faithful prophet, God's instrument to denounce their sins and calamity. "And it came to pass, after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth."^[#23.p36]

#36 Elijah hesitated not to start on his perilous journey. He had been hated, and hunted from city to city by the mandate of the king, for three years, and the whole nation had given their oath that the prophet could not be found. And now Elijah, by the

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word of God, is to present himself before Ahab. Through the apostasy of all Israel, the governor of Ahab's house has proved faithful to God, while his master is a worshiper of Baal. He had, at the risk of his own life, preserved the prophets of God, by hiding them by fifties in a cave, and feeding them. While the servant of Ahab is searching throughout the kingdom for springs and brooks of water, Elijah presented himself before him. Obadiah revered the prophet of God, and as Elijah sends him with a message to the king, he is greatly terrified. He sees danger and death to himself and also to Elijah. He pleads earnestly that his life might not be sacrificed; but Elijah assures Obadiah with an oath that he will see Ahab that day. The prophet will not go to Ahab but as one of God's messengers to command respect, and he sends by Obadiah a message, "Behold, Elijah is here." If Ahab wants to see Elijah, he has now the opportunity to come to him. Elijah will not go to Ahab.

The king heard the message with astonishment, mingled with terror, that Elijah, whom he feared and hated, was coming to meet him. He had long sought for the prophet that he might destroy him, and he knew that Elijah would not expose his life to come to him, unless guarded, or with some terrible denunciation. He remembers the withered arm of Jeroboam, and he decides that it^[#23.p37] is not safe #37 to lift up his hand against the messenger of God. And with fear and trembling, and with a large retinue, he hastens with an imposing display of armies to meet Elijah. And as he meets the man he has so long sought for, face to face, he dares not harm him. The king, so passionate, and filled with hatred against Elijah, seemed to be powerless and unmanned in his presence. As he met the prophet, he could not refrain from speaking the language of his heart, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah, indignant and jealous for the honor and glory of God, answered the charge of Ahab with boldness, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have for-

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saken the commandments of the Lord.”

Elijah Firmly Reproves The People.

The prophet, as God's messenger, had reproved their sins, denouncing upon them the judgments of God, because of their wickedness. Elijah, standing alone in conscious innocence, firm in his integrity, surrounded by the train of armed men, shows no timidity, neither does he show the least reverence to the king. The man whom God has talked with, who has a clear sense of how God regards man in his sinful depravity, has no apology to make to Ahab, nor homage to give him. Elijah, as God's messenger, now commanded, and Ahab obeyed at once the command, as though Elijah was monarch, and he the subject.

#38 Elijah demands a convocation of all Israel at Carmel, and also of all the prophets of Baal. The awful solemnity in the looks of the prophet gives him the appearance of one standing in the ^[#23.p38]presence of the Lord God of Israel. The condition of Israel in their apostasy demanded a firm demeanor, stern speech, and commanding authority. God prepares the message to fit the time and occasion. Sometimes God puts his Spirit upon his messengers to sound an alarm day and night, as did his messenger John, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Then, again, men of action are needed, who will not be swerved from duty, but whose energy will arouse, and demand, "who will be on the Lord's side," let him come over with us. God will have a fitting message to meet his people in their various conditions.

Swift messengers are sent throughout the kingdom with the message from Elijah. Representatives are sent from towns, villages, cities, and families. All seem in haste to answer the call, as though some wonderful miracle was to be performed. Ahab, according to Elijah's command, gathers the prophets of Baal at Carmel. The heart of Israel's apostate leader is overawed, and he tremblingly follows the

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direction of the stern prophet of God.

The assembly was upon Mount Carmel, a place of beauty when the dew and rain fall upon it, causing it to flourish. But now the beauty of Carmel has languished under the curse of God. Upon Mount Carmel, which was the excellency of groves and of flowers, Baal's prophets had erected their altars for their pagan worship. This mountain was conspicuous, and overlooked the surrounding countries. As upon Mount Carmel. God had been signally dishonored by idolatrous worship, Elijah chose this as the place most conspicuous for the display of God's power and to vindicate^[#23,p39] his honor. It was in sight of a large portion of the kingdom. Jezebel's prophets, eight hundred and fifty in number, like a regiment of soldiers prepared for battle, march out in a body with instrumental music, and imposing display. But there was trembling in their hearts as they considered that, at the word of this prophet of Jehovah, the land of Israel had been destitute of dew and rain three years. They felt that some fearful crisis was at hand. They had trusted in their gods, but could not unsay the words of Elijah, and prove him false. But their gods were indifferent to their frantic cries, prayers, and sacrifices. #39

Elijah, early in the morning, stands upon Mount Carmel, surrounded by apostate Israel and the prophets of Baal. He stands undaunted, he, a lone man, in that vast multitude. The man whom the whole kingdom has charged with its weight of woe is before them, unterrified, unattended by visible armies and imposing display. He stands, clad with his coarse garment, with awful solemnity in his countenance, as though fully aware of his sacred commission, as the servant of God, to execute his commands. Elijah fastened his eyes upon the highest ridge of mountains, where had once stood the altar of Jehovah, when the mountain was covered with flourishing trees and flowers. The blight of God was now upon it, and all the desolation of Israel was in full view of the ne-

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glected and torn-down altar of Jehovah, and in sight were the altars of Baal. Ahab stands at the head of the priests of Baal, and all wait in anxious, fearful #40 expectation for the words of Elijah.[#23.p40]

In the full light of the sun, surrounded by thousands, men of war, the prophets of Baal, and the monarch of Israel, stands the defenseless man, Elijah, apparently alone, yet not alone. The most powerful host of Heaven surrounds him. Angels that excel in strength have come from Heaven to shield the faithful and righteous prophet.

Elijah, with stern and commanding voice, cries out, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." Not one in that vast assembly dare utter one word for God, and show their loyalty to Jehovah.

What astonishing deception and fearful blindness had, like a dark cloud, covered Israel. This blindness and apostasy had not closed about them suddenly, but it had come upon them gradually, as they had not heeded the word of reproof and warning which the Lord had sent to them because of their pride and their sins. They, in this fearful crisis, in the presence of the idolatrous priests and the apostate king, remain neutral. If God abhors one sin above another, of which his people are guilty, it is doing nothing in a case of emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime, and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.

False Teachers Exposed.

All Israel is silent. Again the voice of Elijah is heard addressing them, "I only am a prophet of the Lord, whilst Baal's prophets are four hundred and #41 fifty men. Let them therefore give us[#23.p41] two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock,

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and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made."

The proposition of Elijah is reasonable. The people dare not evade it, and they find courage to answer, "The word is good." The prophets of Baal dare not dissent or evade the matter. God has directed this trial, and has prepared confusion for the authors of idolatry, and a signal triumph for his name. The priests of Baal dare not do otherwise than accept the conditions. With terror and guiltiness in their hearts, but outwardly bold and defiant, they rear their altar, lay on the wood and the victim, and then begin their incantations, their chanting and bawling, characteristic of pagan worship. Their shrill cries re-echo through forests and mountains, "O Baal, hear us." The priests gather in an army about their altars, and with leaping and unnatural gestures, and writhing and screaming, and stamping, and tearing their hair, and^[#23.p42] cutting themselves, they manifest apparent #42 sincerity.

But the morning is gone, and noon has come, and yet there has been no move of the gods in pity to Baal's priests, the deluded worshipers of idols. No voice answers their frantic cries. The priests are continually devising how, by deception, they can kindle the fire upon the altars, and give the glory to Baal. But the firm eye of Elijah watches every motion. Eight hundred voices become hoarse. Their garments are covered with blood, and yet their frantic excitement

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does not abate. Their pleadings are mingled with cursings to their sun-god that he does not send fire for their altars. Elijah stands by, watching with eagle eye lest any deception should be practiced; for he knew if they could, by any device, kindle their altar-fire, he would be torn in pieces upon the spot. He wishes to show the people the folly of their doubts, and their halting between two opinions, when they have the wonderful works of God's majestic power in their behalf, and innumerable evidences of his infinite mercies and loving-kindness toward them. "And it came to pass, at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."[#23,p43]

How gladly would Satan, who fell like lightning from Heaven, come to the help of those whom he had deceived, and whose minds he had controlled, and who were fully devoted to his service. Gladly would he have sent the lightning and kindled their sacrifices; but Jehovah had set Satan's bounds. He had restrained his power, and all his devices could not convey one spark to Baal's altars. Evening draws on. The prophets of Baal are wearied, faint, and confused. One suggests one thing, and one, another, until they cease their efforts. Their shrieks and curses no longer resound over Mount Carmel. With weakness and despair, they retire from the contest.

The people have witnessed the terrible demonstrations of the unreasonable, frantic priests. They have witnessed their leaping upon the altar, as though they would grasp the burning rays from the sun to serve their altars. They have become tired of

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the exhibitions of demonism, of pagan idolatry; and they feel earnest and anxious to hear what Elijah will speak.

Elijah's turn has now come. "And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name; and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the^[#23.p44] bullock in pieces, and laid ^{#44}him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah, the prophet, came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Elijah, at the hour of evening sacrifice, repairs the altar of God which the apostasy of Israel has allowed the priests of Baal to tear down. He does not call upon one of the people to aid him in his laborious work. The altars of Baal are all prepared; but Elijah turns to the broken-down altar of God, which is more

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sacred and precious to him in its unsightly ruins than all the magnificent altars of Baal.

#45 Elijah respected the Lord's covenant with his people, although they had apostatized. With calmness and solemnity, he repaired the broken-down^[#23.p45] altar with twelve stones, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. The disappointed priests of Baal, wearied with their vain, frenzied efforts, were sitting to see what Elijah would do. They were filled with fear and hatred toward the prophet for proposing the test which had exposed their weakness and the inefficiency of their gods.

The people of Israel stand spell-bound, pale, anxious, and almost breathless with awe, while Elijah calls upon Jehovah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The people have witnessed the fanatical, unreasonable frenzy of the prophets of Baal. Now they are privileged to witness the calm and awe-inspiring deportment of Elijah, in contrast. He reminded the people of their degeneracy, which had awakened the wrath of God against them, and then calls upon them to humble their hearts, and turn to the God of their fathers, that his curse may be removed from them. Ahab and his idolatrous priests are looking on with amazement mingled with terror. They await the result with anxious, solemn silence.

#46 After the victim was laid upon the altar, he commanded the people to flood with water the sacrifice, and the altar, and fill the trench round about the altar. Elijah then reverentially bows before the unseen God, raises his hands toward Heaven, and offers a calm and simple prayer, unattended with violent gestures, or contortions of the body. No shrieks resound over Carmel's height. A solemn silence, which is oppressive to the priests of Baal, rests upon them all^[#23.p46] In his prayer, Elijah makes use of no extravagant expressions. He prays to Jehovah as though he was nigh, witnessing the whole scene, and hearing his sincere, fervent, yet simple prayer. Baal's priests had screamed, and foamed, and leaped, and prayed,

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very long, from morning until near evening. Elijah's prayer was very short, earnest, reverential, and sincere. No sooner had his prayer been uttered, than flames of fire descend, in a distinct manner, from Heaven like a brilliant flash of lightning, kindling the wood for sacrifice, and consuming the victim, licking up the water in the trench, and consuming even the stones of the altar. The brilliancy of the blaze is painful to the eyes of the multitude and illumines the mountain. The people of the kingdom of Israel, not gathered upon the mount, are watching with interest the gathering of the people upon the mount. As the fire descends, they witness it, and are amazed at the sight. It resembles the pillar of fire at the Red Sea, which by night separated the children of Israel from the Egyptian host.

The people upon the mountain prostrate themselves in terror and awe before the unseen God. They cannot look upon the bright, consuming fire sent from Heaven. They fear that they will be consumed in their apostasy and sins. They cry out with one voice, which resounds over the mountain, and echoes to the plains below them with terrible distinctness, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." Israel is at last aroused and undeceived. They see their sin, and how greatly they have dishonored God. Their anger is aroused against the prophets of [#23.p47] Baal. With fearful terror, Ahab and Baal's #47 priests witnessed the wonderful exhibition of Jehovah's power. Again is heard, in startling words of command, the voice of Elijah to the people, "Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape." And the people were ready to obey the word of Elijah. They seized the false prophets who had deluded them, and brought them to the brook Kishon, and there Elijah, with his own hand, slew these idolatrous priests.

The judgments of God have been executed upon the false priests; the people have confessed their sins, and have acknowledged their father's God; and now the withering curse of God is to be with-

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drawn, and he will again refresh the earth with dew and rain, renewing his blessings unto his people.

Elijah addressed Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain." While Ahab went up to feast, Elijah went up from the fearful sacrifice, to the top of Mount Carmel to pray. His work of slaying the pagan priests did not unfit him for the solemn exercise of prayer. He had performed the will of God. After he had, as God's instrument, done what he could to remove the cause of Israel's apostasy, in slaying the idolatrous priests, he could do no more. He then intercedes in behalf of sinning, apostate Israel. In the most painful position, he bowed with his face between his knees, and most earnestly supplicated God to send rain. Six times successively hesent his servant to see if there was any visible token that God had heard his prayer. He would not become^(#23.p48) impatient and faithless because the Lord did not immediately give the token that his prayer was heard. He continued in earnest prayer, sending his servant seven times, to see if God had granted any signal. His servant returned the sixth time from his outlook toward the sea, with the discouraging report that there was no sign of clouds forming in the brassy heavens. The seventh time, he informed Elijah that there was a small cloud to be seen, about the size of a man's hand. This was enough to satisfy the faith of Elijah. He did not wait for the heavens to gather blackness, to make the matter sure. In that small, rising cloud, his faith hears the sound of abundance of rain. Elijah's works are in accordance with his faith. He sends a message to Ahab by his servant, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not."

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Elijah's Humility.

Here Elijah ventured something upon his faith. He did not wait for sight. "And it came to pass, in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And

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Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."

Elijah had passed through great excitement and labor during the day; but the Spirit of the Lord came upon him because he had been obedient, and had done his will in executing the idolatrous priests. Some would be ready to say, What a hard, cruel man Elijah must have been!^[#23.p49] And anyone who shall #49 defend the honor of God at any risk, will bring censure and condemnation upon himself from a large class. The rain began to descend. It was night, and the blinding rain prevented Ahab from seeing his course. Elijah, nerved by the Spirit and power of God, girded his coarse garment about him, and ran before the chariot of Ahab, guiding his course to the entrance of the city. The prophet of God had humiliated Ahab before his people. He had slain his idolatrous priests, and now he wished to show to Israel that he acknowledges Ahab as his king. As an act of special homage, he guided his chariot, running before it to the entrance of the gate of the city.

Here is a lesson for young men who profess to be servants of God, bearing his message, who are exalted in their own estimation. There is nothing remarkable they can trace in their experience, as could Elijah, yet they feel above performing duties which appear to them menial. They will not come down from their ministerial dignity to do needful service, fearing they are doing the work of a servant. All such should learn from the example of Elijah. His word locked the treasures of heaven, the dew and rain, from the earth, three years. His word alone was the key to unlock heaven, and bring showers of rain. He was honored of God as he offered his simple prayer in the presence of the king and the thousands of Israel, and, in answer, fire flashes from heaven, and kindles the fire upon the altar of sacrifice. His hand executed the judgment of God in slaying eight hundred and fifty priests of Baal; and yet, after the^[#23.p50] exhaust- #50

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ing toil of the day, he who could bring down fire from heaven, and bring the clouds and the rain, after a day of most signal triumph, was willing to perform the service of a menial, and run before the chariot of Ahab in the darkness, and wind, and rain, to serve the sovereign he had not feared to rebuke to his face because of his crimes and sins. The king passed within the gates. Elijah wrapt himself in his mantle, and lay upon the bare earth.

Elijah In Despondency.

After Elijah had shown such undaunted courage in a contest between life and death, after he had triumphed over the king, priest, and people, we would naturally suppose that he would never give way to despondency, or be awed into timidity.

After his first appearance to Ahab, denouncing upon him the judgments of God because of his and Israel's apostasy, God directed his course from Jezebel's power to a place of safety in the mountains, by the brook Cherith. He honored Elijah by sending food to him morning and evening, by an angel of Heaven. Then, as the brook became dry, he sent him to the widow of Serepta, and wrought a miracle daily, to keep the widow's family and Elijah in food. After he had been blessed with evidences of such love and care from God, we would suppose Elijah would never distrust God. But the apostle tells us he was a man of like passions as we, and subject, as we are, to temptations.

#51 Ahab related to Jezebel the wonderful events of the day, and the wonderful exhibitions of the^[#23.p51] power of God, showing that Jehovah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, was God, and that Elijah had slain the prophets of Baal. This woman was hardened in sin, and she became infuriated. Jezebel, bold, defiant, and determined in her idolatry, declared to Ahab that Elijah should not live.

That night a messenger aroused the weary prophet, and delivered the word of Jezebel, in the

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name of her pagan gods, that she would, in the presence of Israel, do to Elijah as he had done to the priests of Baal. Elijah should have met this threat and oath of Jezebel with an appeal for protection to the God of Heaven, who had commissioned him to do the work he had done. He should have told the messenger that the God in whom he trusted would be his protector against the hatred and threats of Jezebel. But the faith and courage of Elijah seem to forsake him. He starts up from his slumbers bewildered. The rain is pouring from the heavens, and darkness is on every side. He loses sight of God. He flees for his life as though the avenger of blood was close behind him. He leaves his servant behind him, on the way, and in the morning, he is far from the habitations of men, upon a dreary desert, alone.

"And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-Sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better [#23.p52] than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under #52 a juniper tree, behold then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?"

Elijah should have trusted in God who had warned him when to flee, and where to find an asylum from the hatred of Jezebel, secure from the dili-

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gent search of Ahab. The Lord had not warned him, at this time, to flee. He had not waited for the Lord to speak to him. He moved rashly. God would have shielded his servant, and would have given him another signal victory in Israel, in sending his judgments upon Jezebel, had he waited with faith and patience.

Weary and prostrate, Elijah sat down to rest. He was discouraged, and felt like murmuring. He said, "Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." He feels that life is no more desirable. He expected, after the signal display of God's power in the presence of Israel, that they would be true and faithful to God. He expected that Jezebel [#23.p53] would no longer have influence over the mind of Ahab, and that there would be a general revolution in the kingdom of Israel. When the threatening message which has come from Jezebel is delivered to him, he forgets that God is the same all-powerful and pitiful God that he was when he prayed to him for fire from heaven, and it came, and for rain, and it came. God had granted every request; yet Elijah is a fugitive, far from the homes of men, and wishing never to look upon man again.

God Does Not Forsake His Desponding Servant.

How did God look upon his suffering servant? Did he forsake him because of despondency and despair had seized him? Oh, no. Elijah was prostrated with discouragement. All day had he toiled without food. When he guided the chariot of Ahab, running before it to the gate of the city, he was strong of courage. He had high hopes of Israel, that, as a nation, they would return to their allegiance to God, and again be re-instated in his favor. But the reaction which frequently follows elevation of faith, marked and glorious success, was pressing upon Elijah. He was exalted to Pisgah's top, to be humiliated in the lowest valley in faith and feeling. But God's eye is still upon his servant. He loves him no less while he is

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feeling broken-hearted and forsaken of God and man, than when, in answer to his prayer, the fire flashed from heaven, illuminating Carmel.

Those who have not borne weighty responsibilities,^[#23.p54] who have not been accustomed to feel #54 very deeply, cannot understand the feelings of Elijah, and be prepared to give him the tender sympathy he deserves. God knows, and can read, the heart's sore anguish under temptation and sore conflict. As Elijah slept under the juniper tree, a soft touch and pleasant voice aroused him. He starts at once in his terror, as if to flee, as though his enemy, in pursuit of his life, had indeed found him. But in the pitying face of love bent upon him, he sees not the face of an enemy, but a friend. An angel of God has been sent with food from heaven to sustain the faithful servant of God. His voice says to Elijah, "Arise and eat." After Elijah had partaken of the refreshment prepared for him, he again slumbered. The second time the angel of God ministers to the wants of Elijah. He touches the exhausted, weary man, and in pitying tenderness says to him, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." Elijah was strengthened, and pursued his journey to Horeb. He was in a wilderness. He lodged in a cave for protection at night from the wild beasts.

Here God met with Elijah through one of his angels, and inquired of him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" I sent thee to the brook Cherith, I sent thee to the widow of Sarepta, I sent thee to Samaria with a message to Ahab, but who sent you this long journey into the wilderness? And what errand have you here? Elijah mourns out his bitterness of soul to the Lord. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of^[#23.p55] Israel have for- #55 saken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great

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and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind and earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Then the Lord manifests himself to Elijah showing him that quiet trust, and firm reliance upon him, will ever find him a present help in time of need.

I have been shown that my husband has erred in giving way to despondency, and distrusting God. Time and again has God revealed himself to him by remarkable evidences of his care, love, and power. But when he has seen that his interest and jealousy for God and his cause have not been understood or appreciated, he has at times given way to discouragement and to^[#23.p56] despair. God has given my husband and myself a special and important work to do in his cause, to reprove and counsel his people. When we see our reproofs slighted, and are repaid with hatred instead of sympathy, then we have frequently let go our faith and trust in the God of Israel; and, like Elijah, we have yielded to despondency and despair. Here has been the great error in the life of my husband, his becoming discouraged because his brethren have brought upon him trials, instead of helping him. And when his brethren see, in the sadness and despondency of my husband, the effect of their unbelief and lack of sympathy, some are prepared to triumph over him, and take advantage of his discouraged state, as if, after all, God cannot be with Bro.

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White or he would not manifest weakness in this direction. I refer such to the work of Elijah, and to his despondency and discouragements. Elijah, although a prophet of God, was a man subject to like passions as we are. We have the frailties of mortal feelings to contend with. But if we trust in God, he will never leave nor forsake us. We may have firm trust in God, under all circumstances, that he will never leave nor forsake us while we preserve our integrity.

My husband may take courage in his affliction, that he has a pitying Heavenly Father who reads the motives and understands the purposes of the soul. Those who stand in the front of the conflict, who are reined up by the Spirit of God to do a special work for him, will frequently feel the reaction, when the pressure is removed, and despondency may sometimes press them^[#23.p57] hard, and shake the #57 most heroic faith, and weaken the most steadfast minds. God understands all our weaknesses. He can pity and love when the hearts of men may be as hard as flint. To wait patiently and trust God when everything looks dark, is the lesson my husband must learn more fully. God will not fail him in his integrity.

Moses and Aaron.

Upon Mount Hor Aaron died and was buried. Moses, Aaron's brother, and Eleazar, his son, accompanied him. The painful duty was laid upon Moses to remove from his brother Aaron the sacerdotal robes and place them upon Eleazar, for God had said he should succeed Aaron in the priesthood. Moses and Eleazar witnessed the death of Aaron; and Moses buried him in the mount. This scene upon Mount Hor carries our minds back and connects it with some of the most striking events in the life of Aaron.

Aaron was a man of amiable disposition, whom God selected to stand with Moses and speak for him; in short, to be mouthpiece for Moses. God might have chosen Aaron as leader; but he who is acquainted with hearts, who understands character,

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#58 knew that Aaron was yielding, and lacked moral courage to stand in defense of the right under all circumstances, irrespective of consequences. Aaron's desire to have the good will of the people sometimes led him to commit great wrongs. He too frequently yielded to their entreaties, and in so doing dishonored God.^[#23.p58] The same want of standing firmly for the right in his family resulted in the death of two of his sons. Aaron was eminent for piety and usefulness, but he neglected to discipline his family. Rather than perform the task of requiring respect and reverence of his sons, he allowed them to follow their inclinations. He did not discipline them in self-denial, but yielded to their wishes. They were not disciplined to respect and reverence parental authority. The father was the proper ruler of his own family as long as he lived. His authority was not to cease, even after his children were grown up and had families of their own. God himself was the monarch of the nation, and from the people he claimed obedience and honor.

The order and prosperity of the kingdom depended upon the good order of the church. And the prosperity, harmony, and order of the church were dependent upon the good order and thorough discipline of families. God punishes the unfaithfulness of parents to whom he has entrusted the duty to maintain the principles of parental government, which lie at the foundation of church discipline, and the prosperity of the nation. One undisciplined child has frequently marred the peace and harmony of a church, and incited to murmuring and rebellion, a nation. God has enjoined upon children, in a most solemn manner, their duty to affectionately respect and honor their parents. God required of parents, on the other hand, to train up their children, and with unceasing diligence to educate them with regard to the claims of his law, and to instruct them in the knowledge^[#23.p59] and fear of God. These injunctions which God laid with so much solemnity upon the Jews, rests with equal weight upon Christian parents.

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Those who neglect the light and instruction given of God in his word, in regard to training their children and commanding their household after them, will have a fearful account to settle. Aaron's criminal neglect to command respect and reverence of his sons resulted in their death.

God distinguished Aaron in choosing him and his male posterity for the priesthood. His sons ministered in the sacred office. Nadab and Abihu failed to reverence the command of God, to offer sacred fire upon their censers with the incense before him. God had forbidden them to use the common fire to present before him with the incense, upon pain of death. #59

Here was seen the result of loose discipline. As Aaron's sons had not been educated to respect and reverence the commands of their father, as they disregarded parental authority, they did not realize the necessity of explicitly following the requirements of God. When indulging their appetite for wine, while under its exciting stimulus, their reason was beclouded. They could not discern difference between the sacred and the common. Contrary to God's express direction, they dishonored him by offering common fire instead of sacred. God visited them with his wrath, fire went forth from his presence and destroyed them.

Aaron bore his severe affliction with patience and humble submission. Sorrow and keen agony wrung his soul. He was convicted of his neglect of duty. He was priest of the Most High^[#23.p60] God, to #60 make atonement for the sins of the people. He was priest of his household, yet he had been inclined to pass over the folly of his children. He neglected his duty to train and educate his children to obedience, self-denial, and reverence for parental authority. Through feelings of misplaced indulgence, he failed to mold the characters of his children with high reverence for eternal things. Aaron did not see, any more than many Christian parents now see, that his misplaced love and the indulgence of his children in

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wrong, was preparing them for the certain displeasure of God, and for his wrath to break forth upon them to their destruction.

While Aaron neglected to exercise his authority, the justice of God awakened against them. Aaron had to learn that gentle remonstrance, without exercising, with firmness, parental restraint, and his imprudent tenderness toward his sons, were cruelty in the extreme. God took the work of justice into his own hands, and destroyed the sons of Aaron.

When God called for Moses to come up into the mountain, it was six days before he was received into the cloud, to the immediate presence of God. The top of the mountain was all aglow with the glory of God. And even while the children of Israel had in their very sight the glory of God upon the mount, unbelief was so natural to them, because Moses was absent, they began to murmur with discontent. While the glory of God signified his sacred presence upon the mountain, and their leader was in close converse with God, they should have been sanctifying ^[#23.p61] themselves to God by close searching of heart, humiliation, and godly fear. God had left Aaron and Hur to take the place of Moses. The people were to consult and advise with these men of God's appointment in the absence of Moses.

Here Aaron's deficiency as a leader or governor of Israel was seen. The people beset him to make them gods to go before them into Egypt. Here was an opportunity for Aaron to show his faith and unwavering confidence in God, and in firmness, and with decision, meet the proposition of the people. But the natural love of Aaron to please, and to yield to the people, led him to sacrifice the honor of God. He requested them to bring their ornaments to him, and he wrought out for them a golden calf, and proclaimed before the people, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And to this senseless god, Aaron made an altar, and proclaimed on the morrow a feast to the Lord. All re-

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straint seemed to be removed from the people. They offered burnt offerings to the golden calf, and a spirit of levity took possession of them. They ate, they drank, and rose up to play. They indulged in shameful rioting and drunkenness.

A few weeks only had passed since they had made a solemn covenant with God to obey his voice. They had listened to the words of God's law; spoken in awful grandeur from Sinai's mount, amid thunders and lightnings and earthquakes. They had heard the declaration from the lips of God himself, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the [#23.p62] land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. #62 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

Aaron had been exalted, also his sons, in being called into the mount, to there witness the glory of God. "And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness."

God had appointed Nadab and Abihu to a most sacred work, therefore he honored them in a most wonderful manner. God gave them a view of his excellent glory, that the scenes they should witness in the mount would abide upon them, and the better qualify them to minister in his service, and render to him that exalted honor and reverence before the people which would give them clearer conceptions of his character, and awaken in them due obedience and reverence for all his requirements.

Moses, before he left his people for the mount,

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#63 read to them the words of the covenant God had made with them, and they with one voice answered, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." How great must have^[#23.p63] been the sin of Aaron, how aggravating in the sight of God!

While Moses was receiving the law of God in the mount, the Lord informed him of the sin of rebellious Israel, and requested him to let them go, that he might destroy them. But Moses plead before God for the people. Although Moses was the meekest man that lived, yet when the interests of the people over whom God had appointed him as leader were at stake he loses his natural timidity, and with singular persistency and wonderful boldness, pleads with God for Israel. He will not consent that God shall destroy his people, although God promised that in their destruction he would exalt Moses, and raise up a better people than Israel. Moses prevailed. God granted his earnest petition not to blot out his people. Moses took the tables of the covenant, the law of ten commandments, and descended from the mount. The boisterous, drunken revelry of the children of Israel reached his ears long before he came to the camp of Israel. When he saw their idolatry, and that they had broken in a most marked manner the words of the covenant, he became overwhelmed with grief and indignation at their base idolatry. Confusion and shame on their account took possession of him, and he there threw down the tables and broke them. As they had broken their covenant with God, Moses, in breaking the tables, signified to them that so, also, God had broken his covenant with them. The tables, whereupon was written the law of God, were broken.

#64 ^[#23.p64] Aaron, with his amiable disposition, so very mild and pleasing, sought to conciliate Moses, as though no very great sin had been committed by the people over which he should feel thus deeply. Moses asked in anger, "What did this people unto thee that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord

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wax hot; thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let him break it off. So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

Aaron would have Moses think that some wonderful miracle had transformed their golden ornaments into the shape of a calf. He did not relate to Moses that he had, with other workmen, wrought out this image.

Aaron had thought that Moses had been too unyielding to the wishes of the people. And if he had been less firm, less decided at times; if he had made a compromise with them, and gratified their wishes, he would have had less trouble, and there would have been more peace and harmony in the camp of Israel. He, therefore, had been trying this new policy. He carried out his natural temperament of yielding to the wishes of the people, to save dissatisfaction and preserve their good will, and thereby prevent a rebellion, which he thought would certainly come if he withstood their wishes. But had Aaron stood unwaveringly for God, had he met the intimation of the people for him to make them gods to go^[#23.p65] before them to Egypt, with the just indignation and horror their proposition deserved; had he cited them to the terrors of Sinai, where God had spoken his law in such glory and majesty; had he reminded them of their solemn covenant with God to obey all he should command them; had he told them that he would not, at the sacrifice of his life, yield to their entreaties, he would have had influence with the people to prevent a terrible apostasy. But when his influence was required to be used in the right direction, in the absence of Moses, when he should have stood as firm and unyielding as did Moses, to prevent them from pursuing a course of sin, his influence was exerted on the

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wrong side. He was powerless to make his influence felt in vindication of God's honor in keeping his holy law. But on the wrong side he had swayed a powerful influence. He directed, and the people obeyed. When Aaron took the first step in the wrong direction, the spirit which had actuated the people imbued him, and he took the lead, and directed as a general, and the people were singularly obedient. Here Aaron gave decided sanction to the most aggravating sins, because it was attended with less difficulty than to stand in vindication of the right. When he swerved from his integrity in giving sanction to the people in their sins, he seemed inspired with decision, earnestness, and zeal, new to him. His timidity seemed suddenly to disappear. He seized the instruments to work out the gold into the image of a calf with a zeal he had never manifested in standing in defense of the honor of God against wrong. He ordered an altar to be built, and with assurance worthy of a better cause, he^[#23.p66] proclaimed to the people that on the morrow there would be a feast to the Lord. The trumpeters took the word from the mouth of Aaron and sounded the proclamation from company to company of the armies of Israel.

Aaron's calm assurance in a wrong course gave him greater influence than Moses could have had in leading them in a right course, and in subduing their rebellion. What terrible spiritual blindness had come upon Aaron that he should put light for darkness, and darkness for light! What presumption in him to proclaim a feast to the Lord over their idolatry of a golden image! Here is seen the power that Satan has over minds that are not fully controlled by the Spirit of God. Satan had set up his banner in the midst of Israel, and it was exalted as the banner of God.

"These," said Aaron (without hesitation or shame), "be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron influenced the children of Israel to go to greater lengths in idolatry than

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had entered their minds. They were no longer troubled lest the burning glory like flaming fire upon the mount had consumed their leader. They thought they had a general who just suited them. They were ready to do anything he suggested. They offered peace offerings, and sacrificed to their golden god, and gave themselves up to pleasure, rioting, and drunkenness. They were then decided in their own minds that it was not because they were wrong that they had so much trouble in the wilderness; but the difficulty, after all, was with their leader. He was not the right kind of a man. He was too unyielding, and was continually keeping their sins^[#23.p67] before them, warning and reproving them, and threatening them with God's displeasure. A new order of things had come, and they were pleased with Aaron, and pleased with themselves. They thought, if Moses had only been as amiable and mild as Aaron, what peace and harmony would have prevailed in the camp of Israel. They cared not now whether Moses ever came down from the mount or not. #67

When Moses saw the idolatry of Israel, and his indignation was so aroused at their shameful forgetfulness of God that he threw down the tables of stone and broke them, Aaron stood meekly by, bearing the censure of Moses with commendable patience. The people were charmed with Aaron's lovely spirit, and were disgusted with Moses' rashness. But God seeth not as man seeth. He condemned not the ardor and indignation of Moses against the base apostasy of Israel.

The true general then takes his position for God. He has come direct from the presence of the Lord, where he plead with him to turn away his wrath from his erring people. Now he has another work to do, as God's minister, to vindicate his honor before the people, and let them see that sin is sin, and righteousness is righteousness. He has a work to do to counteract the terrible influence of Aaron. "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is

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#68 on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his^{23.p68]} brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day."

Here Moses defines genuine consecration as obedience to God, to stand in vindication of the right, and to show a readiness to carry out the purpose of God in the most unpleasant duties, showing that the claims of God are higher than the claims of friends, or the lives of the nearest relatives. The sons of Levi consecrated themselves to God to execute his justice against crime and sin.

#69 Aaron and Moses both sinned in not giving glory and honor to God at the waters of Meribah. They were both wearied and provoked with the continual complaining of Israel, and at a time when God was to mercifully display his glory to the people, to soften and subdue their hearts and lead them to repentance. Moses and Aaron claimed the power of opening the rock for them. "Hear now, ye rebels: must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Here was a golden opportunity to sanctify the Lord in their midst, to show them the long-suffering of God and his tender pity for them. They had murmured against Moses and Aaron because they could not find water. Moses and Aaron took these murmurings as a great trial and dishonor to them. They forgot that it was God whom they were grieving. It was God^{23.p69]} they were sinning against and dishonoring, not those who were men appointed of God to carry out his purpose. They were insulting their best friend in charging their ca-

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lamities upon Moses and Aaron; they were murmuring at God's providence.

This sin of these noble leaders was great. Their lives might have been illustrious to the close. They had been greatly exalted and honored; yet God does not excuse sin in those in exalted positions any sooner than in the more humble.

Many professed Christians look upon men who do not reprove and condemn wrong, as men of piety, and Christians indeed, while men who stand boldly in defense of right, and will not yield their integrity to unconsecrated influences, they think lack piety and a Christian spirit.

Those who stand in defense of the honor of God, and maintain the purity of truth at any cost, will have manifold trials, as did our Saviour in the wilderness of temptation. The yielding temperaments, who have not courage to condemn wrong, but keep silent when their influence is needed to stand in the defense of right against any pressures, may avoid many heartaches, and escape many perplexities, and lose a very rich reward, if not their own souls.

Those who are in harmony with God, and through faith in him receive strength to resist wrong and stand in defense of the right, will always have severe conflicts, and will frequently have to stand almost alone. But precious victories will be theirs while they make God their^[#23.p70] dependence. His grace will #70 be their strength. Their moral sense will be keen, clear, and sensitive. Their moral powers will be able to withstand wrong influences. Their integrity, like that of Moses, will be of the purest character.

The mild and yielding spirit of Aaron, to please the people, blinded his eyes to their sins, and to the enormity of the crime he was sanctioning. His course, in giving influence to wrong and sin in Israel, cost the lives of three thousand men. The course of Moses, in what contrast! After he had evidenced to the people that they could not trifle with God with impunity; after he had shown them the just displeas-

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ure of God for their sins, in giving the terrible decree to slay friends or relatives who persisted in their apostasy; after the work of justice to turn away the wrath of God, irrespective of their feelings of sympathy for loved friends and relatives who continued obstinate in their rebellion, Moses was prepared for another work. He evidenced who was the true friend of God, and the friend of the people.

"And it came to pass, on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sins, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my #71 book. Therefore, now go,^[#23.p71] lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold mine Angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

Moses supplicated God in behalf of sinning Israel. He did not try to lessen their sin before God. He did not excuse them in their sin. He frankly acknowledged that they had sinned a great sin, and had made them gods of gold. Then he loses his timidity, and the interest of Israel is so closely interwoven with his life, that he comes with boldness to God, and prays for him to forgive his people. If their sin, he pleads, is so great that God cannot forgive them, if their names must be blotted from his book, he prayed the Lord to blot out his name also. When the Lord renewed his promise to Moses, that his Angel should go before him in leading the people to the promised land, Moses knew that his request was granted. But the Lord assured Moses that if he was provoked to visit the people for their transgressions, he would

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surely punish them for this grievous sin also. If they were henceforth obedient, he would blot this great sin out of his book.

Letter to a Young Minister and his Wife.

Dear Brother and Sister ----: For some months, I have felt that it was time to write to you some things which the Lord has been pleased to show me in regard to you several^[#23.p72] years ago. Your cases were shown me in connection with others who had a work to do for themselves in order to be fitted for the work of presenting the truth. I was shown that you were both deficient in essential qualifications, and that if these are not obtained, your usefulness, and the salvation of your own souls, will be endangered. You have some faults and errors in your characters which it is very important that you should correct. If you neglect to take hold of the work resolutely and in earnest, these wrongs will increase upon you, and will greatly cripple your influence in the cause and work of God, and will finally result in your being separated from the work of preaching the truth, which work you love so well. #72

In the vision given me for ---- ----, I was shown that he had a very unfortunate stamp of character. He was not disciplined, and his temper was unsubdued. He was permitted to have his own head, and do very much as he pleased. He was greatly deficient in reverence for God and man. He had a strong, unsubmitive spirit. He had but a very faint idea of proper gratitude to those who were doing their utmost for him. He was extremely selfish.

I was shown that independence, a firm, set, unyielding will, a lack of reverence and due respect for others, a selfish disposition, and too great self-confidence marks the character of sister ----. If she does not watch closely, and overcome these errors in her character, she will fail of sitting with Christ in his throne.

In regard to Bro. ----, I was shown that many

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#73 of the same things in the testimony to^[#23.p73]---- applied to him (you). I was pointed back to your past life. I saw that from a child you have been self-confident, headstrong, and self-willed, and have followed your own mind. You have a very independent spirit, and it has been very difficult for you to yield to anyone. When it was your duty to yield your way and your wishes to others, you would carry matters out in your own rash way. You have felt that you were fully competent to think and act independently for yourself. The truth of God has been accepted and loved by you, and has done much for you; but it has not wrought all that transformation necessary for the perfection of Christian character. When you first started out to labor in the work of God, you felt more humble, and were willing to be advised and counseled. But as you began to be successful in a degree, your self-confidence increased, and you were less humble, and became more independent.

As you looked at the work of Bro. and sister White, you thought you could see where you could have done better than they. Feelings have been cherished in your heart against them. You are naturally skeptical and infidel in your feelings. As you have seen their work, and heard the reproofs given those who were wrong, you questioned how you should bear such plain testimony. You decided you could not receive it. You began to brace yourself against the manner of their laboring. You opened a door in your heart for suspicion, doubt, and jealousy of them and their work.

#74 You became prejudiced in your feelings, against their labor. You watched, and listened,^[#23.p74] and gathered up all you could, and surmised much. Because God had given you a measure of success, you began to place your short experience and labors upon a level with Bro. White's labors. You flattered yourself that, were you in his place, you could do very much better than he. You began to grow large in your own eyes. You thought your knowledge far more ex-

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tensive and valuable than it was. Had you had one-hundredth part of the experience in real labor, care, perplexity, and burden-bearing in this cause that Bro. White has had, you would be able to understand more in regard to his work, and would be better prepared to sympathize with him in his labors, rather than to murmur and be suspicious and jealous of him. In regard to your own post of labor, you should be very jealous of yourself lest you fail to do your work to God's acceptance, and lest you fail to honor the cause of truth in your labors. You should, in humiliation of soul, feel, "Who is sufficient for these things?" the reason both of you are so ready to question and surmise in regard to Bro. White's work, is because you know so little about it. So few real burdens have ever pressed upon your souls, so little real anguish for the cause of God has touched your hearts, so little perplexity and real distress have you borne for others, that you are no more prepared to appreciate his work than is a ten years' old boy the anxiety, care, and wearisome toil of his burdened father. The boy may pass along joyous in spirit, because he has not the experience of the burdened, careworn father. He may wonder at the fears and anxiety of the father, which look^[#23.p75] needless to #75 him; but when years of experience shall be added to his life, when he takes hold of, and bears, the real burdens of life, then he may look back to his father's life and understand that which was mysterious to him in his boyhood, for bitter experience has given him knowledge.

I was shown that you are in danger of getting above the simplicity of the work, and of placing yourself upon the pinnacle. You feel that you need no reproof and counsel; and the language of your heart is, I am capable of judging, discriminating, and determining, between right and wrong. I will not have my rights infringed upon. No one shall dictate me. I am capable of forming my own plans of action. I am as good as anybody. God is with me. God gives me suc-

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cess in my efforts. Who has authority to interfere with me? These words I have heard you utter as your case was passing before me in vision, not to any person, but as if in conversation with yourself. My attending angel repeated these words, as he pointed to you both: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven."

I saw that the strength of the children of God was in their humility. When they are little in their own eyes, Jesus will be to them their strength and their righteousness, and God will prosper their labors. I was shown that God would prove Bro. ----. He would give him a measure of prosperity, and if he would^[#23.p76] bear the test, if he would turn the blessings of God to good account, not taking honor to himself, and not becoming lifted up, selfish, and self-confident, the Lord would continue his blessings, for the sake of his cause and for his own glory.

I saw that Bro. ---- was in the greatest danger of becoming lifted up, self-righteous, self-sufficient, and feeling that he is rich and in need of nothing. Unless he guards himself upon these points, the Lord will allow him to go on until he makes his weakness apparent to all. You will be brought into positions where you will be sorely tempted if others do not regard you in as exalted a light as you estimate yourself and your ability. I was shown that you were poorly prepared to bear much prosperity and a great amount of success. A thorough conversion alone will do the work necessary for your case.

I have been shown that you are both naturally selfish. You are in constant danger, unless guarded, of thinking and acting in reference to yourselves. You will lay your plans for your own accommodation without taking into the account how much you may inconvenience others. You are inclined to carry out your ideas and plans without regarding the plans, and respecting the views or feelings, of others. Both

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of you should cultivate reverence and respect for others.

Bro. ----, you have considered that your work was of too great importance for you to come down to engage in household duties. You have not a love for these requirements. You^[#23.p77] neglected them in your younger days. But these small duties which you neglect, are essential to the formation of a well-developed character. #77

I have been shown that our ministers generally are deficient in making themselves useful in the families where they are entertained. Some devote their minds to study, because they love this employment. They do not feel that it is a duty which God enjoins upon ministers to make themselves a blessing in the families which they visit; but many give their minds to books, and shut themselves away from the family, and do not converse with them upon the subjects of truth. The religious interests in the family are scarcely mentioned. This is all wrong. Ministers who have not the burdens and care of the publishing interest upon them, and who have not the perplexities and numerous cares of all the churches, should feel that their labor is not excessively hard. They should feel the deepest interest in the families they visit. They should not feel that they are objects to be petted and waited upon while they give nothing in return. There is an obligation resting upon Christian families to entertain the ministers of Christ, and there is also a duty resting upon ministers who receive the hospitality of Christian friends, to feel under mutual obligation to bear their own burdens as far as possible, and not be a tax to their friends. Many ministers entertain the idea that they must be especially favored and waited upon, and they are frequently injured, and their usefulness crippled, by their being treated as pets.

Bro. and sister ----, while among your brethren^[#23.p78] you have too frequently made it a practice #78 to make arrangements agreeable to yourselves, and to

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take a course to gather attention to yourselves, without considering the convenience or inconvenience of others. You are in danger of making yourselves a center. You have received the attention and consideration of others when, for the good of your own souls, as well as for the benefit of others, you should have devoted more attention to those you visited. Such a course would give you a far greater influence, and you would be blessed in winning more souls to the truth.

Bro. ---, you have ability to present the truth to others. You have an investigating mind, but there are serious defects in your character, which I have mentioned, that must be overcome. You neglected many of the little courtesies of life, because you think so much of yourself that these little attentions are not thought of as required of you. God would not have you burden others while you neglect to see and do the things someone must do. It does not detract from the dignity of a gospel minister to bring in wood and water when needed, and to exercise in doing needed work in the family where he is entertained. In not seeing these little important duties, and improving the opportunity to do them, you deprive yourselves of real blessings, and also deprive others of good that it is their privilege to receive from you. Some of our ministers are not having an amount of physical exercise proportionate to the taxation of the mind. As the result, they are suffering with debility. There is no good reason why^[#23.p79] the health of ministers who have to perform only the ordinary duties devolving upon the minister should fail. Their minds are not constantly burdened with perplexing cares and heavy responsibilities in regard to the important institutions among us. I saw that there was no real cause why they should fail in this important period of the cause and work, if they will pay due regard to the light God has given them in regard to how to labor and how to exercise, with proper attention to their diet.

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Some of our ministers eat very heartily, and

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then do not exercise sufficiently to work off the waste matter which accumulates in the system. They will eat, and sit down most of their time and read, study, and write, when a share of their time should be devoted to systematic, physical labor. #79

Our preachers will certainly break down in health unless they are more careful not to overload the stomach by too great quantities of even healthful food. I saw that you, Bro. and sister ----, were both in danger on this point. Overeating prevents the free flow of thought and words, and that intensity of feeling so necessary to press the truth to the heart of the hearer. The indulgence of appetite beclouds and fetters the mind, and blunts the holy emotions of the soul. The mental and moral powers of some of our preachers are enfeebled by improper eating and lack of physical exercise. Those who crave great quantities of food should not indulge their appetite, but should practice self-denial, and retain the blessings of active muscles, and unoppressed brain. Overeating stupefies the entire being by diverting the energies from the other organs to do the work of the stomach. [#23.p80] #80

The lack of our ministers in not exercising all the organs of the body proportionately, leave some organs worn, while others are weak from inaction.

If wear is left to come almost exclusively upon one organ, or set of muscles, the one most used must become over wearied and greatly weakened. Each faculty of the mind, and each muscle, has its distinctive office, and all are required to be equally exercised in order to become properly developed and retain healthful vigor. Each organ has its work to do in the living organism. Every wheel in the machinery must be a living, active, working wheel. All the faculties have a bearing upon each other, and all need to be exercised in order to be properly developed.

Bro. and sister ----, neither of you enjoy physical, domestic labor. Both of you need to cultivate a love for the practical duties of life, which will be giving you an education necessary for your health,

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and will be increasing your usefulness. You think too much of what you eat, and should not touch those things which will give a poor quality of blood. Both of you have scrofula.

Br. ---, your love for reading, and dislike to physical taxation while talking, and exercising your throat, make you liable to disease of throat and lungs. You should be guarded, and should not speak hurriedly, and rattle off what you have to say as though you had a lesson to repeat. You should not let the labor come upon the upper portion of the vocal organs, for this will be constantly wearing and irritating them, and will lay the foundation for disease. The action should come upon the abdominal muscle. The lungs and throat should be the channel, but should not do all the work.^[#23.p81]

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I was shown that your manner of eating would bring disease upon both of you, which, when once fastened upon you, would not be easily overcome. You might both bear up for years, and not show any special signs of breaking, but cause will be followed by the sure results. God will not work a miracle for either of you, to preserve your health and life. You must eat, and study, and work, understandingly, following enlightened conscience. Our preachers should all be sincere, genuine health reformers, not merely adopting the reforms because others do, but from principle, in obedience to the word of God.

God has given us great light upon the health reform, which he requires us all to respect. He does not send us light to be rejected or disregarded by his people without their suffering the consequences.

I was shown that neither of you really know yourselves. If God should let the enemy loose upon you, as he did upon his servant Job, he would not find in you that same spirit of steadfast integrity that he found in Job, but a spirit of murmuring and of unbelief.

Had you, during my husband's illness, been situated at Battle Creek, at the time of their trial,

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when Satan had special power upon our brethren and sisters there, both of you would have drunk deep of their spirit of jealousy and fault-finding. You would have been among the number, as zealous as the rest, to make a diseased, care-worn man, and a paralytic, an offender for a word.

You are inclined to offset your deficiencies by magnifying and dwelling upon the wrongs you^[#23.p82] #82 suppose exist in Bro. and sister White, and had you an opportunity, as those had in Battle Creek, you would venture to go to greater lengths than did some of them in their wicked crusade against us; for you have less faith, and less reverence than had some of them, and would be less inclined to respect our work and our calling.

I was shown that, notwithstanding you have the sad experience and example of others before you, who have become disaffected, and have murmured, and been fault-finding and jealous of us, you would fail to be warned by their example, and God would test your fidelity and reveal the secrets of your hearts. Your suspicions, distrust, and jealousies, would be revealed, and your weaknesses exposed, that you might see them, and understand yourselves, if you would.

I was shown you listening to the conversation of men and women, and too pleased to gather up their views and impressions, detrimental to our labors. Some had one thing, and some another with which to find fault, similar to the murmurers of the children Israel when Moses was their leader. Some were censuring our course, saying that we were not conservative as we ought to be; we did not seek to please the people as we might; we talked too plainly; we reprov'd too sharply. Some were talking in regard to sister White's dress, picking at straws. Others were expressing dissatisfaction with the course brother White pursued, and remarks were passing from one to the other, questioning their course and finding fault. An angel stood before these persons, unseen by

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#83 them, busily^[#23.p83] writing their words in the book which was to be open to the view of God and angels.

Some are eagerly watching for something to condemn in Bro. and sister White, who have grown gray in their service in the work and cause of God. Some express their views that the testimony of sister White cannot be reliable. This is all that many unconsecrated ones want. The testimonies of reproof have checked their vanity and pride; but if they dared, they would go to almost any length in fashion and pride. To all such, God will give an opportunity to prove themselves, and develop their true characters.

I saw, some years ago, that we should yet have to meet the same spirit which rose at Paris, which has never been thoroughly cured. It has slumbered; but it is not dead. From time to time this spirit of determined murmuring and rebellion would crop out in different individuals, who had at some point of time been leavened with this wicked spirit which has followed us for years. Sister ----, this spirit has, in a degree, been cherished by you, and has had an influence to mold your views and feelings. Sanctimonious infidelity has been gradually growing in the mind of -- -- ----, which is not easy, even for herself, now to be rid of. This same determined spirit which held---- ----, and others in Maine in a fanatical delusion so long, against every influence to lead them to the truth, has held it's powerful, deceptive influence over ---- ----'s mind in B.C., and the same influence has affected you, sister ----. You were of that temperament that the enemy^[#23.p84] could affect you—that calm, determined, unyielding temperament—so that the same results will, only in a greater degree, attend your influence, if wrong, as that of ---- ----.

Feelings of suspicion, jealousy, and unbelief have been gaining power upon your mind for years. You have a hatred to reproof. You are very sensitive, and your sympathies arise at once for anyone who is reproved. This not a sanctified feeling, and is not prompted by the Spirit of God.

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Bro. and sister ----, I was shown that when this spirit of fault-finding and murmuring would be developed in you, when it should be manifested, and the leaven of dissatisfaction, jealousy, and unbelief should appear, which had cursed the life of ---- ---- and her husband, we should have a work to do to meet it decidedly, and give that spirit no quarters, and that until this should be developed I should keep silent, for there was a time to speak and a time to keep silent. I saw that, should apparent prosperity attend the labors of Bro. ----, unless he was a thoroughly converted man, he would be in danger of losing his soul. He does not have becoming respect for the positions and labor of others, and will consider himself second to none. #84

I was shown that temptations will continually increase in regard to the labors of Bro. and sister White. Our work is a peculiar work, and of a different character from that of any others who labor in the field. God does not call ministers who have only to labor in word and doctrine to do our work. Neither does he call us to do only their work. We each have, in some respects, a^[#23.p85] distinct work. God has been pleased to open to me the secrets of the inner life and hidden sins of his people. I have had the unpleasant duty laid upon me to reveal hidden sins and to reprove wrongs. When I have been compelled by the Spirit of God to reprove sins that others did not know existed, it has stirred up the natural feelings in the hearts of the unsanctified. While some have humbled their hearts before God with repentance and confessions, and have forsaken their sins, others have felt a spirit of hatred arise in their hearts. Their pride has been hurt when their course has been reproved. They entertain thoughts that it is sister White that is hurting them, instead of feeling grateful to God that he has in mercy spoken to them through his humble instrument, to show them their dangers and sins, that they may put them away before it shall be too late for wrongs to be righted. #85

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Some are ready to inquire, Who told sister White these things? They have even put the question to me, Did anyone tell you these things? I could answer them, Yes; yes, the angel of God has spoken to me. But what they mean is, Have the brethren and sisters been exposing their faults? For the future, I shall not belittle the testimonies God has given me, to make explanations to try to satisfy such narrow minds, but shall treat all such questions as an insult to the Spirit of God. God has seen fit to thrust me into positions in which he has not placed any other one in our ranks. He has laid upon me burdens of reproof that he has not given to any other one. My husband has stood by my side to sustain the testimonies, and to give his voice in union with the testimony of reproof. He has been compelled to take a decided stand to press back the unbelief and rebellion, which has been bold and defiant, and that would break down any testimony I might bear, because the ones reproved were cut, and felt deeply over the reproof given. This is exactly as God designed. He meant that they should feel. It was necessary that they should feel before their proud hearts would yield up their sins, and thus cleanse their hearts and lives from all iniquity.

In every advance move that God has led us to make, in every step gained by God's people, there have been ready tools of Satan among us, to stand back and suggest doubts and unbelief, and to throw obstacles in our way, to weaken our faith and courage. We have had to stand like warriors, ready to press and fight our way through the opposition raised, which has made our work tenfold harder than it otherwise would have been. We have had to stand firmly, and unyielding as a rock. This firmness has been interpreted to be hard-heartedness and willfulness. God never designed that we should swerve, first to the right and then to the left, to gratify the minds of unconsecrated brethren. He designed our course should be straightforward. One and another have

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come to us, professing to have great burdens for us, to have us go this way or that, contrary to the light God had given us. What if we had followed these false lights and fanatical impressions? Surely, our people should not then put confidence in us. We have had to set our faces as flints for the right, and then press on to work and duty.

Some among us have been ever ready to carry matters to extreme, and to overreach the mark.^[#23.p87] They seem to be without an anchor. Such have greatly injured the cause of truth. There are others who seem never to have a position where they can stand firmly and surely when God calls for faithful soldiers to be found at the post of duty, ready to battle if need be. There are those who will not, when required of God, make a charge upon the enemy. They will do nothing until others have fought the battle and gained the victory for them, and then they are ready to share the spoils. How much can God count upon such soldiers? They are accounted as cowards in his cause. This class, I saw, gained no experience for themselves in regard to warfare against sin and Satan. They were more inclined to fight against the faithful soldiers of Christ than against Satan and his host. Had they girded on the armor and pressed into the battle, they would have gained a valuable experience which it was their privilege to have. But they had no courage to contend for the right, and venture something in the warfare, and learn how to attack Satan and take his strongholds. Some have no idea of running any risks, or venturing anything, themselves. But somebody must venture. They must run risks in this cause. Those who will not venture, and expose themselves to censure, will stand all prepared to watch those who do bear responsibilities, and be ready, if there is a semblance of chance, to find fault with them, and injure them if they can. This has been the experience of Bro. and sister White in their labors. Satan and his host have been arrayed against them, but these were not all; those who should have

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#88 stood by them in the^[#23.p88] warfare, when they saw them over-burdened and pressed beyond measure, have stood prepared to join Satan in his work to discourage and weaken them, and, if possible, drive them from the field.

Bro. and sister ----, I have been shown that, as you have traveled, you have been looked up to and highly esteemed, and treated with greater respect and deference than was for your good. It is not natural for you to treat with like respect those who have borne the burdens which God has laid upon them in his cause and work. Both of you love your ease. To be turned out of your course, to inconvenience yourselves, you are not inclined to do. You desire to have things bend to your convenience. You have large self-esteem, and exalted opinions of your acquirements. You have not had perplexing cares and burdens to bear, and important decisions to make, which involved the interest of God's cause, such as has been the lot of my husband. God has made him a counselor to his people, to advise and counsel such young men as yourself, as children in the truth. And when you take that humble position which a true sense of your real state will lead you to take, you will be willing to be counseled. It is because of the few responsibilities you have borne that you do not understand why Bro. White should feel more deeply than yourself. There is just this difference between you and him in this matter. He has invested thirty of the best years of his life in the cause of God, while you have had but few years of experience, and, comparatively, have had nothing of the hardships to meet that he
#89 has had.^[#23.p89]

After the hardest labors of those who first led out in this work, to prepare the truth and bring up the work ready to your hand, you embrace it, and go out to labor to present the precious arguments which others, with inexpressible anxiety, have searched out for you. While you are amply provided for in point of means, your weekly wages sure, you having no rea-

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son for care or anxiety in this direction, these pioneers of the cause suffered deprivations of every kind. They had no assurance of anything. They were dependent upon God, and upon the few true-hearted ones who received their labors. While you have sympathizing brethren to sustain you and fully appreciate your labors, there were but very few to stand by the first laborers in this work. All could be counted in a few minutes. We knew what it was to go hungry for want of food, and to suffer with cold for the want of suitable clothing. We have traveled all night by private conveyance to visit the brethren, because we had no means to defray the expenses of hotel fare. We traveled miles on foot, time and again, because we had no money to hire a carriage. Oh! how precious was the truth to us! how valuable souls purchased by the blood of Christ! We have not complaints to make of our sufferings in those days of close want and perplexity, which made the exercise of faith necessary. They were the happiest days of our lives. There we learned the simplicity of faith. There, while in affliction, we tested and proved the Lord. He was our consolation. He was to us like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. It is unfortunate for you, my brother, and our young ministers generally, that you and they [#23.p90] have not a similar experience in privation, in trial, and in need; for such an experience would be worth to you more than houses and lands, gold or silver. #89 #90

When we refer to our past experience of excessive labors and wants, and of laboring with our hands to support ourselves, and to publish the truth at the very commencement of the work, some of our young preachers, of but few years experience in the work, seem to be annoyed, and charge us with boasting of our own works. The reason of this is that their own lives have been so free from wearing care, want, and self-sacrifice, that they know not how to sympathize with us, and the contrast is not agreeable to their feelings. To have the experience of others pre-

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sented before them in such wide contrast with their own course, does not make their labors appear in so favorable a light as they would have them.

When we first commenced this work, we were both in feeble health. My husband was a dyspeptic; yet three times a day we made our supplications, in faith, to God for strength. My husband went into the hay-field with his scythe, and in the strength God gave him in answer to our earnest prayers, he there earned, by mowing, means to purchase us neat, plain clothing, and to pay our fare to a distant State, to present the truth to our brethren.

#91 We have a right to refer to the past, as did the apostle Paul. "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied; and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome^[#23.p91] unto you, and so will I keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia."

We are carrying out the exhortation of the apostle to the Hebrews, in referring to our past experience. "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly while ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, while ye became companions of them that were so used."

Our lives are interwoven with the cause of God. We have no separate interest aside from this work. And when we see the advancement the cause has made from a very small beginning, coming up slowly, yet surely, to strength and prosperity, who shall prevent or forbid our boasting in God, as we see the success of the cause in which we have toiled, and suffered, and nearly sacrificed our lives? Our experience in this cause is valuable to us. We have invested everything in it.

Moses was the meekest man that lived, yet he

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was repeatedly compelled, through the murmurings of the children of Israel, to bring up their course of sin after leaving Egypt, vindicating his course as their leader.

Just before he was to leave Israel to die, he rehearsed before them their course of rebellion and murmuring since they had left Egypt, and his interest and love for them, which led him to plead with God in their behalf. Moses relates to Israel that he had earnestly entreated of the Lord to let him pass over Jordan to the promised land. "But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me." Moses presented before^[#23,p92] them their sins, and ^{#92}said to them, "Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you." He related to them how many times he had plead with God and humbled his soul in anguish because of their sins.

It was the design of God that Moses should frequently remind Israel of their transgressions and rebellion, that they might humble their hearts before God in view of their sins. God would not have them forget the errors and sins which had provoked his anger against them. The rehearsal of their transgressions, and of the mercies and goodness of God to them, which they had not appreciated, was not agreeable to their feelings. Nevertheless, God directed that this should be done.

I have been shown that young men like yourself, who have had but a few years of imperfect experience in the cause of present truth, are not the ones whom God will trust to bear weighty responsibilities, and lead out in this work. Such should manifest a delicacy in taking positions which would conflict with the judgment and opinions of those of mature experience, whose lives have been interwoven with the cause of God nearly as many years as you have lived, and who have had an active part in this work from its small beginning.

God will not select men of but little experience and considerable self-confidence to lead out in this

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sacred, important work. There is much here at stake. Men who have but little experience in the sufferings, trials, opposition, and privation that have been endured to bring up the work to its present condition of prosperity, should be very jealous of themselves.

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Young men who now engage in the work of preaching the truth should cultivate modesty and humility. They should be careful how they become exalted, lest they be overthrown. They will be accountable for the clear light of truth which now shines upon them. I saw that God was displeased with the disposition some have, to murmur against those who have fought the heaviest battles for them, and who have endured so much in the commencement of the message, when the work went hard.

The experienced laborers, who have toiled under the weight and the oppressive burdens, when there were but few to help bear them, God regards. He has, for those who have proved faithful, a jealous care. God is displeased with those who are ready to find fault, and reproach those servants of God who have grown gray in building up the cause of present truth. Your reproaches and your murmurings will surely stand against you in the day of God. As long as God has not laid upon you, young men, heavy responsibilities, do not get out of your place, and rely upon your own independent judgment, and assume responsibilities for which you are not fitted.

Dear brother and sister, you need to cultivate watchfulness and humility, and to be diligent in prayer. The more closely you live to God, the more clearly will you discern your weaknesses and your dangers. A practical view of the law of God, and clear discernment of the atonement of Christ, will give you the knowledge of yourselves, and will show you wherein you fail to perfect Christian character. In short, you both need a daily experience in God's will concerning you. When you see your great spiritual lack, you will sense the fact that human deprav-

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ity, specified in the word of God, is true in your experience. You are both pharisaical, and you are in danger of remaining voluntarily and fearfully in the dark in regard to your true standing before God, and in regard to your dangers.

You both need to learn the various duties which devolve upon you in your relations in life under a variety of circumstances. You have both neglected your duties, both to God and man. Self-knowledge you need so much. The ignorance of your own heart leads you to overlook the necessity of a daily, living experience in the divine life. In a degree, you overlook the necessity of a divine influence to be with you constantly. This is positively necessary in doing the work of God. If you neglect this, and pass on in self-confidence and self-sufficiency, you will be left to make very great blunders. You need constantly to cherish a spirit of dependence and lowliness of mind. He who feels his own weakness will look higher than himself, and will feel the need of constant strength from above. The grace of God will lead him to exercise and cherish a spirit of constant gratitude. He who is best acquainted with his own weakness will know that it is the matchless grace of God alone that will triumph over the rebellion of the heart.

You need to become acquainted with the weak as well as the strong points in your character, that you may be constantly guarded lest you engage in enterprises, and assume responsibilities, for which God has never designed you. You should not compare your actions and measure your lives by^[#23.p95] any human standard, but with the rule of duty revealed in the Bible. #95

I was shown, Bro. and sister ----, that a work is before you to do for yourselves that you have not dreamed was necessary. For years you have been cherishing temptations and jealousies in regard to us and our work, which is not pleasing to God. You may think that you believe the testimonies that God has given, but unbelief is gaining ground with you in re-

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gard to their being of God.

Your labors, I was shown, would be more effectual in the conversion of souls to the truth, if you dwelt upon the practical as well as the theoretical, having the living, practical elements in your own heart, and carrying them out in your own life.

You need to have a firmer hold from above. You are too dependent upon your surroundings. If you have a large congregation, you are elevated, and you desire to address them. But sometimes your congregations diminish, your spirits sink, and you have but little courage to labor. Surely, something is wanting. Your hold is not firm enough upon God. Some of the most important truths in the teachings of Christ were preached by him to one Samaritan woman who came to draw water as he, being weary, sat upon the well to rest. The fountain of living waters was within him. The fountain of living waters must be in us, springing up to refresh those who are brought under our influence.

#96 Christ sought for men wherever he could find them, in the public streets, in private houses, in the synagogues, by the sea-side. He toiled all^[#23.p96] day in preaching to the multitude and in healing the sick that were brought to him, and, frequently, after he had dismissed the people that they might return to their homes to rest and sleep, he spent the entire night in prayer, to come forth and renew his labors in the morning. O Bro. and sister, you do not know anything in reality of self-denial and self-sacrifice for Christ, and for the truth's sake. You must depend more fully upon God, and less upon your own abilities. You need to hide in God.

You are inclined, Bro. ----, to be severe in reproof, to form your own conclusions in regard to individuals, especially if their course has crossed your track; and, according to your views of the case, you sometimes deal with them in an unsparing manner. You have not been a tender-hearted, pitiful, courteous man as was your Exemplar. You need to soften

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your spirit, be more courteous and kind, and to have greater disinterested benevolence. You need to bring your soul into more close communion with God by earnest prayer, mixed with living faith. Every prayer offered in faith lifts the suppliant above discouraging doubts and human passions. Prayer gives strength to renew the conflict with the powers of darkness, and to bear trials patiently, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

While you take counsel with your doubts and fears, or try to solve everything you cannot clearly see before you have faith, your perplexities will only increase and deepen. If you come to God feeling helpless and dependent, as you really are, and in humble, trusting prayer make your wants known to him whose^[#23.p97] knowledge is infinite, who sees every-^{#97}thing in creation, and who governs everything by his will and word, he can and will attend to your cry, and will let light shine into your heart and all around you; for through sincere prayer, your soul is brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. You may have no remarkable evidence at the time, that the face of your Redeemer is bending over you with compassion and love, but this is even so. You may not feel his visible touch, but his hand is upon you in love and pitying tenderness.

God loves both of you, and he wants to save you with an abundant salvation. But it must not be in your way, but in God's own appointed way. You must comply with the conditions laid down in the Scriptures of truth, and God will as surely fulfill on his part as his throne is sure.

You must not, my brother, rise up against the reproofs and warnings God sends to his people because these admonitions are humiliating to human nature. You need to die daily, to have a daily crucifixion to self.

According to the light God has given me in vision, wickedness and deception are increasing among God's people, who profess to keep his com-

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mandments. Spiritual discernment to see sin as it exists, and put it out of the camp, is decreasing; spiritual blindness is fast coming upon God's people. The straight testimony must be revived, and it will separate those from Israel who have ever been at war with the means God has ordained to keep corruptions out of the church. Wrongs must be called wrongs. #98 [#23.p98] Grievous sins must be called by their right name. All of God's people should come nearer to him and wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Then will they see sin in the true light and will realize how offensive is sin in the sight of God.

In the temptation of our first parents, it seemed a small matter to transgress the command of God in one small act, and eat of the tree beautiful to the eye and pleasant to the taste. To the transgressors, this was but a small act; but it destroyed their allegiance to God, and opened a flood of woe and guilt which has deluged the world. Who can know, in the moment of temptation, the terrible consequences which will result from one wrong, hasty step. Our only safety is to be shielded by the grace of God every moment, and not put out our own spiritual eyesight so that we will call evil good, and good, evil. Without hesitation or argument, we must close and guard the avenues of the soul against evil.

It costs us an effort to secure eternal life. It is only by long and persevering efforts, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall be overcomers. But if we patiently and determinedly, in the name of the Conqueror who overcame in our behalf in the wilderness of temptation, overcome as he overcame, we shall have the eternal reward. Our efforts, our self-denial, our perseverance, must be proportionate to the infinite value of the object we are in pursuit of.

#99 You must not allow your sympathies for yourselves to shield yourselves and others in wrong, because, to outward appearance, in your eyes, [#23.p99] you see nothing to condemn. God sees; God can read the motives and purposes of the soul. I entreat you in

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the name of our Master, who has called us and appointed us our work, to keep your hands off, and leave us to do the work God has laid upon us. Keep your words of sympathy and pity for those who really deserve them, those who are pressed by the Spirit of God to show his people their transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. Error and sin in these last days are embraced more readily than truth and righteousness. The soldiers of the cross of Christ are now required to gird on the Christian armor and press back the moral darkness that is flooding the world.

God will give both of you precious victories if you surrender yourselves wholly to him, and let his grace subdue your proud hearts. Your self-righteousness will avail nothing with God. Nothing should be done by fits and starts, or in a spirit of rashness. Wrongs cannot be righted, nor reformations in character made, by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Sanctification is not a work of a day, nor a year, but of a life-time. Without continual efforts and constant activity, there cannot be advancement in the divine life and the attainment of the victor's crown.

We are doing up work for the Judgment, and it is unsafe to work in our own wisdom and trust to our own judgment. With the spirit of self-confidence you now possess neither of you could be happy in Heaven; for there all, even the exalted angels, are subordinate. You have yet to learn subordination and submission. Both of you must be transformed by the grace of God.^[#23.p100]

#100

Sister ----, I saw that you should be careful that you do not open a door of temptation to your husband that you cannot close at will. It is easier to invite the enemy into your hearts, than to dismiss him after he has the ground. Your pride is easily hurt, and you need to come more close to God, and seek with earnestness for grace, divine grace, to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. God will be your helper if you choose him for your strength. Both of you should encourage greater devo-

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tion to God. The only way to watch humbly, is to watch prayerfully. Do not for a moment think you may sit down and enjoy yourselves, and study your pleasure and your own convenience. The life of Christ is our example. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded, he was bruised. You are too well satisfied with your position. You have need of constant watchfulness lest Satan beguile you through his subtlety, corrupt your minds, and lead you into inconsistencies and gross darkness. Your watchfulness should be characterized by a spirit of humble dependence upon God. It should not be carried on with a proud, self-reliant spirit, but with a deep sense of your personal weakness, and a childlike trust in the promises of God.

#101 It is now an easy and pleasant task to preach the truth of the third angel's message, in comparison with what it was when the message first started, when the numbers were few, and we were looked upon as fanatics. Those who bore the responsibility of the work in the rise and early progress of the message, knew what conflict, and distress, and soul anguish were. Night and^[#23.p101] day the burden was heavy upon them. They thought not of rest or convenience even when they were pressed with suffering and disease. The shortness of time called for activity, and the laborers were few.

Frequently, when brought into strait places, the entire night has been spent in earnest, agonizing prayer, with tears, for help from God, and light to shine upon his word. When the light has come, and the clouds have been driven back, what joy and grateful happiness rested upon the anxious, earnest seekers! Our gratitude to God was as complete as had been our earnest, hungering cry for light. Some nights we could not sleep, because our hearts were overflowing with love and gratitude to God.

Men who now go forth to preach the truth, have things made ready to their hand. They cannot

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now experience such privations as laborers in present truth have endured before them. The truth has been brought out, link after link, in a clear, connected chain. To bring the truth out in such clearness and harmony has required careful research. Opposition, the most bitter and determined, drove the servants of God to the Lord and to their Bibles. Precious indeed to them was the light which came from God.

I have been shown that the reason why some cannot discern the right is because they have so long cherished the enemy, who has worked side by side with them while they have not discerned his power. It sometimes seems hard to wait patiently till God's time to vindicate the right. But I have been shown that if we become impatient, we lose a rich reward. As faithful husbandmen^[#23.p102] in God's great field, we #102 must sow with tears, patient, and hopeful. We must meet troubles and sorrows. Temptations and wearisome toils will afflict the soul, and we must patiently wait in faith to reap with joy. Those persons who are nowhere to be found in the time of peril and danger, when the strength, and courage, and influence of all are required to make a charge upon the enemy, God will have no use for in the final victory. Those who stand like faithful soldiers to battle against wrong, and to vindicate the right, warring against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, will each receive the commendation from the Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Never was there greater need of faithful warnings and reproofs, and close, straight dealing, than at this very time. Satan has come down with great power, knowing that his time is short. He is flooding the world with pleasing fables, and the people of God love to have smooth things spoken to them. Sin and iniquity are not abhorred. I was shown that there must be more firm and determined efforts by God's people, to press back the incoming darkness. The

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close work of the Spirit of God is needed now as never before. Stupidity must be shaken off. We must arouse from the lethargy that will prove our destruction unless we resist it.

Satan has a powerful controlling influence upon minds. Preachers and people are in danger of being found upon the side of the powers of darkness.

#103 There is no such thing now as a neutral^[#23.p103] position. We are all decidedly for the right, or decidedly with the wrong. Said Christ, "They that are not for me, are against me; and they that gather not with me, scatter abroad."

There are ever found those who will sympathize with those who are wrong. Satan had sympathizers in Heaven and took large numbers of the angels with him. God and Christ and Heavenly angels were on one side, and Satan on the other. Notwithstanding the infinite power and majesty of God and Jesus Christ, angels became disaffected. The insinuations of Satan took effect until they really believed that the Father and the Son were their enemies, and Satan, the benefactor. Satan has the same power and the same control over minds now, only increased by exercise and experience a hundred-fold. Men and women are today deceived, blinded by his insinuations and devices, and know it not. They are, in giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, preparing themselves for complete deception. They rise up with bitter feelings against the ones who have dared to speak of their errors and reprove their sins.

Those who have in the fear of God ventured out to faithfully meet error and sin, calling sin by its right name, have discharged a disagreeable duty, with much suffering of feelings to themselves; but they get the sympathy of but few, and suffer the neglect of many. Sympathizers are on the wrong side, and they carry out the purposes of Satan to defeat the design of God.

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Reproofs always hurt human nature. Many are the souls that have been destroyed by the unwise ^[#23.p104]sympathy of their brethren; for they, through ^{#104}their brethren's sympathizing with them, thought they must indeed be abused, and the reprover was all wrong and had a bad spirit. The only hope for sinners in Zion is to fully see and confess their wrongs, and put them away. Those who step in to destroy the edge of sharp reproof that God sends, saying that the reprover was partly wrong, and the reprovèd was not just right, please the enemy. Any way that Satan can devise to make the reproofs of none effect will accomplish his design. Some will lay blame upon the one whom God has sent with a message of warning, saying, He is too severe; and in so doing, they become responsible for the soul of the sinner whom God desired to save, and to whom, because he loved him, he sent correction, that he might humble his soul before God, and put his sins from him. These false sympathizers will have an account to settle with the Master by-and-by for their work of death.

There are many who profess to believe the truth who are blind to their own danger. They cherish iniquity in their hearts and practice it in their lives. Their friends cannot read their hearts, and frequently think such are all right. E. G. W. Black Hawk, Colorado, Aug. 12, 1873.

Letter to a Young Sister.

Dear Sister ----: I have been shown that you need a thorough conversion. You have accepted the truth, but have not received the blessings the truth brings, because you have not^[#23.p105] experienced its ^{#105}transforming power. You are in danger of losing both worlds, unless you have a more thorough work of grace in your heart, and unless your will is brought into conformity to the mind and will of Christ.

You are not now on the right track for that peace or happiness which the true, humble, cross-bearing believer is sure to receive. You have the

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stamp of your father's character. You have a selfish disposition. You do not realize this, but it is true. Your principal thoughts are for yourself, to please yourself, to do those things which will be most agreeable to you, without reference to the happiness of those around you. You are making a mistake in searching for happiness. If you find happiness, it will be in the performance of duty, and the forgetfulness of self. While your thoughts are so much upon yourself, you cannot be happy.

You neglect to cheerfully engage in the work which God has left you to do. You overlook the common, simple duties lying directly in your pathway, and your mind wanders off to some greater work, which you imagine will be more congenial to your taste, which will supply the lack in your life, the barrenness in your soul. You will surely be disappointed here. The work which God has left you to do, is to take up the everyday duties which are common, right around you, and do the plain, homely duties of life cheerfully, not mechanically, but having your heart in what you do, and with your heart, as well as your hands, perform the simple duties which lie before you.

#106 You do not study to make others happy, you do not have your eyes open, trying to discern what ^[#23.p106] you can do, in little things, in little attentions, in the daily courtesies of life, for your parents and the members of the household. You have felt too much that it was a virtue to shut yourself away from the family, and brood over your unhappy thoughts, and unhappy experience, gathering thorns, and taking satisfaction in wounding yourself with them. You indulge in a dreamy habit which must be broken up. You leave duties undone. Work which you ought to do to relieve others, you neglect for the pleasure of indulging your own unhappy musings. You do not know yourself. Up, to duty. Arouse yourself, and take up neglected duty. Redeem the past by future faithfulness. Take hold of the work before you; and, in the

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faithful performance of duty, you will forget yourself, and will not have time to muse and become gloomy, and feel disagreeable and unhappy.

You have almost everything to learn in the Christian experience. You are not improving as fast as you might, and as you must, if you ever obtain eternal life. You are now forming a character for Heaven, or a character which will debar you from Heaven.

You have had your mind and thoughts so engrossed in yourself that you have not realized what you must do in order to become a true follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. You have neglected your home duties. You have been a cloud and a shadow in the family, when it was your privilege to shed light and be a blessing to the dear ones around you. You have been pettish, fretful, and unhappy, when there was, in reality, nothing^[#23.p107] to make you so. You have not been awake to see what you might do to lift the burdens from your mother, and to bless your parents in every way possible. You have looked to your parents and sisters to help you, to be happy, and to administer to you, to do for you, while your thoughts have been centered upon yourself. You have not had the grace of God in your heart, while you have deceived yourself in thinking that you were really advanced in the knowledge of the divine will. #107

You have been ready to engage in conversation with those not of our faith, when it was impossible for you to present an intelligent reason of our faith before them. In this, you do not rightly represent the truth, and do much more injury to the cause of truth than you do good. If you should talk less in vindication of our faith, and study your Bible more, and let your deportment be of that character which would testify that the influence of the truth was good upon your heart and life, you would do far more good than in mere talk, while you lack faithfulness in so many things.

If you are careful to follow the example of our

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self-denying, self-sacrificing Redeemer, who was ever seeking to do others good, and to bless others, but not seeking ease and pleasure and enjoyment for himself, you will then bless others with your influence. In our mingling in society, in families, or in our relations of life, either limited or extended, there are many ways wherein we may acknowledge our Lord, and many ways wherein we may deny him. We may #108 deny him^[#23.p108] in our words, in speaking evil of others, in foolish talking, in jesting, joking, or by idle or unkind words, or by prevaricating, speaking contrary to truth. In our words, we may confess that Christ is not in us. In our character, we may deny Christ by loving our ease, shunning the duties and burdens of life, which someone must bear if we do not, and in loving sinful pleasure. We may also deny Christ by pride of dress and conformity to the world. We may deny Christ by uncourteous behavior. We may deny Christ by love of our own opinions, and by seeking to maintain and justify self. We may deny Christ in allowing the mind to run in the channel of lovesick sentimentalism, and in brooding over our supposed hard lot and trials.

No one can truly confess Christ before the world, unless the mind and Spirit of Christ live in him. It is impossible to communicate that which we have not. The conversation and the deportment should be a real and visible expression of grace and truth within. If the heart is sanctified, submissive, and humble, the fruits will be seen outwardly, and will be a most effectual confession of Christ. Words and profession are not enough. You, my sister, must have something more than this. You are deceiving yourself. Your spirit, your character, and your actions, are not the spirit of meekness, self-denial, and charity. Words and profession may express much humility and love, but if the conduct is not regulated daily by the grace of God, you are not a partaker of the Heavenly gift, you have not forsaken all for #109 Christ, you have not^[#23.p109] surrendered your own

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will and pleasure to become his disciple.

You commit sin and deny your Saviour in dwelling on gloomy things, and in gathering trials to yourself, and in borrowing troubles. You bring the troubles of tomorrow into today, and embitter your own heart, and bring burdens and a cloud upon those around you, by manufacturing trials. You are very unwise in taking precious, probationary time which God has given you to do good, to become rich in good works, in thinking unhappy thoughts, and in airy castle-building. You suffer your imagination to run upon subjects that will bring to you no relief or happiness. Your day-dreaming stands directly in the way of your obtaining a sound, healthy, intelligent experience in things of God and a moral fitness for the better life.

The truth of God received in the heart is able to make you wise unto salvation. In believing and obeying it, you will receive grace sufficient for the duties and trials of today. Grace for tomorrow you do not need. You should feel that you have only to do with today. Overcome for today. Deny self for today. Watch and pray for today. Obtain victories in God for today. Circumstances that exist, our surroundings, the changes daily transpiring around us, the written word of God which discerns and proves all things, are sufficient to teach us our duty, and just what we ought to do, day by day.

Instead of suffering your mind to run in a channel from which you will derive no benefit, you should be searching the Scriptures daily^[#23.p110] and #110 doing those duties which may now be irksome to you, but which must be done by someone in daily life.

The beauties of nature have a tongue that speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart can be impressed with the love of God and his glory as seen in the works of his hand. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the works of nature. There is a lesson in the sunbeam, and in the variety of objects in nature that

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God has presented to our view. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the sun, moon, and stars placed in the heavens, all invite our attention and meditation, and bid us become acquainted with God, who made them all. The lessons you can learn from the various objects of the natural world are these: They are obedient to the will of their Creator. They never deny God, never refuse obedience to any intimation of his will. Fallen beings alone refuse to yield full obedience to their Maker. Their words and works are at variance with God and opposed to the principles of his government. Your thoughts are not elevated. There is enough in the natural world to lead you to love and adore your Creator. There is food for thought without shutting yourself away to feed on disappointed hopes and perverted imaginations.

Do not be ready to talk with unbelievers, and enter into argument with those who oppose the truth; #111 for you are not furnished with Scripture^[#23.p111] knowledge to do this. You have neglected to study your Bible. You can best recommend the truth by the meekness of your life and the faithful discharge of your daily duties. If you are conscientiously strict to do your part, faithful and earnest to see what you can and should do for those for whom you labor, you will then better represent the truth. The best way in which you can recommend the truth is, not by argument, not by talk, but by living it daily, by your consistent, modest, humble life, as a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is a sad thing to be discontented with our surroundings, or the circumstances which have placed us where our duties seem humble and unimportant. Private and humble duties are distasteful to you. You are restless, uneasy, and dissatisfied.

All this springs from selfishness. You think more of yourself than others think of you. You love yourself better than you love your parents, sisters, and brother, and better than you love God. You want to have a more congenial labor, for which you think

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you will be better fitted. You are not willing to work and wait in the humble sphere of action where God has placed you until he proves and tests you, and you demonstrate your ability and fitness for a higher position. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." The spirit of meekness does not consist in discontent, it is directly the opposite.

Those professed Christians who are constantly whining and complaining, who seem to think happiness and a cheerful countenance a sin,^[#23.p112] have not the genuine article of religion. Those who look upon nature's beautiful scenery as they would upon a dead picture, who choose to look upon dead leaves rather than to gather the beautiful living flowers, who take a mournful pleasure in all that is melancholy in the language spoken to them by the natural world, who see no beauty in valleys clothed with verdure, who close their senses to the joyful voice which speaks to them in nature, which is sweet and musical to the listening ear, are not in Christ. They are not walking in the light, they are gathering to themselves darkness and gloom, when they could just as well have brightness, and the blessing of the Sun of Righteousness arising in their hearts with healing in his beams. #112

You are, my young sister, living an imaginary life. You cannot detect or realize a blessing in anything. You imagine troubles and trials which do not exist. You exaggerate little annoyances into grievous trials. This is not the meekness which Christ blessed. It is an unsanctified, rebellious, and unfilial discontent. Meekness is a precious grace, willing to suffer silently, willing to endure trials. Meekness is patient, and labors to be happy under all circumstances. Meekness is always thankful, and makes its own songs of happiness, making melody in the heart to God. Meekness will suffer disappointment and wrong, and will not retaliate. Meekness is not to be silent and sulky. A morose temper is the opposite of meekness; for this only wounds, and gives pain to others,

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#113 and takes no pleasure to itself.^[#23.p113]

My young sister, you have but just entered the school of Christ. You have yet almost everything to learn. You do not now dress extravagantly, but you have pride of appearance. You desire to dress with less simplicity. You think considerable more than you should of the matter of dress. Christ invites you, "Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Submit your neck to the yoke which Christ imposes, and you will find in this submission the very happiness you have tried to gain to yourself in your own way, following your own course.

You may be cheerful if you will bring even your thoughts in subjection to the will of Christ. You should make no delay, but closely search your own heart and die to self daily. You may inquire, How can I master my own actions, and control my inward emotions? Many who profess not the love of God do, to a considerable extent, control their spirit without the aid of the special grace of God. They cultivate self-control. This is indeed a rebuke to those who know that from God they may obtain strength and grace, and yet do not exhibit the graces of the Spirit of God. Christ is our model. He was meek and lowly. Learn of him, and imitate his example. The Son of God was faultless. We must aim to this perfection, and overcome as he overcame, if we have a seat at his right

#114 hand.^[#23.p114]

You have peculiarities of character which need to be sternly disciplined, and resolutely controlled, before you could with any safety enter the marriage relation. Therefore, marriage should be put from your mind until you overcome defects in your character, for you would not make a happy wife. You have neglected to educate yourself for systematic household labor. You have not seen the necessity of acquiring habits of industry. This habit of enjoying useful labor,

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once formed, will never be lost. You are then prepared to be placed in any circumstance in life, and you will be fitted for the position. You will learn to love activity. If you enjoy useful labor, you will have your mind occupied with your employment, and you will not find time to indulge in dreamy fancies.

Knowledge of useful labor will impart to your restless and dissatisfied mind energy, efficiency, and a becoming, modest dignity, which will command respect. You know but very little of yourself. You know not the deceptions of your own heart. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Search your heart carefully, and take time for meditation and prayer. Unless you see the defects in your character, and with genuine sincerity correct your errors, you cannot be a disciple of Christ.

You love to think and to talk about young men. You interpret their civilities as a special regard for yourself. You flatter yourself that you are more highly esteemed than you really are. Your conversation should be upon subjects that will profit, and that will refine and elevate.^[#23.p115] You are not, my dear #115 child, cultivating habits of frankness and sincerity. Your heart is not right. Your influence is not good upon the young, for you have not the mind of Christ; yet you flatter yourself that you have made great advancement in the Christian life.

A reformation must commence in your father's family. You bear the stamp of your father's character. You should endeavor to shun his errors and his extremes. If you are truly a disciple of Christ, you will see important work to do at your home. Every family may be a perpetual school. The elder sisters can exert a strong influence upon the younger members of the family. The younger, witnessing the example of the older, will be led by the principle of imitation more than by oft-repeated precepts. The eldest daughter should ever feel it a Christian duty devolving upon her to aid her mother in bearing her many toilsome burdens. Hours are worse than lost that are spent in

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bed, sleeping, or in gloomy musings, while some shoulders in the family are bowed to carry the heavy toilsome load. The eldest daughters may assist in the education of the younger members of the family. Here will be an excellent opportunity to teach those less advanced than yourself, kindly and diligently, having the fear of the Lord before you. You may gain the affections of those you try to help. You may here have one of the best of schools in which to exercise the Christian graces. You do not love children. In short, you do not love anything which requires steady, earnest, persevering effort. You do not^[#23.p116]love steady application. You love change and variety. You are constantly seeking to find something that will please yourself and give you happiness. You need self-education, and you can obtain this better now than at any future time.

You have almost every change to make in your life, and may God help you to take hold of the work without delay. Only the pure, the good, and the holy, will dwell with Christ when he cometh into his kingdom.

You cannot obtain Heaven without earnest, persevering effort. Your life, hitherto, has been aimless, and nearly useless, as viewed in the light of Heaven. You now have opportunity to redeem the time, and to wash your robe of character in the blood of the Lamb. God will help you if you feel your need of his help. Your righteousness is of no value with God. It is only through the merits of Christ that you will be victor at last. And if you can be among those who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, Heaven will be cheap enough. E. G. W.

Note from the Publisher:

James White Proposes Broad Plans for the Cause
The several months spent in Colorado had given James White an opportunity to stand back and survey the cause as a whole. As he did so he wrote several articles for the Review, proposing daring and

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broad steps in advance. In late August, as Ellen White had completed copy for Testimony No. 23, which carried an extended article entitled "The Laodicean Church," James White appended a forty-seven-page statement he titled An Earnest Appeal, addressed to a broad group, "The General Conference Committee, the 'Picked Men' at Battle Creek, the Committees of the State Conferences, and the Officers of the Several Branches of Our Tract and Missionary Society." This separately paged statement opens:

An Earnest Appeal

To the General Conference Committee, the "Picked Men" at Battle Creek, the Committees of the State Conferences, and the Officers of the Several Branches of our Tract and Missionary Society.

DEAR BRETHREN: We take up our pen to address you with assurance that the Lord has been leading out our mind to consider the present condition of our people, and the wants of the cause, such as we never felt before. In our Rocky-Mountain retreat, we have taken time to review the whole ground of our position. We have surveyed the entire field of labor, and have considered our own condition before God, and that of our people. And with repentance and confession of want of faith and patience, when in deep afflictions in times past, to wait for God to vindicate the right, we have been drawing near the Lord.

At our early season of prayer this morning, August 20, as we retired from the family by ourselves, to especially seek the Lord, as has been our custom since we have been in the mountains, Mrs. W.'s feelings were with ours in the strongest assurance that the hand of the Lord had separated us from his people for awhile, to improve our health, and to gather spiritual strength, and clear light as to the condition and wants of the cause. Here, by the grace of God, we expect to remain until the Lord shall send us out to

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#S2 labor among his people.[#23Sup.p2]

And while we enjoy great freedom in the Lord, and the assurance that he is leading us, and forgiving our want of faith, and hope, and courage, and patience to wait, and is restoring to us the joys of his salvation, we feel the deepest interest for those of our fellow-laborers who have brought darkness and bondage to their own minds and spirits in not standing independently for the Lord and for the right; and our earnest prayers go up to God many times a day for them, and also for those who have double labor, and care, and responsibility in the cause, on account of the failure of some to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Spirit's cry is in our hearts for them, and we expect to see in them the work of the Spirit in answer. If ever God's servants should stand together in the toils, and sorrows, and joys, and responsibilities of the work, they should in the crisis of the present hour.

Dear brethren, as to the correctness of our positions, relative to the soon close of human probation, the coming of the Son of man, and their clear and easy defense from the Scriptures of truth, we need not address you. You see complete harmony in them, all agreeing with the sure word of prophecy in wonderful perfection. And you come to the natural and inevitable conclusion that the close of our work must soon come. Otherwise, the entire movement must be an inexplicable delusion. But no! the Bible is the rock on which we firmly stand. Our system of interpretation is the only safe and true one. And in harmony with God's warnings to, and his dealings with, men and nations in the[#23Sup.p3] past, the world's last warning has come, and her final grand crisis is just upon us.

But, dear brethren, our people are in a fearful condition before God. It is generally admitted that the testimony of the True Witness to the church of the Laodiceans, Revelation 3:14-21, applies to our time, and to our people. And this position seems to be ably

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defended, and sustained by overwhelming evidences, in Bro. Smith's "Thoughts on the Revelation."

Our present confidence as a people that we have the truth, and that God is with us, while we are so far separated from him by the love of this world, self-confidence, and, with many, a decided hatred to reproof, gives point and force to the rebuke of the Son of God to the last church:

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent."

Dear brethren, it is not enough for us to simply admit the correct application of this startling rebuke to ourselves at the present time. We should ponder its fearful import with care,^[#23Sup.p4] and let its terrific threatening move us to immediate action. You very well know that at no period of our existence, as a people, was its application as forcible as at the present time. #S4

The Lord has been appealing to our people through the manifestation of the Spirit of prophecy in our day, in reproofs, warnings, and entreaties. They have been warned of the sins of covetousness, love of the world, selfishness, pride, self-confidence, and love of ease; and of a want of consecration, self-sacrifice, the love of God, and love for the salvation of souls. Many have read these reproofs until they are tired of them, and now neglect them. And some cherish a hatred to such testimony. These see no need of reproof. They feel assured that we have the truth, and that

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the Lord is with us; and they conclude that these continued reproofs and warnings hinder the progress of the cause.

This view of things, and this spirit, is increasing among our people. Love for the pure testimony is waning; and those who dare speak plainly and decidedly against prevailing wrongs and sins among us make themselves a prey to a bitter spirit of rebellion in those who have been often reprov'd, and have stiffen'd their necks against correction. The deception upon the minds of our people is a fearful one. The prophecy to the last stage of the church of Jesus Christ, given A. D. 96, looks forward nearly eighteen hundred years, to 1873, and describes, with minute exactness, the condition of things among us, utters a terrific warning of utter rejection without zealous repentance, counsels the only way of escape, and then, in strains of fullest benevolence ^[#23Sup.p5]and tenderest affection, promises the nearest and dearest communion with Christ to all who hear the voice of warning and open the door of their hearts by zeal in repenting of the sins which have barred the dear Saviour from them.

And let it be remembered that this testimony to the church of the Laodiceans is from the True Witness. It is from the Son of God. It appeals to our people at the present critical hour. It describes their true condition of blindness as to their standing before God; and nothing has done so much to bring our people into this condition, as the influence of those who have cherished a feeling of dislike, and with some it has amounted to determined hatred, against the reproofs which the Lord has given his people through his faithful servants.

A fearful crisis is just upon us. A testimony is ripening among us that will find a hearty response from those whose highest ambition and greatest desire is to be right before God. It will touch the tenderest feelings of all those who bear the burdens of the cause, and who sigh and cry for the growing evils

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among us. This testimony, in harmony with that of the True Witness to the last stage of the church, representing the condition of our people to be very bad, when those who are blinded with their sins of omission and commission think their state to be very good, will not be received by all. Some have so far blinded their eyes to repeated warnings, and are held so fast in the spirit of rebellion, that they never will see things clearly, and feel their lost condition, until it shall be too late for complete reform.^[#23Sup.p6]

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The shape things are taking strongly indicates that "The Shaking," described in Spiritual Gifts 1:183-186, may be just upon us, and that the present time calls for close examination, confession of sins, and earnest prayer before God. As the aforementioned volume is out of print, and not within the reach of many of our people, we give the pages referred to in full.

"I saw some with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety, which expressed their internal struggle. There were firmness and great earnestness expressed in their countenances, while large drops of perspiration rose upon their foreheads, and fell. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God's approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look settled upon them.

"Evil angels crowded around them, pressing their darkness upon them, to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and they distrust God, and next murmur against him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels were having the charge over the people of God, and as the poisonous atmosphere from these evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the angels, which had the charge over them, were continually wafting their wings over them to scatter the thick darkness that surrounded them.

"Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent

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#S7 and careless. They were not resisting^[#23Sup.p7] the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left them, and went to the aid of those earnest, praying ones. I saw the angels of God hasten to the assistance of all those who were struggling with all their energies to resist those evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But the angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.

“As these praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, and encouraged their hearts, and lighted up their countenances.

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen. I was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. It will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver of the testimony, and it will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. This straight testimony, some will not bear. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God’s people.

“I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs, has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it will obey it, and be purified.

#S8 “Said the angel, List ye! Soon I heard a voice that sounded like many musical instruments, all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever^[#23Sup.p8] heard. It seemed to be so full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, Look ye! My attention was then turned to the company I had seen before, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying with agony of spirit. I saw that the company of guardian angels around

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them had doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, firm like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, shone now with the light and glory of Heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy.

“The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to agonize, persevere, and plead for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their numbers were immediately made up by others’ taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Still the evil angels pressed around them. But they could have no power over them.

“I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth in great power. It had effect. I saw those who had been bound; some wives had been bound by their husbands, and some children had been bound by their parents. The^{#23Sup.p9]} honest who #S9 had been held or prevented from hearing the truth, now eagerly laid hold of the truth spoken. All fear of their relatives was gone. The truth alone was exalted to them. It was dearer and more precious than life. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, It is the latter rain; the refreshing from the presence of the Lord; the loud cry of the third angel.”

Dear brethren, we invite your especial attention to the fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth chapters of Isaiah. We suggest that there is strong evidence that the fifty-eighth chapter has a clear and forcible application to our time, and to our condition and duty. This chapter opens with the injunction, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show

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my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.”

The prophet then describes the people of the Lord as formal in their religious devotions. They seek the Lord with prayer and fasting, but not with acceptance. And they murmur because the Lord does not seem to accept their devotions. The Lord then shows that they are defective in their works, as the reason why their lip-service, and their fasting, are not acceptable to him. He rebukes their covetousness and oppression, and teaches them a lesson of benevolence and love, that is manifested in noble, Christ-like deeds. And in the opening verses of the fifty-ninth chapter he addresses those burning, hope-inspiring words to the formal, self-righteous, deceived sinners in Zion. The^[#23Sup.p10] Lord would call them even from their knees and from their devout fasting, to consider facts in the case, of vast importance, as follows:-

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” If the sins mentioned in these verses are pointed out in the previous chapter, then we safely, and from necessity, conclude that the great sin of the people of God at this time is, selfishly hoarding the good things of this life, in neglect of that liberality which God requires. In this neglect of duty, their fasting and their prayers are not acceptable in his sight.

The Lord’s ear is not heavy, neither is his hand short; but he will not answer their prayers, and reach down his hand to their deliverance, until they put away their sins. When they will do this, he will manifest himself to them gloriously. Who has a clean record in Heaven? All our sins are on record in the books above. And it is the work of the Holy Spirit to impress upon the minds of sinners in Zion the very sins that are written against them, and which separate them from God.

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Dear brethren, shall we marvel, and complain, and murmur, because God does not answer our prayers graciously, when, if he did answer them at all, it would have to be done over a record of unconfessed sins in the books above? Rather, let us closely examine our hearts and lives; and if God in mercy speaks from Heaven and points out our sins, we should be the most grateful people that^[#23Sup.p11] live, #S11 and should humble ourselves greatly, repent zealously, and pray fervently that the Holy Spirit may bring before our minds the very sins that are written against us in the Heavenly records, that we may put them away and draw very near to the Lord.

We address you, dear brethren, because, in the providence of God, it has fallen to your lot to bear the responsibilities of the cause of such magnitude and vast importance. It is right that our people should look to you to lead out in the cause of present truth. If your faith shall be weak, and your views and plans as to the extent of the work and the means to be immediately employed for its advancement limited, theirs will be. If you rise up, leaning upon a consistent faith, and lead off in plans, and ways, and means, in harmony with the professed position of Seventh-day Adventists, the true and the good at heart will follow.

ORGANIZATION

In the early history of the cause, in the absence of organized, united action among our people, measures had to be carried very much by individual responsibility and effort. This was not only laborious in the extreme, and sometimes very painful, to the pioneers in the cause; but what most cut them to the heart with feelings of discouragement was the fact that their very best efforts were liable to be counteracted at any time by those who, from want of experience, and from want of humility to learn from those whom God had raised up to lead out in the work, were willing tools of Satan to excite rebellion and

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#S12 cause confusion.^[#23Sup.p12]

But, thank God, those sad days are past. Old things, in this respect, are passed away, and all things have become new. This work is now in the hands of men chosen annually by our people. Our people, having elected them to office, will sustain them. And those who choose to rebel against the order, established customs, and acknowledged agencies employed in this cause from the beginning will not have the pleasure of oppressing individuals, and injuring their influence with the tongue of slander; but they will have to meet the influence of the men our people put in office, and through them the body of our people.

With Seventh-day Adventists, organization was not so much a matter of choice as of necessity. It was first entered into very cautiously by some, and reluctantly by others. And as numbers have increased, and missionary fields have opened before us, we have all come to prize our simple, and, to human view, complete organization. The history of our cause bears a decided testimony in favor of our system of organization. The men who framed it, and introduced it, felt the importance of their work. The Guiding Hand was with them, which is the reason why the lapse of more than ten years has not revealed defects demanding changes. We unhesitatingly express our firm convictions that organization with us was by the direct providence of God. And to disregard our organization is an insult to God's providential dealings with us, and a sin of no small magnitude.

The permanency of the cause, and united effort of all our people to push the work forward,
#S13 ^[#23Sup.p13] depends upon the establishment and maintenance of order. And this cannot be done without proper organization. And organization exists only in form when the offices of such organization are trampled under foot.

No man, capable of filling any office in the cause of God, will feel exalted by such promotion. The

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true principle bearing upon this subject is expressed by our Lord in these words: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." While those who are leaders and officers should be regarded as such, the respect which they may receive will lead them to highly esteem and love those who sustain them in their official duties.

Our General Conference is the highest earthly authority with our people, and is designed to take charge of the entire work in this and all other countries. The officers of our State Conferences, and, also, those of our institutions located at Battle Creek, are expected to respect our General Conference Committee as the men appointed to take the general supervision of the cause in all its branches and interests. They should be regarded as the safest counselors, and the proper persons to give advice in all important matters.

One or more of the General Conference Committee should be present at each State Conference, and should take part in all deliberations and counsels, especially in licensing men to improve their gifts in teaching the word of God, and auditing accounts, and settling with ministers. These men, who labor from State to State, and have their minds exercised with the matters pertaining to the general wants and dangers of the cause, are far better qualified to judge of the local wants of State Conferences than their own officers possibly can be. #S14

The several State Conferences are appointing men to move to Battle Creek to take charge of the leading interests of our cause located in that city. This subject would not have been agitated, and the plan would not have received the sanction of our General Conference, had it not been indispensably necessary. These representative men and families stand in close connection with our efficient General Conference Committee. Should one of them prove to be not the person for the place, he will be reported back to his State Conference by the General Confer-

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ence Committee, and another will be appointed by the State Conference to fill his place.

The General Conference, and also our State Conferences, will be sustained by our people far and near. And the representative men and families, who bear the burdens of the work at Battle Creek, will have the prayers and the confidence of our people everywhere.

All persons of sound judgment will admire the wisdom and safety of our arrangements to guard our institutions and cause. They have been made with the greatest care and no small sacrifice. And now for any of our people to withhold their confidence, sympathy, and support, from the General Conference Committee and the picked men at Battle Creek, and take stock in a spirit of murmuring and fault-finding that may arise in consequence of decided action for the right and against wrong, would be not only an
#S15 insult upon the General Conference, the^[#23Sup.p15] State Conferences, the men sent to Battle Creek, but our entire system of order and organization. It is the duty of our General Conference Committee to understand how matters are moving in all departments of the cause, to correct wrongs, and to sustain the right. And it would be an exhibition of folly for those who know but very little of the workings of the cause to set up their judgment against those who know all about it, and are annually appointed to take charge of it. The field of labor has already become extensive, and new branches of the work are constantly arising, demanding the attention and watch care of the General Conference Committee.

Works must be prepared expressly for translation into other languages. This great and important work of publishing the message in other languages claims immediate attention. The Lord has given the cause brethren Brownsberger, Lichtenstein, and others, to assist in the work.

An appeal from the friends in Oregon and Washington Territory is now in the hands of the Com-

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mittee, and we hope they will be able to send a safe and efficient missionary to that promising field soon. And there are other similar calls that should have attention. And the scattered friends of the cause must be patient, and ever bear in mind that the only proper way for missionary work to be carried forward is under the supervision of our General Conference Committee.

The present policy of calling one or more of our most reliable men from the several States to guard our institutions at Battle Creek, and to represent our people in the different States, will not ^[#23Sup.p16] fail to establish that complete confidence in the minds and hearts of our people everywhere that no other means can. And when these men of God, after prayer and careful reflection, say to our people in the several States that one, or two, or three hundred thousand dollars are wanted for the glory of God and the advancement of his cause, it will be forwarded without delay. Whatever lack of confidence there may have been in the minds of any, in the management of affairs at Battle Creek up to the present time, under the present policy, such doubts will simply be unreasonable. The men who have come to Battle Creek, have done so at no small sacrifice for the sake of the cause. And these are the very last to be called in question. If we cannot confide in the men appointed to this position by the State Conferences, we can confide in none. #S16

BROADER PLANS OF OPERATION

It is truly gratifying to witness the present progress of the cause. To learn that persons of moral worth and mind, not only of the American people, but those from other nations in our country, are joining our ranks, is very encouraging.

But when we consider the extent and magnitude of the work to be accomplished, as marked out in prophecy, the brief period in which it must be done, we are forced to the conclusion that God re-

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quires of us broader plans and more vigorous efforts. It seems that the providence of God is far in advance of us.

#S17 God is wonderfully moving upon the minds and hearts of the people of other tongues in our country. We should have had works printed in the ^[#23Sup.p17] German, French, and Swedish languages, as well as in the Danish, several years since. These manifestations are very wonderful, and should stir our people greatly.

Bro. Matteson has done a good work for the Danish and Norwegian people, in translating our works, and in getting out their monthly. God will bless him and his people if they humbly persevere, and push the work onward in the name and strength of God.

We are very happy to learn, through the Review, of the work of the Lord by Bro. Lee among the Swedes. In the Lord he must put his trust, as he has done under his discouragements, and he will have strength and wisdom to win souls to Christ.

There are no reasons why missions among the French, Germans, and Swedes in our country may not be as successful as the one among the Danes and Norwegians, if the same energy and self-sacrifice can be manifested in the men who may lead out. But those who engage in such missions will find, if they are successful, that the work is no child's play. We found this to be the case, especially in the early history of the work, among the American people.

The fields are all white and ready for the harvest. There is not only a want of publications in different languages, and men filled with the spirit of their mission to preach to the people of other languages in our own country, and scatter publications among them, but we must send men to Europe to establish the work there.

#S18 And there should be those to preach the truth, and circulate our works in our principal cities. ^[#23Sup.p18] It was in the great thoroughfares of travel

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that our Lord gave much of his public instruction, where people of all nations heard him and spread his fame abroad. The larger cities, and smaller ones also, must be entered, and tons of our publications in the different languages circulated. When one of our larger cities shall be entered with a tent, a daily paper must be established in connection, as an advertising medium of the meetings in the tent, and of our publications, and to give the substance of each day's lectures for the instruction of the reading masses. We have altogether too long made child's play of the message which God has committed to us to give to the people. Let us from this time have our efforts correspond with the magnitude and importance of the work, or let us abandon our profession.

There are scores of men in the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists who have become literally rich since they embraced the message. And when our General Conference Committee, in a judicious manner, lay plans broad enough, our wealthy brethren, and our brethren in more moderate circumstances, will back up the work with their means.

We have recently been looking over the broad field relative to our publishing interests. We think the time has come to stereotype our standard books, pamphlets, and tracts, and at the same time take two sets of plates, one for a branch office on the Pacific coast, and one for the Atlantic. This would reduce the cost of our publications, and the need of capital and office room at Battle Creek. Paper is but a trifle ^[#23Sup.p19] higher in San Francisco than in Battle ^{#S19} Creek. It is made on the coast of Maine, and shipped to the Pacific coast. And on the Atlantic coast, stock is cheaper than in Michigan. The day is not far distant when our publications will be printed from duplicate plates, both on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. This will greatly reduce our type setting, and our heavy freights on publications from the interior to the east and to the west.

God is willing to do great things for his cause

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on the Pacific coast. He has shown his willingness to work for his cause and people in California, especially in the year past, in sending them help when they needed it most in the sad state of things last fall, and in greatly blessing the labors of his servants the present season.

The General Conference Committee is disposed to extend the work up the coast, to Oregon and Washington Territory. The friends of the cause on the Pacific coast should have the cash ready to liberally help establish a Branch Office and Health Institute on their coast in 1874.

We would here state that those who may regard these suggestions as extravagant should understand that little has ever been accomplished in our cause without laying plans, and without persevering efforts to execute them. Those of our people who have neither faith nor interest in the prosperity of the cause, but have been willing to shut themselves up to their own interests in this life, have never been ready to second our plans and efforts to extend and push forward the work. It is of no use to appeal to such in reference to laying broader plans.

But in hope that our words will be felt, we do
#S20 [#23Sup.p20] appeal to our General Conference Committee, to the State Conference Committees, to the picked men at Battle Creek, and to the officers of our Tract and Missionary Societies. The General Conference Committee, seeing the pressing wants of the cause, should lay their plans wisely and well, sufficiently extensive to meet present and future demands.

OUR SCHOOL AT BATTLE CREEK

In the matter of the school at Battle Creek, the General Conference Committee and the representative men at Battle Creek cannot wait until the means are all raised. They must lay their plans sufficiently broad, and then go to work with the means already raised. And while the buildings are going up, let the money be raised to complete the work. Should it be

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necessary, on account of narrow views and the tardiness of our people, a debt could be made, to be reduced year by year, as the men of this world do successfully in the execution of worldly schemes.

OUR HEALTH INSTITUTE.

With a liberal hand, our people should free our Health Institute from all embarrassments and obligations, and make it capable of receiving three hundred patients. Then the worthy afflicted people of the Lord, who have not the means to spare, could find an asylum for a few weeks, or months, free of charge. When there shall be stock taken to swell the sum to \$100,000, the interest all to be appropriated to the charitable uses of the Institute, then it will be placed forever above want,^[#23Sup.p21] and be able to #S21 expend \$10,000 annually on the worthy poor.

It is reported there are seventy patients at the Institute, and that there are daily arrivals from all parts of the country. The increasing confidence in the Health Reformer, and the Health Institute, and the ability and integrity of our people in the management of such matters, is encouraging. It is remarkable that the knowledge and influence of these should be so extensive, when we have advertised only in our own publications. A few hundreds of dollars expended in advertising, and there could be three hundred patients called to the Institute as easily as seventy. But we have not dared to advertise, lest more should come than could be treated. This is a living shame to our people. The Health Institute has been, and still can be, one of the most powerful means of shedding light upon many honest minds, and spreading abroad, in the most favorable manner, the knowledge of the truth.

THE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

The Publishing Association, in order to carry on its business, must have a large increase of its capital stock. The third building, including lot, will

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cost \$10,000. The power press has now run fifteen years, and must be laid up for repairs. If it was in good running order, it would have to groan day and night, as it did at great loss all last winter, to do our work. We are, therefore, under the necessity of immediately purchasing two new presses, that two may
 #S22 run constantly, while a third may be held^[#23Sup.p22] in reserve to be called into use in case of a break-down. The two presses, freight, and expenses of putting them in running order will cost not far from \$8,000, so that the third building and presses cost, the present season, the sum of \$18,000.

The rapid increase of the business of the Association called for these, and also calls for more printing material and stock to correspond, so that there should be raised by our people the present season the sum of \$25,000, or the Association will have to draw upon its earnings, and contract debts.

We wish here to appeal to the sense of justice and honor of our people. You were informed by our article, entitled, Permanency of the Cause, which appeared in Review for July 8, 1873, that all that the numerous friends had done for our publishing interests for the period of twenty-one years, in donations, shares of stock, and legacies, was only \$36,000; while those who had worn out their energies in building up the publishing interests had, with the blessing of God, added \$37,000, besides paying the sum of \$5,000 during the three years past, to the writers of new books, it being one-half of the profits on first editions.

And this has been accomplished while offering our publications at extremely low prices. It has been our policy to press our publications into the hands of the people everywhere, and we have put down prices very low, that we might give them a wider circulation. Our prices are generally below other publishing houses, even those larger houses where they turn out
 #S23 large^[#23Sup.p23] editions one after another from plates, for the reading million. While the real cost of their

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books is at least twenty per cent less than the cost of ours, their prices are twenty per cent higher. It is under such circumstances that \$37,000 has been added #S22 to the \$36,000 put in by all our people. And now that \$25,000 are wanted the present season, will our people raise this sum? or will they withhold their means, and leave the work to be crippled until this sum shall be earned by those who toil incessantly for six to twelve dollars per week, enough, simply, for a subsistence? Which shall be done?

We are conscious that those who have sacrificed health, and have endangered life, have erred in supposing that the friends of the cause would fully appreciate their toils and sacrifices. They did confidently expect that the low prices of our publications, and devotion to the work which has secured great prosperity, would inspire in the hearts of all the friends of the cause a corresponding spirit of sacrifice, to meet the rapidly increasing demands for more capital to be invested in buildings, presses, types, stock, etc.

Will not the facts and figures presented in the foregoing, relative to the Association, give confidence in the work, and provoke the friends of the cause, everywhere, to love and good works? If not, then we despair of their ever being moved to come up to the help of the Lord with their means. [#23Sup.p24] #S24

SYSTEMATIC BENEVOLENCE

Our system to raise means for the support of the cause is equitable in its workings, and will be ample in its results. But when all our people shall come up to the figures, in the rapid growth of the cause, it must be guarded carefully from abuses by careless auditors and unconsecrated ministers, lest our people become discouraged at improper appropriations, and the system become broken down.

The auditing of accounts and settling with licentiates at the last annual meeting of the Michigan Conference, in some cases, was such that, if our peo-

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ple were acquainted with the facts, many would not pay into the treasury at all. We are glad to know that the President of the General Conference is aroused to the dangers to which our S. B. is exposed.

The books at the Office show that several hundred dollars were paid to a licentiate, a single youth, of wealthy, believing parents, who had not made his mark as a successful laborer, while a preacher of considerable experience, who had labored ardently and successfully in Indiana and Michigan, received less than the licentiate, simply because he was conscientious in bringing in his account of time spent in work.

True, this youth, as well as others in Michigan, speaks from place to place, reports good attendance, prejudice removed, etc., etc. But where are the conversions? What churches are being raised up by these young men to bring funds into the treasury? Is it not astonishing that auditing committees will pay funds out of ^{#23Sup.p25]} the treasury to such men, who do little or nothing to bring means into the treasury? And men in such circumstances in life, who do not add to the cause and the treasury, who would take money out of it, would sell their Lord for fewer pieces of silver than were pocketed by Judas.

We will here mention another abuse of the S. B. treasury. A certain preacher encouraged a certain brother to go out and labor. He went on the cars, from Michigan to Wisconsin and back, at the expense, as he reported, of \$50.00. The Wisconsin Conference was invited to pay the bill; but not having employed the brother, and not being able to see \$50.00 worth of work done, very sensibly refused. The brother then appealed to Battle Creek, and the now ex-president of the Michigan Conference, and one of the General Conference Committee, decided to pay the bill, \$25.00 from the General Conference fund, and \$25.00 from the Michigan Conference fund.

In the first place, it is the duty of the officers of our conferences to encourage men to go out to la-

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bor. The most that ministers can do, is to report persons to the proper authorities. And, in the second place, men should go out on their first trips on foot, or with their own private conveyance, near home, at their own expense. And, in the third place, we thank God that General Conference had backbone to decide that the two officials who paid the money out of the two funds, should pay the sums from their own pockets into the treasury again.

As a people, we should have a zeal for truth, justice, and righteousness. Our efficient ^[#23Sup.p26] #S26 ministers, who labor and study, and become workmen, and are successful, especially those who are worn under the burdens of the cause, should be fully sustained. Our young men should be encouraged to become strong men in the work. And all licentiates should be directed and encouraged to take a course to become men of God, and successful laborers. But those who have not a heart in them to venture out, and endure hardships and discouragements, and still believe and hope on until God gives them success, which will place them in the confidence of our people, are not worthy to receive funds which have been sacredly consecrated to the cause.

And we would suggest that, before paying money from the treasury, the auditing committees would do well to take into account the amount of actual labor put forth, and the amount of good accomplished; the circumstances and real wants of the minister, and the number of dependents in his family; whether he keeps house and entertains others, and has heavy home expenses, or whether he and his family live upon the brethren, and have no home expenses.

The entire amount of S. B. paid by all our people, as given in last General Conference report, is \$30,687. It is not difficult to show that, according to the plan adopted by our people, the entire sum should not be less than \$75,000. The New England Conference is supposed to come up nearer to the fig-

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#S27 ures of our adopted plan of S. B. than any other. That Conference has longest enjoyed the legitimate workings of the Tract and Missionary Society. And this being one of the branches of the work^[#23Sup.p27] of the Society, its officers have brought the figures up nearer to the plan than are those of any other Conference. That Conference averages about \$10 to each member.

And we make the statement, partly from personal knowledge, and partly from the opinions of proper judges, that the members of the New England Conference will not average, in point of amount of property, with the members of our Conferences generally.

But suppose that they do average in point of property with others; then, if others put their figures up as near the plan as the New England Conference has, the average amount for the entire membership will be \$10. The membership given in last report is 5,875. Should each pay into the treasury, this conference year, equal to the members of the New England Conference, the entire sum would be 58,750. But there are not less than 10,000 Seventh-day Adventists in the United States. And there are no reasons why our numerous scattered friends, who are not members of churches, should excuse themselves from adopting the plan of S. B. Should all our people enter the plan, and come up to the figures set forth in the plan, the amount would be not less than \$75,000 annually.

#S28 Now, who shall take hold of the work to bring all our people up to the figures? Our preachers have other work on their hands, more proper for their calling. And the elders and deacons of our churches sustain so close relation to their churches as to make this work, in many cases at least, a delicate one for them. Who, then, are^[#23Sup.p28] the proper persons to do this work? The answer to this question is at hand. The officers of our Tract and Missionary Societies are the very persons to take hold of it. It is their duty to

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ascertain whether the members of our churches, and scattered brethren as far as possible, do, or do not, come up to the figures of the plan of S. B. Let the men be elected to those offices that have the nerve to do this work, and the good judgment and the piety to do it in a manner in harmony with the name - Systematic Benevolence.

Bro. E. H. Root and his twelve associate directors have a large work on their hands. The membership of the Michigan Conference was, at last report, 1616, whose S. B. is \$6,528.72, which is only \$4.04 a member. This is less than one-half, to a member, of the amount paid by the New England Conference; when, if the members of the Michigan Conference would come up to the figures on their comparative wealth, they would pay into the treasury at least twenty five per cent more to a member than the average amount of the members of the New England Conference. But should Michigan average only as high as the New England Conference, the entire amount would be \$16,160, instead of \$6,528.72. We believe that the amount of S. B. of the Michigan Conference can be raised to \$20,000 before the close of 1874, if the officers of the Tract and Missionary Society will take hold of the work in good old New England style. The officers of the Tract and Missionary Societies in all the States should take hold of this work in earnest. And let the General Conference Committee see that^[#23Sup.p29] all our scattered brethren adopt our #S29 plan of S. B.

But what shall be done with so much money? Answer: The General Conference should expend, before the close of 1874, the sum of \$20,000 in the preparation, translation, and publication, of works in the German, French, Danish, and Swedish languages. And the General Conference must extend its missions to Europe, to the Pacific, and, in fact, in all directions, as far as the calls can be supplied.

And, then, not less than \$300,000 must be raised for our School, Publishing Association, Health

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Institute, and Book Fund, during the years 1874 and 1875. There should be raised, during the year 1874, the sum of \$50,000 for our School, \$50,000 for the Health Institute, and \$50,000 to be divided equally between the Publishing Association and the Book Fund, making in all, \$150,000. And the same amounts should also be raised during 1875.

Suppose that our S. B. is one per cent on all the property of our people, amounting to \$75,000. In order to raise the \$150,000 annually, for two years, two per cent more would be required annually beside the S. B. These sums can be raised by our people without the least embarrassment. Will the General Conference Committee set the stone rolling, the work to be carried out by the Officers of the Tract and Missionary Societies? We suggest that there should be among us persons who would pay, besides the full figures of S. B., the following sums during 1875, quarterly on the first of March, June, September, and December.^[#23Sup.p30]

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50 persons, each,\$200 00per quarter,\$40,000 100 “
 ”100 00“ ”40,000 100 “ ”50 00“ ”20,000 100 “ ”25 00“
 ”10,000 250 “ ”10 00“ ”10,000 500 “ ”5 00“ ”10,000
 500 “ ”2 50“ ”5,000 1000 “ ”1 25“ ”5,000 2000 “ ”62
 1/2“ ”5,000 5000 “ ”25“ ”5,000 Total\$150,000

TRACT AND MISSIONARY WORK

We hail the appearance, and witness the rising prosperity, of the Tract and Missionary Society among us, with great joy, and highest hopes as to the efficiency of this means of grace. Like every other means to accomplish great good in the cause of Christ, however, this must be pushed forward with vigilance at every step. God bless Bro. Haskell, and send him to all parts of the wide field to plead with our people in behalf of this worthy institution.

This Tract and Missionary work must be encouraged by every proper means. And the trustees of the Publishing Association will doubtless all agree on the following points:

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1. To discount one-fourth on all bound books and pamphlets.
2. To discount one-half on tracts.
3. To receive one-half the wholesale prices of books, pamphlets, and tracts, furnished to T. and M. Societies from the Book Fund, and one-half from the Societies.
4. To pay all common railroad freights on books to any distance not exceeding 1,500 miles. Express charges on books to be paid by the receiver.^[#23Sup.p31] #S31

And we would here call especial attention to Bro. Littlejohn's pamphlet on "The Constitutional Amendment: or, the Sunday, the Sabbath, the Change, and the Restitution." This work is adapted, above all others on our catalogue, for general circulation by the Tract and Missionary Society. It is candid and able. It is in a style to meet the taste, and also the wants of the intelligent reading public. This pamphlet should be widely circulated to open the way for Bro. Littlejohn's full work, containing the discussion, also, between himself and the Statesman. The terms of our publications to the T. and M. Society are made as easy as possible to encourage that living, efficient organization.

Again, faith in the work of God, as manifested in the cause of the third message from its beginning, in the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy among us, is not increasing in the minds of those who do not read Mrs. W. 's works. Those who read them are established. Those who do not read them waver, and are exposed to the poisonous influence of those who are at war with Mrs. W. 's plain testimonies. The most proper way to encourage an intelligent faith in the testimonies of the Spirit of God to the church, is to urge the reading of the books. These books are not what a misinformed public suppose them to be. Nothing will disarm prejudice, and increase faith in this work, like reading the books. A case at Woodland favorably illustrates this matter. When Elders Loughborough and Cornell were there with the tent,

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#S32 in the summer of 1872, a cry was raised against the visions, and one man sent for one of the books, and boasted that he would soon be able^[#23Sup.p32] to expose the whole matter. The book came, the gentleman read it and was silent. His friends called for the book, but he would not let them have it, and there the matter ended. And when Mrs. W. visited Woodland, in the autumn of the same year, she was heard with intense interest. The time is not far distant when the T. and M. Society will put these works into the hands of all candid persons who desire to read them, especially Sabbath-keepers. Mrs. W. hopes to complete volumes two and three before next General Conference. These three volumes are designed to contain her views of the great controversy, from the fall of Satan to the destruction of sin and sinners at the second death, including much practical matter especially applicable to our time.

THE BOOK FUND

There was a commendable zeal in raising the book fund when the enterprise was first started, and much good was done by the circulation of our works before the T. and M. Society was established. But, very soon, discouragements arose relative to tract distribution on individual responsibility, as tracts were claimed by persons who proved to be so unworthy as to do more harm than good in tract and missionary labor. It was soon seen that organized effort was necessary to do this work properly. And the more we see the workings of our Tract and Missionary Society, the more we admire, and thank God for, the organization.

#S33 Our brethren can now add their donations to the Book Fund with the assurance that they will be used judiciously, to the glory of God. This^[#23Sup.p33] work is now under the direction of men of judgment and of piety. They must have the books, in English, German, French, Danish, Swedish, &c. God help. Let the fund in hand, of \$5,000, be expended, and let

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\$25,000 take its place during the year 1874. Should all our people come up to the figures on S. B., so that there might be a surplus in the hands of the General Conference treasury, what a fine thing for general conference to be able to make an appropriation of a few thousands to the Book Fund. The time is not far distant when our soundest men will feel compelled to leave their farms and shops to go everywhere to converse with the people, and circulate our works. God help us, as a people, to feel the importance of our mission.

GENERAL REMARKS

Dear brethren, may God give you to see and realize the magnitude and importance of the work in all its branches. May you ever be imbued with the spirit of the work, and feel and know in your own minds and hearts that it is the work of God. This being, in an eminent sense, the work of God, men must be careful not to take glory to themselves when the Lord works through them in its prosperity. Whatever has been done in this cause from the first, however wearing, requiring the most self-sacrificing effort, has been accomplished because the Lord was in it. Let his name be glorified.

And while we regret our want of faith to endure the trials of the past, at the same time, in calling to remembrance the former days, in the early history of this cause, we find comfort and courage in^[#23Sup.p34] #S34 the Lord. We must not be denied the pleasure of recounting the mercies of the Lord to us in our humble efforts to build up the cause from the very first.

By the grace of God, we were enabled to earn the money at chopping cord wood that took us to the first Conference of believers in the third message, in the year 1848. And by his grace, we earned the money at mowing grass to furnish ourselves with second-hand and other cheapest clothing, and to pay our fare to the second Conference, held in Western New York the same year.

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Those were happy days. It was our joy to preach the truth then, to even a very few, after paying our fare on second-class cars and canal boats, from money thus earned.

Our earliest friends in the cause, now living, will bear us witness that, for the first years of our labors in the cause, we preached from town to town, and from State to State, much of the time with patches on knees, elbows, and toes of our boots.

We learned how to trust in God in those days, and felt the blessedness of perfect trust. We knew what it was to suffer hunger from want of convenient food, and cold from want of proper clothing, and to work, day after day, week after week, and year after year, from fifteen to eighteen hours each day, besides the arduous labors of the Sabbath meetings.

Thank God that twenty-five years of the very best of life have gone into the cause of the third message. We only regret that it has not always been with a cheerful, hopeful, trusting spirit. During the past year, we have had seasons of close examination, and #S35 repentance before God, and have^[#23Sup.p35] had the most gracious manifestations of the pitying love of Christ.

And let it be distinctly understood that we are not conscious of doing our brethren any injustice. Our sin has been against God, in suffering the wrongs of others to depress, and cut off living faith in his providential care. For this, we have felt deep sorrow of heart, and have humbled ourself greatly before God, and have the clearest assurance that he accepts our confessions and humiliation.

And we would say to those who are disposed to act a similar part to that of Shimei to repenting David, If the Lord suffer them to triumph over our humiliation, let them triumph. In the language of David: "It may be that the Lord will look upon mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for their cursing." See 2Sam., chap. 16.

But as our chief labors and cares have been

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for our publishing work, we wish to speak more particularly as to it. When we established the press at Rochester, N. Y., in 1852, we had not means to pay freight on household goods. We waited and prayed a day for help. Next day we took a letter from the post-office from sister Howland, then of Topsham, Me., containing \$5.00. This was unexpected. With this we paid freight, and had six shillings left, with which we purchased Mrs. W. a set of second-hand, wood-seated chairs. They were odds and ends, no two of them being alike. Soon we were able to purchase two bedsteads at twenty-five cents each. We took our first meals on a fireboard, placed upon the head of an old flour barrel. And as we partook of our frugal meals, ^[#23Sup.p36] we felt that God was good. We added furniture and the necessaries of life as we were able to get them. #S36

Some of our brethren who know nothing by experience of our toils and wants in the early history of the cause, seem disturbed at our relation of them. We boast in the Lord of the grace that has been given us, and by his grace our people shall soon have a book full of the facts and incidents to which we look back with greatest pleasure.

Above all things, we have dreaded to become a church pauper, or a church pet. And, although we have helped other ministers to homes, with our means, and with our influence, the thought never entered our mind or the mind of Mrs. W., in our poverty, to have the brethren help us to a home. It is true that during our extreme sickness, and reduced circumstances about six years since, our people helped us by donations amounting to nearly \$1,000. This we offered to pay back to the donors, or to put into the cause two dollars for one. No one has called for their donations. And within the four years past, we have put into the several branches of the cause the sum of \$3,000, which is three dollars for one. And now, be it known to all persons who have donated to our personal wants, that we are ready at any

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time before the first day of January, 1874, to pay back to them two dollars for every one we have received from them. And our firm principles, to stand for the right, irrespective of the love of friends and the hatred of enemies, and not swerve to the right nor to the left, spoils us for a church pet.

Of those brethren who have been helped to homes, we would say that, in our opinion, the
 #S37 ^[#23Sup.p37]act injured most of them. Some of them have been but very little help to the cause since that time. In particular, we suggest that the brethren in the States of Iowa and New York have been greatly imposed upon. Those ministers accepted responsibilities that are on record above, and the matter will have to be met, either by a proper course in this life, or by the results of the Judgment settlement, very soon.

And we would also suggest that it would be highly proper for those who have it in their hearts to refund means given them in a home, to first offer it to the donors. Those brethren whom we had helped to get homes when they were in the enjoyment of health would have found a precious blessing in refunding it when we were sick, and so reduced that we sold furniture, carpets, and next, our dear home in Battle Creek. But God has greatly blessed us, and has raised us above want, so that we have a competency. And the Battle Creek church, to whom we had preached, and for whom we had labored more than ten years without remuneration, when we should have been resting from office labors, lost a great blessing when they let us sell our home, and go from their midst in our affliction. Instead of giving us sympathy and support, they gave their sympathy to those who hated us, simply because we bore that testimony which was true in their cases. And our enemies everywhere are indebted to that people, and to their sympathizers, for the falsehoods that have gone out unfavorable to us. These things have been most oppressive and cruel. But, thank God, a record has
 #S38 been kept of their^[#23Sup.p38] course and of ours, and

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the God of all the earth will do right.

We do not say that the prophet Isaiah wrote his fifty-eighth chapter especially for the church at Battle Creek; but we do say that their covetous neglect and oppression above mentioned, the treatment of the lamented Hannah Moore, and of orphans we have brought into their midst, and now their proclamations of fasts while they do not from the heart do those things which constitute an acceptable fast to the Lord, should make the appeal and the promises of that chapter, of great interest to that church.

God speaks to that people: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

And our heart leaps with joy as we read the promised blessing to those who keep God's glorious fast. Here they are. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy^[#23Sup.p39] #S39 darkness be as the noonday. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

There are great blessings for our people everywhere, if they will seek them lawfully. The beloved John declares that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us

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from all unrighteousness.” He states, also, that “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,” and “if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” But confessing one’s sins is generally hard work; and some would rather fast and make long prayers, if they can persuade themselves that such service will do as well. These need not wonder that the Lord does not hear them. Isaiah explains the matter fully. “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” And because words are very cheap, others will with-hold their tithes and offerings, and take it out in praying; and they wonder, and mourn, and almost murmur, that the Lord does not hear their prayers. Malachi meets their case completely. “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the

#S40 [#23Sup.p40] storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Prayer is a sacred duty, in its proper time and place; but it was never designed to take the place of justice, benevolence, true repentance, and mercy. Let those who are praying against the closed Heaven, while their hearts are darkened and hardened with sins of omission and commission, get up from their knees, and confess their sins, and first do those things which will open the windows of Heaven. Then prayer will be easy, and the blessing will be poured out.

We have no property east of the Mississippi river, and we do not expect to sustain that close rela-

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tion to the work at head-quarters that we have in time past. And we wish here to make a statement of facts in regard to the Publishing Association.

In another place, we stated that our people had for the past twenty-one years, from first to last, put into the Association, in donations, legacies, and shares of stock, the sum of \$36,000. To this has been added, notwithstanding the high prices during the war, and bad management by others during our sickness after the war, the sum of \$37,000.

But in this no account is made of the value that exists in the business itself, in lists of subscribers, copy-right of publications, etc. This is really worth not less than one-half as much more as the entire amount of property invoiced. No competent judge of what publishers call the ^[#23Sup.p41] "good will" #S41 of such a flourishing publishing house, would set its value less than \$35,000. But we will call the entire value of the Association only \$100,000. And the correctness of this estimate is further seen when it is understood that the annual earning of the Association is not less than \$10,000 after meeting all expenses of every sort. The annual reports for the last four years have shown an increase in earnings of ten per cent on the capital invested.

And now, as we leave the personal charge of this work to the picked men at Battle Creek, we devoutly thank God that we are able to report to the friends of the cause, that we leave in their hands the property of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association to the amount of \$100,000, which has cost our people \$36,000.

In the building up of our publishing interests, several able writers have, by the grace of God, contributed invaluable articles to our periodicals, and works of real merit to our catalogue of publications. But these men have not borne the burdens, cares, and perplexities of the financial department. In fact, they were so free from all care of this branch of the work, that they gave no attention whatever to it. Dur-

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#S42 ing the last year that Bro. Aldrich served as President, \$4,000 of the capital stock of the Association were sunk, when there should have been a gain, at ten per cent earned on the property invested, that year, of \$3,500. Several of our ablest writers were associated in office with Bro. Aldrich; and none of them took the trouble to care and know how matters were going. If credit is to be given to these brethren for the financial^[#23Sup.p42] prosperity of the Association, then, we inquire, Where were they during the year when \$4,000 capital stock was lost, when there should have been a gain of \$3,500 at least?

As far as human agencies are concerned, much credit should be given to sister A. P. Van Horn, who filled the responsible position of Secretary with ability and the greatest care; and in our absence and our feebleness, matured plans for the general management, and after submitting them to us, with our approval, executed them.

But let all our people understand that it is because God has especially blessed and directed those who have had a heart to labor and suffer, and sacrifice all that makes this life of any value - health - is the reason why prosperity has crowned their efforts. This is God's work, and let him have the glory.

Those who are compelled to leave the personal care of the work, under most painful circumstances as regards health, cheerfully and confidently trust themselves in the hands of God. If our people are not just with them at present, God will be. And his people will see the day when they will properly value their labors.

We have made sacrifices to build up our Health Institute, such as is not in our power to do again. Yet, as we now have faithful, representative men at Battle Creek, to guard our institutions there, our interest in it is greater than when more or less doubt existed as to its prosperity and the great good it is destined to accomplish.

About four years since, by bad management,

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the Health Institute and the Reformer were brought into most discouraging circumstances; so^[#23Sup.p43] #S43 much so, that we at one time decided in our own mind that the property must be sold, and after paying heavy debts, a small per cent be refunded to stockholders. The prospect was most gloomy. Mrs. W. had made important statements, upon high authority, relative to the Institute and its work, the fulfillment of which seemed doubtful.

But at the very time when the prospect looked the most doubtful, when bowed at the family altar, the Spirit of the Lord came upon us, faith revived, and with a clear presentiment of the future prosperity of the Institute, we gave this testimony in the hearing of our family, while still bowed on our knees, "God will yet vindicate all that his Spirit has testified of the prosperity and usefulness of our Health Institute."

At that time, there was a debt on the Institute of \$13,000, and but eight patients. The confidence of our people in the Health Reformer and the Health Institute was being shaken, and many were discontinuing the Reformer. We clearly saw that the prosperity of the Institute depended very much upon the character and tone of the Reformer. If that journal should improve and prosper, the Institute would prosper. Should it run down, and be discontinued, the Institute would have to be closed up.

Mrs. W. decided to unite her energies with ours to improve the Reformer, and to extend its circulation. God blessed our efforts. The circulation of the Reformer was soon doubled, and, with the assistance of several contributors, and the blessing of God, it became a live journal. We also united our efforts at the Health Institute as counselors, and often spoke to the patients in^[#23Sup.p44] the parlor as #S44 we could steal a half hour from other pressing duties.

Confidence soon became restored in the Institute, and, in consequence of the wide circulation of the Reformer, patients came pouring in, so that most of the time for three years there have been as many

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as desired. The Institute has paid the \$13,000 debt, amounting, including interest, to at least \$15,000. And it has purchased, built, repaired, and fitted up rooms to the amount of \$15,000 more.

That the Institute might be able to relieve those who had taken stock which they were not able to hold, and to set an example to others, we took \$500 more stock, making \$1,000 held by Mrs. W. and ourself. But it has been difficult to raise much new stock. So, at a still later period, we took \$500 more, making \$1,500, and urged the friends of the Institute to come up liberally. But most of the new stock taken for several years has been simply transferred from those who were not able to hold it as a virtual donation.

And here we wish to state that, although we had nothing to do whatever in inducing poor people to take stock in the Institute with the hope that they would receive large interests, we have taken \$1,000 more in stock than we are able to hold, for the sake of relieving those poorer than ourselves; while those who framed the organization, and who committed the error, have, as yet, done little or nothing to relieve those who were deceived by extravagant representations of profits.

#S45 When we took charge of the Reformer, the [#23Sup.p45] number of paying subscribers was small, so that the journal was hardly self-sustaining, and some of our ministers suggested that it be discontinued, and a hygienic department be opened in the Review. But the increase was so very rapid that the profits on the Reformer, health books, etc., in the period of two years, were \$5,000.

Many grateful thanks to those brethren who wrote for the Reformer, and assisted in obtaining subscribers. But besides these, no one, not even the Health Institute, lifted a hand to earn the \$5,000. The Reformer had called patronage so that the Institute had paid its debts, and had purchased, and built, and fitted up, largely. The Reformer had advertised

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the Institute free; and now, here are \$5,000 profits on it, books, etc. Does justice inquire, Whose was the \$5,000? Let justice answer. But we took the \$5,000 we had earned at the expense of health, and paid ourself for our last home in Battle Creek, and gave a deed to the Health Institute.

As we are compelled to leave the work at headquarters to others, and, judging from the past, our acts in connection with it to be criticised and misrepresented, we feel a relief in stating foregoing facts, for the information of the true friends of the cause. These we wish to save from the influence of those who would misrepresent us. It is a painful necessity which demands such explanations in matters pertaining so largely to one's self. But there are those among Seventh-day Adventists who would take advantage of our silence to misrepresent us, or, if we state facts, they will charge us with self-praise. These we do not expect to help. They will try^[#23Sup.p46] to #S46 make capital out of our silence, or our defense.

But this is probably the last statement of the kind we shall ever make.

As we lay off the armor from sad necessity, we shall look to you, dear brethren, of the General Conference Committee, the picked men at Battle Creek, and the committees of the several State Conferences, to defend us and care for us. You know our toils and sacrifices, and we confide in you to do justice by us. We also confide to your care the institutions which have occupied the best of our life, and in which we have crowded the strength of two years into one. Beware of putty men, two-faced men, and men given to change. Depend upon it, men of iron and steel are wanted at Battle Creek, who will, at the same time, deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

If the Lord looks upon our affliction, and gives us strength to labor, we may go where the brethren fully open the way for us, and remain, God willing, while they care for us. Our day for pressing the battle, and urging our way through, is past.

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Dear brethren, we wish to guard you against the attacks of Satan. We call your attention to the charge that we complain of brethren for not taking responsibilities; and then, when they do, they are severely censured if they err in judgment. To this we reply that when the men who had watched us, and had given their influence to those who had murmured against us, during the first twelve years of our hardest toils, did assume responsibilities during our sickness which terribly injured the cause, we were

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[#23Sup.p47] probably too willing that they should feel their wrong, and that they should learn the cruelty of holding in doubt, and casting an influence against, those who were doing their duty as God had called them. But where is the man we have cast a feather's weight of blame upon while sincerely doing his duty. As we have ever said, so we repeat: Those who have been thrust into the battle, as we have been, and as Brn. Butler and Haskell now are, should be sustained in their faithful efforts to do their duty, as long as they are held in office, should they err in judgment once in three times.

Second, We are charged with injuring the cause by harsh dealing with brethren. Now, if this be true, it is an easy matter to prove it. Mrs. W. has labored by our side from State to State, and from church to church, for twenty-four years, and it has been our specific work to correct errors, allay fanaticism, and deal with unruly spirits.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” Let the order, unity, and the comparative efficiency of our people, testify to this point. This, brethren, is a trick of Satan, manifested in a bold falsehood. What churches have we divided and scattered? You know that our work has been to remove errors and difficulties from among the people of God, and bring them to a state of unity. God has wonderfully blessed our efforts to do this, and let his dear name have the praise. Beware of a feigned, sanctimonious fear of Bro. White in that class who choose this as their best

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plan to deceive you, and wickedly cast a false impression and fear upon others.
J. W.

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Testimony For The Church

Number 24

By Ellen G. White
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1875

The Great Rebellion

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

When the Hebrews were brought into scenes of danger, and where their appetite was restricted, instead of their trusting in God, who had done wondrous things for them, they murmured against Moses. The Son of God was the leader of the Israelites, although invisible to the congregation. His presence went before them, and conducted all their travels, while Moses was their^{#24.p4} visible leader, receiving his direction from the angel, who was Jesus Christ.

Base Idolatry.

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

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

The Hebrews were cruelly unbelieving and basely ungrateful in their impious request, "Make us gods to go before us." If Moses was absent, the presence of the Lord^{#24.p5} remained. They were not forsaken. The manna continued to fall, and they were fed by a divine hand morning and evening. The cloudy pillar by day and the pillar of fire by night signified the presence of God, which was a living memorial before them. The divine presence was not dependent upon the presence of Moses. But at the very time that he was pleading with the Lord in the mount in their behalf, they were rushing into shameful errors, in transgression of the law so recently given in grandeur. #5

We see the weakness of Aaron. Had he stood with true moral courage, and in boldness rebuked the leaders in this shameful request, his timely words would have saved that terrible apostasy. But his desire to be popular with the congregation, and his fear of incurring their displeasure, led him to cowardly sacrifice the allegiance of the Hebrews in that decisive

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moment. He raised an altar, and made a graven image, and proclaimed a day to consecrate that image as an object of worship, and to proclaim before all Israel, These be the gods which led you out of Egypt. He calmly witnesses the merriment and dancing to this senseless image, while the top of the mount is still illuminated with the glory of God. Moses is sent down from the mount by the Lord to rebuke the people. But He would not consent to leave the mount ^{#6} [24.p6] until his pleadings in behalf of Israel is heard and his request granted that God would pardon them.

The Tables of the Law Broken.

Moses came from the mount with the precious record in his hands, a pledge of God to man on condition of obedience. Moses was the meekest man upon the earth; but when he viewed the apostasy of Israel, he was angry and jealous for the glory of God. In his indignation he casts to the ground the precious pledge of God, which was more dear to his soul than his life. He sees the law broken by the Hebrews, and in his zeal for God to deface the idol they were worshiping, he sacrificed the tables of stone. Aaron stood by, calmly, patiently bearing the severe censure of Moses. All this might have been prevented by a word from Aaron at the right time. True, noble decision for the right in the hour of Israel's peril, would have balanced their minds in the right direction.

Does God condemn Moses? No, no; the great goodness of God pardons the rashness and zeal of Moses because it was all on account of his fidelity, and his disappointment and grief at the sight of his eyes in the evidence of Israel's apostasy. The man who might have saved the Hebrews in the hour of their peril is calm. He ^{#7} [24.p7] does not show indignation because of the sins of the people, neither does he reproach himself and manifest remorse under the sense of his wrongs, but seeks to justify his course in a grievous sin. He makes the people accountable for his

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weakness in yielding to their request. he was unwilling to bear the murmuring of Israel, to stand under the pressure of their clamors and unreasonable wishes as Moses had done. He entered into the spirit and feelings of the people without remonstrance, and then sought to make them responsible. The congregation of Israel thought Aaron a much more pleasant leader than Moses. He was not so unyielding. They thought Moses showed a very bad spirit, and their sympathies were with Aaron, whom Moses so severely censured. But God pardoned the indiscretion of honest zeal in Moses, while he held Aaron accountable for his sinful weakness and lack of integrity under a pressure of circumstances. Aaron, in order to save himself, sacrificed thousands of the Israelites. The Hebrews felt the punishment of God for this act of apostasy; but in a short time they are again full of discontent and rebellion.

The People Murmur.

When the armies of Israel prospered, they took all the glory to themselves.[#24.p8] When they were tested and #8 proved by hunger, or warfare, they charged all their hardships to Moses. The power of God which was manifested in a remarkable manner in their deliverance from Egypt, and seen from time to time all through their journeyings, should have inspired them with faith, and forever closed their mouths from on expression of ingratitude. But the least apprehension of want, the least fear of danger from any cause, overbalanced the benefits in their favor, and caused them to overlook the blessings received in their times of greatest danger. The experience they passed through in the matter of worshiping the golden calf, should have made so deep an impression upon their minds as never to be effaced. But, although the marks of God's displeasure were fresh before them in their broken ranks and missing numbers because of their repeated offenses against the angel who was leading them, they did not take these lessons to their hearts,

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#9 and by faithful obedience redeem their past failure, and again they are overcome by the temptations of Satan. The best efforts of the meekest man upon the earth could not quell their insubordination. The unselfish interest of Moses was rewarded with jealousy, suspicion, and calumny. His humble shepherd's life was far more peaceful and happy than^[#24.p9] his present position as pastor to that vast congregation of turbulent spirits. Their unreasonable jealousies were more difficult to manage than the fierce wolves of the wilderness. Moses dared not choose his own course and do as best pleased himself. He had left his shepherd's crook at God's express command, and in its place had been given him a rod of power. He dared not lay down this scepter and resign his position, till God should dismiss him.

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

#10 Satan's plan is to drive them from the post of duty by working through agents. All whom he can excite to distrust and suspicion he will use as his instruments. The position of Moses in carrying the burdens he bore for the Israel of God was not^[#24.p10] appreciated. There is in the nature of man, when not under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, a disposition to envy, jealousy, and cruel distrust, which, if not subdued, lead to a desire to undermine and tear down, while selfish spirits will seek to build themselves up upon their ruins.

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Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were men who, by God's appointment, had been entrusted with special honors. They had been of that number who went up, with the seventy of the elders, with Moses into the mount, and beheld the glory of God. They saw the glorious light which covered the divine form of Jesus Christ. The bottom of this cloud was in appearance "like the paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." These men were in the presence of the glory of the Lord, and did eat and drink without being destroyed by the purity and unsurpassed glory that was reflected upon them. But a change had come. A temptation, slight at first, had been harbored and strengthened as it was encouraged, until the imagination was controlled by the power of Satan. These men upon the most frivolous pretense ventured upon their work of disaffection. They hinted and expressed doubts at first which took with many minds so readily that they ventured still farther, being more and more confirmed in their suspicions^[#24.p11] by a word from one and another, each #11 expressing what they thought of certain things which had come under their notice, until these deceived, deluded souls really thought that they had a zeal for the Lord in this matter, and that they would not be excusable unless they carried out to the full their purpose of making Moses see and feel the preposterous position he was standing in toward Israel. A little leaven of distrust, and of dissension, envy, and jealousy, was leavening the camp of Israel.

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

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#12 Korah was not satisfied with his position. He was connected with the service of the tabernacle, yet he desired to be exalted to the priesthood. God had established Moses as chief governor, and the priesthood was given to Aaron and his sons. Korah determined to compel Moses to change the order of things, whereby he^[#24.p12] should be raised to the dignity of the priesthood. To be more sure of accomplishing his purpose, he drew Dathan and Abiram, the descendants of Reuben, into his rebellion.

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

To the Levites was assigned the office of erecting the tabernacle, and encamping around about it, while the hosts of Israel pitched their tents at a distance from the tabernacle. And when they journeyed, the Levites took down the tabernacle, and bore it, and the ark, and all the sacred articles of furniture. Because God thus honored the Levites, they became ambitious for still higher office, that they might obtain greater influence with the congregation. "And they gathered themselves together against^[#24.p13] Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?"

False Sympathy.

There is nothing which will please the people

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better than to be praised and flattered when they are in wrong and darkness and deserve reproof. Korah gained the ears of the people, and next their sympathies, by representing Moses as an overbearing leader. He said he was too harsh, too exacting, too dictatorial, and that he reproved the people as though they were sinners when they were a holy people, sanctified to the Lord, and the Lord was among them. Korah rehearsed the incidents in their experience in their travels through the wilderness, where they had been brought into straight places and where many of them had died, because of murmuring and disobedience, and with their perverted senses they thought they saw very clearly that all their trouble might have been saved if Moses had pursued a different course. He was too unyielding, too exacting, and they decided that all their disasters in the wilderness were chargeable to Moses. Korah, the leading^[#24.p14] spirit professed great wisdom in discerning the true reason for their trials and affliction. #14

In this work of disaffection there was greater harmony and union between these discordant elements, in their feelings and views, than had ever been known to exist before. Korah's success in gaining the larger part of the congregation of Israel on his side, led him to feel confident that he was wise and correct in judgment, and that Moses indeed usurping authority that threatened the prosperity and salvation of Israel. He claimed that God had opened the matter to him, and laid upon him the burden of changing the government of Israel just before it was too late. He stated that the congregation was not at fault; they were righteous. This great cry about the murmuring of the congregation bringing upon them the wrath of God was all a mistake. The people only wanted to have their rights; they wanted individual independence. As the sense of the self-sacrifice patience of Moses would force itself upon their memories, and as his disinterested efforts in their behalf while they were in bondage of slavery, would come

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before them, their consciences would be somewhat disturbed. Some were not wholly with Korah in his views of Moses, and sought to speak in his behalf.
#15 The men,^[#24.p15] Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, must assign some reason before the people for Moses' doing as he has done in showing so great an interest from the first for the congregation of Israel. Their selfish minds which have been debased as Satan's instruments, suggest that they have at last found out the object of Moses' apparent interest. He had designed to keep them wandering in the wilderness until they all, or nearly all, should perish, and he should come into possession of their property.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and two hundred and fifty princes who had joined them, first became jealous, then envious, and next rebellious. They had talked in regard to Moses' position as ruler of the people, until they imagined that it was a very enviable position, which any of them could fill as well as Moses. And they gave themselves up to discontent until they really deceived themselves and one another, in thinking that Moses and Aaron had placed themselves in the position which they occupied to Israel. They said that Moses and Aaron exalted themselves above the congregation of the Lord, in taking upon them the priesthood and government, and that this office should not be conferred on their house alone. They said that it was sufficient for them if they were on a level with their brethren; for they were
#16 ^[#24.p16] no more holy than the people, who were equally favored with God's peculiar presence and protection.

Character Tested.

As Moses listened to the words of Korah, he was filled with anguish, and fell upon his face before the people. "And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him, even him whom he hath chosen will

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he cause to come near unto him. This do; take you censers, Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow; and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi. Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee; and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord; and^[#24.p17] what is #17
 Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" Moses told them that Aaron had assumed no office of himself; that God had placed him in the sacred office.

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

They accused Moses of being the cause of their not entering the promised land. They said that God had not dealt with them thus. He had not said that they should die in the wilderness. They would never believe that he had thus said; but that it was Moses who had said this, not the Lord; and that it was all arranged by Moses to never bring them to the land of Canaan. They spoke of his leading them from a land that flowed with milk and honey. They forgot in their blind rebellion their sufferings in the land of Egypt, and the desolating plagues brought upon that land. But they now accuse Moses of bringing them from a good land, to kill them in the wilderness, that

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#18 he might be made rich with their possessions. They ^[#24.p18]inquired of Moses, in an insolent manner, if he thought that none of all the host of Israel were wise enough to understand his motives, and discover his imposture; or if he thought they would all submit to have them lead them about like blind men as he pleased, sometimes toward Canaan, then back again toward the Red Sea and Egypt. These words they spoke before the congregation, and they utterly refused any longer to acknowledge the authority of Moses and Aaron.

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

#19 Korah and his company who aspired to the priesthood in their self-confidence, even ^[#24.p19]took the censers and stood in the door of the tabernacle with Moses. Korah had cherished his envy and rebellion until he was self-deceived, and he really thought that the congregation was a very righteous people, and that Moses was a tyrannical ruler, continually dwelling upon the necessity of the congregation's being holy, when there was no need of it, for they were holy.

These rebellious ones had flattered the people in general to believe that they were right, and that all their troubles arose from Moses, their ruler, who was continually reminding them of their sins. The people

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

The Rebels Perish.

Korah, in his exalted self-confidence, gathered all the congregation of Israel against Moses and Aaron, "unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And^{24.20} the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation? And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side; and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them^{24.21} up #21

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with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord."

As soon as Moses ceased speaking, the earth opened and swallowed them up, and their tents, and all that pertained unto them. They went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the congregation.

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

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

#22

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

The Rebellion Not Cured.

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After this terrific exhibition of God's judgment, the people returned to their tents, but not humbled. They were terrified. They had been deeply influenced by the spirit of rebellion, and had been flattered by Korah and his company to believe that they were a very good people, and that they had been wronged and abused by Moses. They had their mind so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of those who had perished that it was difficult to free themselves of their blind prejudice. If they should admit that Korah and his company were all wicked, and Moses righteous, then they would be compelled to receive as the word [#24.p23] of God, that which they were unwilling to believe, that they should certainly all die in the wilderness. They were not willing to submit to this, and tried to believe that it was all imposture, and that Moses had deceived them. The men who had perished, had spoken pleasant words to them, and manifested especial interest and love for them, and they thought Moses a designing man. They decided that they could not be wrong; that, after all, these men who had perished were good men, and Moses had by some means been the cause of their destruction. #23

Satan can lead deceived souls to great lengths. He can pervert their judgment, their sight, and their hearing. It was so in the case of the Israelites. "But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord." The people were disappointed in the matter, resulting as it did in favor of Moses and Aaron. The appearance of Korah and his company, all impiously exercising the priest's office with their censers, struck the people with admiration. They did not see that these men were offering a daring affront to the divine Majesty. When they were destroyed, the people were terrified; but after a short time all came in a tumultuous manner to Moses and Aaron, [#24.p24] and charged them with the blood of those men who had perished by the hand #24

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of God.

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

While Moses was praying before the Lord to pardon the sins of his people, he requested Aaron to make an atonement for their sin, while he remained before the Lord, that his prayers might ascend with the incense and be acceptable to God, that all the congregation might not perish in their rebellion. "And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord. The plague is²⁴ begun. And Aaron took as²⁵ Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people. And he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died about the matter of Korah. And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the plague was stayed."

The Subject Applied.

In the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, we have a lesson of warning lest we follow their example. "Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also

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tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

We have evidences in God's word of the liability of the people of God being greatly deceived. There are many instances where what may seem to be a sincere zeal for the honor of God has its origin in leaving the soul unguarded for the enemy to^[#24.p26] #26 tempt and impress the mind with a perverted sense of the real state of things. And we may expect just such things in these last days; for Satan is just as busy now as he was with the congregation of Israel. The cruelty and strength of prejudice are not understood. After the congregation had the evidences before their sight of the destruction of these leaders in rebellion, the power of suspicion and distrust which had been let into their souls was not removed. They saw the earth open and the leaders in rebellion go down into the bowels of the earth. This fearful exhibition before them surely ought to have cured them, and led them to the deepest repentance for their abuse of Moses.

Here God gave all Israel an opportunity to see and to feel the sinfulness of their course which should have led them to repentance and confession. He gave the deceived ones overwhelming evidence that they were sinners, and that his servant Moses was right. They had an opportunity to pass one night in reflection upon the fearful visitation of Heaven which they had witnessed. But reason was perverted. Korah had instigated the rebellion. Two hundred and fifty princes joined him and spread the disaffection. All the congregation were, to a greater or less degree, affected with the^[#24.p27] #27 prevailing jealousy, surmisings, and hatred, against Moses, which had brought the displeasure of God in a fearfully marked manner. Yet our gracious God shows himself a God of justice and mercy. He made a distinction between the insti-

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gators, the leaders in the rebellion, and those who had been deceived or led by them. He pitied the ignorance and folly of those who had been deceived.

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

#28 While Moses was trying the test before the congregation of Israel, if these men who had started the rebellion had repented and sought forgiveness of God and of his injured servant, the vengeance of God would even then have been stayed. But there stood Korah, the instigator of the rebellion, and his sympathizers boldly in their tents, as if in defiance of God's wrath, as though^[#24.p28] God had never wrought through his servant Moses. And much less do these rebellious ones act as though they were men who had been so recently honored of God by being brought almost directly with Moses into his presence, beholding his unsurpassed glory. These men saw Moses come down from the mount after he had received the second tables of stone, while his face was resplendent with the glory of God, so that the people would not approach him, but fled from him. He called to them; but they seemed terrified. He presented the tables of stone. He said, I plead in your behalf. I have turned the wrath of God from you. I have urged that if God forsake and destroy his congregation that my name may be blotted from his book. Lo, God has answered me, and here these tables of stone I hold in my hand are the pledge given me of his reconciliation with his people..

The people perceive that it is the voice of Moses, that although he is transformed and glorified,

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he is yet Moses. They tell Moses that they cannot look into his face; for the radiant light in his countenance is exceedingly painful to them. His face is like the sun. They cannot look upon it. When Moses finds out the difficulty, he covers his face with a vail. He did not plead that the light and glory upon his face was the^[#24.p29] reflection of God's glory that he placed upon #29 him, and the people must bear it; but he covers his glory. The sinfulness of the people made it painful to behold his glorified face. Just so will it be when the saints of God are glorified, just previous to the second appearing of our Lord. The wicked will retire and shrink away from the sight; for the glory in the countenances of the saints will pain them. But all this glory upon Moses, all this divine stamp seen upon God's humble servant, is forgotten.

Slighted Mercy.

The Hebrews had an opportunity to reflect upon the scene they had witnessed in the visitation of God's wrath upon the most prominent ones in this great rebellion. The goodness and mercy of God was displayed in not completely exterminating this ungrateful people when his wrath was kindled against the most responsible ones. God gave the congregation who had permitted themselves to be deceived space for repentance. The fact that the Lord, their invisible leader, showed so much long-suffering and mercy in this instance, is distinctly recorded as evidence of his willingness to forgive the most grievous offenders, when they should have a sense of their sin and return unto the Lord with repentance^[#24.p30] and #30 humiliation. The congregation had been arrested in their presumptuous course by the display of the Lord's vengeance; but they were not convinced that they were great sinners against the Lord, deserving his wrath for their rebellious course.

It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities he has appointed to lead them. They had

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not only done this, but purposed to put both Moses and Aaron to death. These men fled from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, through fear of destruction; but their rebellion was not cured. They were not in grief and despair because of their guilt. They felt not the effect of an awakened, convicted conscience because they had abused their most precious privileges, and sinned against light and knowledge. We may here learn precious lessons of the long-suffering of Jesus, the angel who went before the Hebrews in the wilderness.

Their invisible Leader would save them from a disgraceful destruction. Forgiveness is lingering for them. It is possible for them to find pardon if they will even now repent. The vengeance of God has now come near to them and appealed to them to repent. A special, irresistible interference from Heaven has arrested their presumptuous rebellion. Now if they #31 [#24.p31] respond to the interposition of God's providence they may be saved.

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

That night of probation to the Hebrews was not passed by them in confessing and repenting of their sins, but in devising some way to resist the evidences which showed them to be the greatest sinners. They still held their jealous hatred of the men of God's appointment. They strengthened themselves in their mad course of resisting the authority of Moses and Aaron. Satan was at hand to pervert the judgment and lead them blindfolded to destruction. Their minds had been most thoroughly poisoned with disaf-

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fection, and they had the matter fixed beyond a question in their minds that Moses and Aaron were wicked men, and that they were responsible for the death of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whom they [#24.p32] thought would have been the saviours of the Hebrews by bringing in a better order of things, where praise would take the place of reproof, and peace the place of anxiety and conflict. #32

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

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

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

Here we find a striking exhibition of the blindness that will compass human minds that turn from light and evidence. Here we see the strength of settled rebellion.[#24.p33] Here we see how difficult is rebellion #33 to be overcome. Surely, the Hebrews had the most convincing evidence in the destruction of the men who had deceived them. But they still stood forth boldly and defiantly, and accused Moses and Aaron of killing good and holy men. "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

Moses did not feel the guilt of sin, and did not hasten away at the word of the Lord and leave the

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

He prostrated himself before God, because the people felt no necessity for humiliation. He mediates for the people, because they feel no need of interceding in their own behalf. Moses here typifies Christ. In this critical crisis, Moses manifested the true shepherd's interest for the flock of his care. He pleads that the wrath of an offended God may not destroy utterly the people of his choice. He holds back by his intercession the arm of vengeance, that a full end shall not be made of disobedient, rebellious Israel. He directed^[#24.p34] Aaron what course to pursue in that terrible crisis when the wrath of God had gone forth, and the plague had begun. Aaron stood with his censers waving it before the Lord while the intercessions of Moses ascended with the smoke of the incense. Moses dared not cease his entreaties. He took hold of the strength of the angel as did Jacob in his wrestling, and like Jacob he prevailed. Aaron was standing between the living and the dead, when the gracious answer came, I have heard thy prayer, I will not consume utterly. The very men whom the congregation despised and would have put to death, are the ones to plead in their behalf that the avenging sword of God might be sheathed and sinful Israel spared.

New Testament Application.

The apostle plainly stated that the experience of the Israelites in their travels has been recorded for the benefit of those living in this age of the world, upon whom the ends of the world are come. We do not consider that our dangers are any less than those of the Hebrews, but greater. There will be temptations to jealousies and murmurings, and there will be outspoken rebellion, as is on record in regard to ancient

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Israel. There will ever be a spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But shall the voice of [#24.p35] reproof be hushed because of this? If so, we #35 shall be in no better situation than the various denominations in our land, who are afraid to touch the errors and prevailing sins of the people.

Those whom God has set apart as ministers of righteousness have solemn responsibilities laid upon them to reprove the sins of the people. Paul commanded Titus, "These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." There are ever those who will despise the one who dares to reprove sin. There are times when reproofs must be given. Paul directs Titus to rebuke a certain class sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Men and women who are brought together, with their different organizations, in church capacity, have peculiarities and faults. As these will be developed, they will require reproof. If those who are placed in important positions never reprove, never rebuke, there would soon be a demoralized condition of things that would greatly dishonor God. But how shall the reproof be given? Let the apostle answer: "With all long-suffering and doctrine." Principle should be brought to bear upon the one who needs reproof. But never should the wrongs of God's people be passed by indifferently. [#24.p36] #36

There will be men and women who despise reproof, and who will ever in their feelings rise up against it. It is not pleasant to be told of our wrongs. In almost every case where there is a necessity of reproof, there will be some who entirely overlook the fact that the Spirit of the Lord has been grieved, and his cause reproached. These will pity those who deserved reproof because personal feelings have been hurt. All this unsanctified sympathy places the sympathizers where they are sharers in the guilt of the one reproofed. In nine cases out of ten, if the one reproofed had been left under a sense of his wrongs, he might have been helped to see them, and thereby

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have been reformed. But meddling, unsanctified sympathizers place altogether a wrong construction upon the motives and nature of the reproof given, and by their sympathizing with the one reproofed lead him to feel that he has been really abused, and their feelings rise up in rebellion against the one who has only done his duty. Those who faithfully discharge their unpleasant duties under a sense of their accountability to God, will receive his blessing. God requires his servants to be always in earnest to do his will. In the apostle's charge to Timothy, he exhorts him to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; ^{#24.p37}reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."

#37

The Hebrews were not willing to submit to the directions and restrictions of the Lord. They simply wanted their own way, to follow the leadings of their own mind, and be controlled by their own judgment. Could they have been left free to do this, there would have been no complaints made of Moses. They were restless under restraint.

God would have his people disciplined and brought into harmony of action, that they may see eye to eye, and be of the same mind, and of the same judgment. In order to bring about this state of things there is much to be done. The carnal heart must be subdued, and transformed. God designs that there should ever be a living testimony in the church. There will be a necessity of reproofs and exhortations, and some will need to be rebuked sharply as the case demands. We hear the plea, Oh! I am so sensitive, I cannot bear the least reflection. If these would state the case correctly, they would say, I am so self-willed, so self-sufficient, so proud spirited, I will not be dictated; I will not be reproofed; I claim the right of individual judgment; I have a right to believe and talk as I please. God would not have us yield up our individuality. But what man is a proper judge of ^{#24.p38}how far this matter of individual independence should be carried.

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

The history of the Israelites presents before us the great danger of deception. Many do not have a sense of the sinfulness^[#24.p39] of their own natures, #39 nor of the grace of forgiveness. They are in nature's darkness, subject to temptations and to great deception. They are far from God; yet they have great satisfaction in their lives when their conduct is abhorred of God. This class will ever be at war with the leadings of the Spirit of God, especially against reproof. They do not wish to be disturbed. They have occasionally selfish fears, occasionally good purposes, some anxious thoughts and convictions. But they have not a depth of experience, because they are not riveted to the Eternal Rock. This class never see the necessity of the plain testimony. Sin does not appear so exceedingly sinful, for the very reason they are not walking in the light, as Christ is in the light.

There is still another class who have had great light, and special conviction, and a genuine experi-

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ence in the workings of the Spirit of God; but the manifold temptations of Satan have overcome them. They do not appreciate the light that God has given them. They do not heed the warnings and reproofs from the Spirit of God. They are under condemnation. These will ever be at variance with the straight testimony, because it condemns them.

#40 God designs that his people shall be a unit; that they shall see eye to eye, and[#24.p40] be of the same mind and of the same judgment. This cannot be accomplished without a clear, pointed, living testimony in the church. The prayer of Christ was that his disciples might be one as he was one with his Father. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast love them, as thou hast loved me."EGW

Appeal to the Young.

Dear Youth: The Lord has given me, from time to time, testimonies of warning for you. He has given you encouragement if you would yield your hearts' best and holiest affections to him. As these warnings revive distinctly before me, I feel a sense of your danger that I know you do not feel. The school located in Battle Creek brings many young people together of different mental organizations. If these youth are not #41 [#24.p41] consecrated to God, and humbly walking in the way of his commandments, obedient to his will, the location of a school in Battle Creek will prove a means of great discouragement to the church.

This school may be made a blessing or a curse. I entreat of you who have ever named the name of Christ to depart from all iniquity, and de-

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velop characters that God can approve.

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

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

Young men and women, you are accountable to God for the light he has given you.^[#24.p42] This light and these warnings, if not heeded, will rise up in judgment against you. You have your dangers plainly stated. You are cautioned and guarded on every side and hedged in with warnings. And in the house of God you have listened to the most solemn, heart-searching truths presented by the servants of God in demonstration of the Spirit. What weight have these solemn appeals upon your hearts? And what influence do they have upon your characters? You will be held responsible for every one of these appeals and warnings. They will rise up in judgments to condemn those who pursue a life of vanity, levity, and pride. #42

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

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#43 After this light has been given, and after your dangers have been plainly presented before you, the responsibility becomes yours. The manner in which you treat the light God gives you will turn the scale for happiness or woe. You are shaping^[#24.p43] your destinies for yourselves. You all have an influence for good or for evil on the minds and characters of others. And just the influence which you exert is written in the book of records in Heaven. An angel is attending you, and taking record of your words and actions. When you arise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God? And do you humbly, with your heart, make known your wants to your Heavenly Father? If you do, angels mark your prayers, and if these prayers have not gone forth out of feigned lips, when you are in danger of unconsciously doing wrong, and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions.

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

#44 There are those around you who have been religiously instructed, and some have been indulged, petted, flattered, and praised, until they have been literally spoiled for practical life. I am speaking in regard to^[#24.p44] persons I know. Their characters are warped by indulgence, flattery, and indolence, so that for this life they are useless. And if useless so far as this life is concerned, what may we hope for that life where all is purity and holiness, and where all have harmonious characters. I have prayed for these persons. I have personally addressed them. I could see the influence they would exert over other minds, in leading them to vanity, love of dress, and carelessness in regard to their eternal interests. The only

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hope for this class is for them to take heed to their ways, and humble their proud, vain hearts before God, make confession of their sins, and be converted.

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

Every day that you disregard the claims of God, every opportunity of offered mercy^[#24.p45] you #45 slight, is charged to your account, and will swell the list of sins against you in the day when the accounts of every soul will be investigated. I address you, young men and women, professor or un professor. God calls for your affections, your devotion, and your cheerful obedience to him. You have now a short time of probation, and you may now improve this opportunity to make an unconditional surrender to God.

Obedience and submission to God's requirements are the conditions given us by the inspired apostle, by which we become children of God, members of the royal family. Every child and youth, and every man and woman, has Jesus rescued by his own blood from the abyss of ruin to which Satan was compelling them to go. Because sinners will not accept of the salvation freely offered to them, are they released from their obligations? Their choosing to remain in sin and bold transgression does not lessen their guilt. Jesus paid a price for them, and they belong to him. They are his property, and if they will not yield obedience to Him who has given his life for them, and if they will devote their time and strength and talents to the service of Satan, they are earning their wages, which is death. Immortal glory and eternal life our Redeemer offers as a reward to those who

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#46 will be obedient to him. He has made^[#24.p46] it possible for them to perfect Christian character through his name, and overcome on their own account as he has overcome in their behalf. He has given them an example in his own life, showing them how they may overcome. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

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

Those who have put on Christ by baptism, and have by this act shown their separation from the world, and have covenanted to walk in newness of life, should not set up idols in their hearts. Those who have once rejoiced in the evidence of sins forgiven, who have tasted of a Saviour's love, and then persist in uniting with the foes of Christ, and reject the perfect righteousness Jesus offers them, and choose the ways that he has condemned, will be more severely judged than heathen who have never had the light and never known God or his Law. Those who refuse to follow the light God has given them, and choose the amusements, vanities, and follies, of the world,^[#24.p47]

#47 and refuse to conform their conduct to the just and holy requirements of God's law, are guilty of sins the most aggravating in the sight of God. Their guilt and their wages will be proportionate to the light and the privileges they have had.

We see the world absorbed in their own amusements. The first and highest thoughts of the larger portion, especially of females, are for display. Love of dress and pleasures is wrecking the happiness of thousands. And some of those who profess to love and keep the commandments of God are coming as near to aping this class as possible, and retain the name of Christians. And some of the young are so eager for display that they are willing to give up even

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the name of Christian, if they can only follow out their inclination for vanity of dress and love of pleasure. Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, and abstain from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind is in keeping with our faith. Are we of that number who see the folly of the worldlings in indulging in extravagance in dress, as well as in love of amusements? If so, we should be of that class who will shun everything that gives sanction to this spirit which takes possession of the minds and hearts of those who live only for this world, and who have no thought or care for the next.

[#24.p48]

#48

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

The young may endeavor to excel in seeking for the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is a jewel of inestimable value that may be worn with heavenly grace. This adorning will possess attraction for many in this world, and will be esteemed of great price by the heavenly angels, and above all by our Heavenly Father, and will fit them to be welcome guests in the heavenly courts.[#24.p49]

#49

The youth have faculties that, with proper cul-

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

But I feel deeply pained at heart for the fathers and mothers of these youth, as well as for the children. There has been a lack in the training of these children which leaves a heavy responsibility somewhere. Parents who have petted and indulged their children in the place of judiciously, from principle, restraining them, can see the^[#24.p50] character they have formed. As the training has been, so the character inclines.

Faithful Abraham.

My mind goes back to faithful Abraham pursuing his journey with Isaac by his side in obedience to the divine command given him in the night vision of Beersheba. He sees before him the mountain God had told him he would signalize as the one upon which he was to sacrifice. He removes the wood from the shoulder of his servant and lays it upon Isaac, the one to be offered. He girds up his soul with firmness and agonizing sternness, ready for the work which God required him to do. With a breaking heart and unnerved hand, he takes the fire, while Isaac inquires, Father, here is the fire and the wood; but

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where is the offering? Oh! Abraham cannot tell him now. Father and son build the altar, and the terrible moment comes for Abraham to make known to Isaac that which has agonized his soul all that long journey, that Isaac himself is the victim. Isaac is not a lad; he is a full-grown young man. He could have refused to submit to his father's design, if he chose. He does not accuse his father of insanity. He does not seek to change his purpose even. He submits. He believes in the love of his father, and that he would not make this terrible sacrifice of his^[#24.p51] only son, if #51 God had not bidden him to do so, Isaac was bound by the trembling, loving hands of his pitying father, because God had said it. The son submitted to the sacrifice, because he believed in the integrity of his father. And when everything was ready, when the faith of the father, and the submission of the son were fully tested, the angel of God stays the uplifted hand of Abraham that was about to slay his son. He tells him it is enough. "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

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

Isaac was the figure of the Son of God who was offered a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God would impress upon Abraham the gospel of salvation to man. In order to do this, and make the truth to him a reality, as well as to test his faith, he required of him to slay his darling Isaac. All the sorrows and agony Abraham endured through this dark and fearful trial were for the purpose of deeply impressing^[#24.p52] upon his understanding the plan of redemption #52 for fallen man. He was made to understand in his own experience how unutterable was the self-denial

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of the infinite God in giving his own Son to die to rescue man from utter ruin. No mental torture to Abraham could be equal to that he endured in obeying the divine command to sacrifice his son.

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

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

#53 Could God give to us any great proof of his love than this that he gave his Son to pass through this scene of suffering? And as the gift of God to man was a free gift, his love is infinite. The claims of God upon our confidence, our obedience,^[#24.p53]our whole heart, and the wealth of our affections, correspond with the infinite gift. He requires all that is possible for man to give. The submission on our part must be proportionate to the gift of God. It must be complete, and wanting in nothing. We are all debtors to God. He has claims upon us that we cannot meet without giving ourselves a full and willing sacrifice. Prompt and willing obedience God claims, and nothing short of this will he accept. We have opportunity now to secure the love and favor of God. This year of 1875 may be the last year of some who may read this. Is there any among the youth who shall read this appeal who would choose the pleasure of the world before that peace which Christ gives the earnest seeker and the cheerful doer of his will?

God is weighing our characters, our conduct, and our motives, in the balances of the sanctuary. It

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will be a fearful thing to be pronounced wanting in love and obedience by our Redeemer, who died upon the cross to draw our hearts unto him. God has bestowed upon us great and precious gifts. He has given us light and a knowledge of his will that we need not err or walk in darkness. To be weighed in the balance and found wanting in the day of final settlement and rewards will be a fearful thing, a terrible mistake which^[#24.p54] can never be corrected. Shall the book of God be searched in vain for your names, young friends? #54

God has appointed you a work to do for him which will make you a co-laborer with him. There are souls to save around you. There will be those whom you can encourage and bless by your earnest efforts. You may turn souls from sin to righteousness. When you have a sense of your accountability to God, you will feel your need of faithfulness in prayer, and faithfulness in watching against the temptations of Satan. You will, if you are indeed Christians, feel more like mourning over the moral darkness in the world than indulging in levity and pride of dress. You will be among those who are sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. You will resist the temptations of Satan to indulge in vanity and in trimmings and ornaments for display. The mind is narrowed and the intellect dwarfed that can be gratified with these frivolous things to the neglect of high responsibilities. The youth in our day may be workers with Christ if they will, and in working, their faith will strengthen and their knowledge of the divine will increase. Every true purpose and every act of right doing will be recorded in the book of life. I wish I could arouse the youth to see and^[#24.p55] feel the sinfulness of living for their own gratification and dwarfing their intellect to the cheap, vain things of this life. If they would elevate their thoughts and words above the frivolous attractions of this world, and make it their aim to glorify God, his peace which passeth all understanding would be theirs. #55

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Humiliation Of Christ.

Did not our Exemplar tread a hard, self-denying, self-sacrificing, humble path, on our account, in order to save us? He encountered difficulties. He experienced disappointment and suffered reproach and affliction in his work of saving us. And shall we refuse to follow where the King of glory has led the way? Shall we complain of hardship and trial in the work of overcoming on our account, when we remember the suffering of our Redeemer in the wilderness of temptation, and in the garden of Gethsemane, and on Calvary? All these were endured to show us the way, and bring us the divine help we must have or perish. If the youth would win eternal life, they need not expect that they can follow their own inclinations. The prize will cost them something, yes, everything. They can now have Jesus or the world. How many dear youth will suffer privation, weariness, toil, and anxiety, in order to ^{#24.p56}serve themselves, and gain an object in this life? They do not think of complaining of the hardships and difficulties they encounter in order to serve their own interest. Why then should the youth shrink from conflict, self-denial, or from any sacrifice, for eternal life?

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

Jesus paid an infinite price to redeem the

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world, and the race was given into his hands. They became his property. He sacrificed his honor, his riches, and his glorious home in the royal courts, and became the son of Joseph and Mary. Joseph was one of the humblest day laborers, and Jesus worked, and lived a life of hardship^{#24.p57} and toil. When his ministry commenced, after his baptism, he endured nearly six weeks of an agonizing fast. It was not merely the gnawing pangs of hunger which made his sufferings inexpressibly severe, but it was the guilt of the sins of the world which pressed so heavily upon him. With this terrible weight of guilt upon him because of our sins he withstood the fearful test upon appetite, love of the world, love of honor, and pride of display which leads to presumption. These three great leading temptations, Christ endured, and overcame in behalf of man, working out for him a righteous character because he knew man could not do this of himself. He knew that upon these three points Satan was to assail the race. He had overcome Adam, and designed to carry forward his work to completion in the ruin of man. Christ entered the field in man's behalf to conquer Satan

for him because he saw man could not overcome on his own account. Christ prepared the way for the ransom of man by his own life of suffering, self-denial, self-sacrifice, his humiliation, and, finally, his death. He has brought help to man that he may, in following his example, overcome on his own account, as Christ has overcome for him.

"What? know ye not that your body is^{#24.p58} ^{#58} the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship

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hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

How graciously and tenderly our Heavenly Father deals with his children. He preserves them from a thousand dangers to them unseen. He guards them from the subtle arts of Satan, lest they should be
 #59 [#24.p59] destroyed. Because the protecting care of God through his angels is not seen by our dull vision, we do not try to contemplate and appreciate the ever-watchful interest our kind and benevolent Creator has over the work of his hands; and we are not grateful for the multitude of mercies he daily bestows upon us.

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

If the youth could only be awake, and deeply feel their need of strength from God to resist the temptations of Satan, precious victories would be theirs, and they would obtain a valuable experience in the Christian warfare. How few of the young think of the inspired apostle's exhortation, "Be sober, be

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vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;[#24.p60] whom resist steadfast in the faith." In the vision given to John, he saw the power of Satan over men, and exclaimed, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." #60

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

The service of Christ is not drudgery to the fully consecrated soul. Obedience to our Saviour does not detract from our happiness and true pleasure in this life, but has a refining, elevating power upon our characters. The daily study of the precious words of life found in our Bibles strengthens the intellect, and furnishes knowledge of the grand and glorious works of God [#24.p61]in nature. Through study of the Scrip- #61
tures, a correct knowledge is obtained in regard to the way to live in order to enjoy the greatest amount of unalloyed happiness. The Bible student is also furnished with Scripture arguments to meet the doubts of unbelievers and remove them by the clear light of truth. Those who have searched the Scriptures may ever be fortified against the temptations of Satan, and may be thoroughly furnished to every good work, and prepared to give to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is within them.

The impression is too frequently left upon

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

While pure religion is looked upon as exacting in its demands, and, with the young especially, is unfavorably contrasted with the false glitter and tinsel of the world, they regard the Bible requirements as a #62 [#24.p62] humiliating, self-denying test, which takes from them all the enjoyment of life. But the religion of the Bible ever has a tendency to elevate and refine. And had the professed followers of Jesus Christ carried out the principles of pure religion in their lives, the religion of Jesus Christ would be acceptable to more refined minds. The religion of the Bible has nothing in it which would jar upon the finest feelings. It is, in all its precepts and requirements, pure as the character of God, and as elevated as his throne.

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

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ment, would outvie in loveliness^[#24.p63] the gorgeous #63
apparel of Solomon. Even Solomon in all his glory
was not arrayed like one of these.

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

Dear youth, a disposition in you to follow fashion in your dress, and to wear lace, and gold, and artificials, for display, will not recommend your religion and the truth you profess to others. People of discernment will look upon your attempts to beautify the external, as proof of weak minds and proud hearts. Simple, plain, unpretending dress will be a recommendation to my youthful sisters. In no better way can you let your light shine to others than in your simplicity of dress and deportment. You may show to all that you place a proper^[#24.p64] estimate upon the #64
things of this life in comparison with eternal considerations.

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

God, who created everything lovely and beautiful that the eye rests upon, is a lover of the beauti-

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

Pure Religion.

#65 Religion, pure and undefiled, ennobles its possessor. You will ever find with the true Christian a marked cheerfulness, a^[#24.p65] holy, happy confidence in God, a submission to his providences that is refreshing to the soul. To the Christian, God's love and benevolence can be seen in every bounty he receives. The beauties in nature are a theme for contemplation. In studying the natural loveliness surrounding us, the mind is carried up through nature to the Author of all that is lovely. All the works of God are speaking to our senses, magnifying his power, exalting his wisdom. Every created thing has in it charms which interest the child of God, and mold his taste to these precious evidences of God's love above the work of human skill.

The prophet, in words of glowing fervor, magnifies God in his created works: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" "O Lord God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvelous works."

It is absence of religion that makes the path of so many professors of religion shadowy. There are those who may pass for Christians, but they are unworthy the name. They have not Christian character.
#66 When^[#24.p66] their Christianity is put to the test, its falsity is too evident. True religion is seen in the daily

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deportment. The life of the Christian is characterized by earnest, unselfish working to do others good and to glorify God. Their path is not dark and gloomy.

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

And shall the young live vain and thoughtless lives of fashion and frivolity, dwarfing their intellect to the matter of dress, and consume their time in sensual pleasure? When they are all unready, God may say to them, This night thy folly shall end. He may permit mortal sickness to come upon those who have borne no fruit to his glory. While facing the realities of eternity, they may begin to realize the value of time and the life they have lost. They may then have some sense of the worth of the soul. They see that their lives have not glorified God in lighting the path of others to Heaven. They have lived to glorify self. And when racked with pain and with anguish of soul, they cannot have clear conceptions of eternal things. They may review their past lives, and in their remorse cry out, I have done nothing for Jesus who^{#24.p67} has done everything for me. My life has been a terrible failure. #67

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

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

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selves fully to be directed by his Spirit.

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

#68 I wish all youth could see as I have seen the work that they can do, and which God will hold them responsible for, because they do not do it. The greatest work that was ever accomplished in the world, was by Him^[#24.p68] who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. A frivolous-minded person will never accomplish good.

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

#69 I would remind youth who wear feathers upon their hats and ornament their persons^[#24.p69] that because of their sins our Saviour's head wore the shameful crown of thorns. When you devote precious time to trimming your apparel, remember the King of glory wore a plain, seamless coat. You who weary

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yourselves in decorating your persons, please bear in mind that Jesus was often weary from incessant toil and self-denial and self-sacrifice to bless the suffering and needy. He spent whole nights in prayer upon the lonely mountains. Not because of his weakness and his necessities, but he saw, he felt, the weakness of your natures to resist the temptations of the enemy upon the very points where you are now overcome. He knew that you would be indifferent in regard to your dangers and would not feel your need of prayer. It was on our account, he poured out his prayers to his Father with strong cries and tears. It was to save us from the very pride and love of vanity and pleasure that we now indulge which crowds out the love of Jesus, that caused those tears, and marred our Saviour's visage with sorrow and anguish more than any of the sons of men.

Will you, young friends, arise and shake off this dreadful indifference and stupor which has conformed you to the world? Will you heed the voice of warning which tells you destruction lies in the path of those who are at ease in this hour of ~~of~~^{#24.p70} danger. #70
God's patience will not always wait for you, poor trifling souls. God, who holds our destinies in his hands, will not always be trifled with. Jesus declares to us that there is a greater sin than that which caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is the sin of those who have the great light of the truth in these days and who are not moved to repentance. It is the sin of rejecting the light of the most solemn message of mercy to the world. It is the sin of those who see Jesus in the wilderness of temptation, bowed down as with mortal agony because of the sins of the world, and yet are not moved to thorough repentance. He fasted nearly six weeks to overcome, in behalf of men, the indulgence of appetite, their vanity, display, and worldly honor. He has shown them how they may overcome on their own account as he overcame, but it is not pleasant to their natures to endure conflict and reproach, derision and shame, for his dear sake.

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It is not agreeable to deny self and to ever be seeking to do good to others. It is not pleasant to overcome as Christ overcame, so they turn from the pattern which is plainly given them to copy, and refuse to imitate the example that the Saviour came from the heavenly courts to leave them.

#71 It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for^[#24.p71]those who have had the privileges and the great light which shines in our day, and who neglect to follow the light, and give their hearts fully to God. E. G. W.

Tithes and Offerings.

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

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

#72 Angels are ever engaged in working for^[#24.p72]others' happiness. This is their joy. That which to selfish hearts would be considered humiliating service, in ministry to those who are wretched, and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of the pure, sinless angels in the royal courts of Heaven. The spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit which pervades Heaven, and is the very es-

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sence of its bliss.

Those who feel no special pleasure in seeking to be a blessing to others, in working even at a sacrifice to do them good, cannot have the spirit of Christ, or of Heaven; for they have no union with the work of angels, and cannot participate in the bliss that imparts the elevated joy to the heavenly angels. Christ has said, "Joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which needeth no repentance." If the joy of angels is in seeing sinners repent, will it not be the joy of sinners, saved by the blood of Christ, to see others repent and turn to Christ through their instrumentality! In working in harmony with Christ and the holy angels, we shall experience a joy that cannot be realized aside from this work.

The principle of the cross of Christ brings every believing soul under heavy contribution to deny self, to impart light to others, and to give of their means to extend the ^{#24.p73}light. If they are in connection with Heaven, they will be engaged in the work in harmony with the angels. #73

The principle of worldlings is to get all they can of the perishable things of this life. Selfish love of gain is the ruling principle in their lives. The purest joy found is not in riches, not where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns and self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle. There are thousands who are passing their lives in indulgence and whose hearts are filled with repining. They are victims of selfishness and discontent in the vain effort to satisfy their minds with indulgence. But unhappiness is stamped upon their very countenances, and behind them is a desolate desert, because their course is not fruitful in good works.

In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, covetousness, selfishness, and love of ease, will be overcome, and it will be our pleasure to do the will of Christ, whose servants we claim to be. Our happiness will then be propor-

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tionate to our unselfish works, prompted by the love of Christ.

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed.

#74 He that gives to the needy blesses^[#24.p74] others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached his object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but he knew that he could not be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he should be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

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

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

#75 God has mercifully brought a class to the knowledge of the truth, that they might^[#24.p75] appreciate its priceless value in comparison with earthly treasures. Jesus has said to these, "Follow me." He is testing them with the invitation to the supper which he has prepared. He is watching to see what characters they will develop, whether their own selfish interests will be considered of greater value than eternal

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riches. Many of these dear brethren are now by their actions framing the excuses mentioned in the parable.

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

This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the^[#24.p76] present #73 truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which he has prepared for them at great cost to himself; but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure. They are invited to take part in the things of eternal value; but their farms, their cattle, and their home interest, seem of so much greater importance than obedience to the heavenly invitation, and these earthly things are made the excuse for their disobedience to the heavenly command, "Come; for all things are now ready." These brethren are blindly following the example of those represented in the parable. They look at their worldly possessions, and say, No, Lord, I cannot follow thee, "I pray thee have me excused."

The very blessings which God has given to these men, to prove them, to see if they will render "unto God the things that are God's," they use as an excuse that they cannot obey the claims of truth. They have grasped their earthly treasure in their

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#77 arms, and say, I must take care of these things; I must not neglect the things of this life; these things are mine. Thus the hearts of these men have become as unimpressible as the beaten highway. They close the door of their hearts to the heavenly messenger, who says, "Come; for all^[#24.p77] things are now ready," and throw it open, inviting the passage of the world's burden and business cares, and Jesus knocks in vain for admittance.

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

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

#75 When the love of the world takes possession of the heart, and becomes a ruling passion, there is left no room for adoration^[#24.p78] to God; for the higher powers of the mind submit to the slavery of mammon, and cannot retain thoughts of God and of Heaven. The mind loses its remembrance of God, and is narrowed and dwarfed to the accumulation of money.

Through selfishness and love of the world, these men have been passing on with less and less

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sense of the magnitude of the work for these last days. They have not educated their minds to make a business of serving God. They have not an experience in that direction. Their property has absorbed their affections and eclipsed the magnitude of the plan of salvation. While they are improving and enlarging their worldly plans they see no necessity for the enlargement and extension of the work of God. They invest their means in temporal things, but not in the eternal. Their hearts are ambitious for more means. God has made them the depositaries of his law, that they might let the light so graciously given them shine forth to others. But they have so increased their cares and anxieties that they have no time to bless others with their influence, to converse with their neighbors, to pray with them, and for them, and to seek to bring them to the knowledge of the truth.

These men are responsible for the good they might do, but from which they excuse [#24.p79] #79 themselves because of worldly cares and burdens, which engross their minds and absorb their affections. Souls for whom Christ died might be saved by their personal effort and godly example. Precious souls are perishing for the light which God has given to men to be reflected upon the pathway of others. But the precious light is hid under a bushel and it gives no light to those who are in the house. Every man is a steward of God. To each the Master has committed his means which man claims as his own. He says, "Occupy till I come." A time is coming when Christ will require his own with usury. He will say to his stewards, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Those who have hid their Lord's money in a napkin in the earth, instead of putting it out to the exchangers, or those who have squandered their Lord's money by expending it for needless things, instead of putting it out to usury by investing it in his cause, will receive no approval of the Master, but decided condemnation. The unprofitable servant in the parable brought back the one talent to God, and said, "I knew thee

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that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine."
#80 His Lord takes up his words: "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."

This unprofitable servant was not ignorant of God's plans, but he set himself firmly to thwart the purpose of God, charging him with unfairness in requiring improvement upon the money entrusted to him. This very complaint and murmuring is made by a large class of wealthy men, professing to believe the truth. They are, like the unfaithful servant, afraid that the increase of the talents God has lent them will be called for to advance the spread of truth; therefore they tie it up, by investing it in earthly treasures, and burying it in the world, thus making it so fast that they have nothing, or next to nothing, to invest in the cause of God. They have buried it, fearing that God would call for some of the principal or increase. When at the demand of their Lord they bring the amount given them, they come with ungrateful excuses why they have not put the means, lent them by God, out to the exchangers, by investing it in his cause, to carry on his work.

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

What will be this joy of our Lord? It will be in seeing souls saved in the kingdom of glory. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross,

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despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

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

The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in a sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Every one who will share this salvation, purchased for them by such an infinite sacrifice by the Son^[#24.p82] of God, will follow the example of the #82 True Pattern. Jesus Christ was the chief corner stone, and we must build upon this foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish, marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And shall men, partakers of the great salvation which Jesus came from Heaven to bring them, refuse to follow their Lord, and to share in his self-denial and sacrifice? Says Christ, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." The very vital principle, the sap which flows through the vine, nourishes the branches, that they may flourish and bear fruit. Is the servant greater than his Lord? Shall the world's Redeemer practice self-denial and sacrifice on our account, and the members of Christ's body practice self-indulgence? Self-denial is an essential condition of discipleship.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I lead the way in the path of self-denial. I require nothing of you, my

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followers, but that of which I your Lord give you an example in my own life.

#83 The Saviour of the world conquered^[#24.p83] Satan in the wilderness of temptation. He overcame to show man how he may overcome. He announced in the synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

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

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

#84 He has given his people a plan for raising sums sufficient to make the enterprise self-sustaining. God's plan in the tithing^[#24.p84] system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. Here are simplicity and utility combined, which it requires not depth of learning to understand and execute. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, and woman, and youth, may become a treasurer for the Lord. They may be agents to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle, "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath

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prospered him."

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

As the persevering, systematic workers see that the tendency of their benevolent efforts is to nourish love to God and their fellow-men, and that their personal efforts are extending their sphere of usefulness,^[#24.p85] they will realize that it is a great #85 blessing to be co-workers with Jesus Christ. The Christian church as a general thing are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess to support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Never can the work of God advance as it should until the followers of Christ become active, zealous workers.

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

If the plan of systematic benevolence was fully adopted and carried out to a man, there would be a constant supply in the treasury. The income would

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flow in like a steady stream constantly supplied by overflowing springs of benevolence.

#86 Almsgiving is a part of gospel religion. Does not the consideration of the infinite^[#24.p86] price paid for our redemption leave upon us solemn obligations pecuniarily, as well as lay claim upon all our power to be devoted to the work of the Master?

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

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

#87 It is through his poverty that we are made rich, and yet, will we refuse to give back to him his own gifts?^[#24.p87]

God is not dependent upon man for the support of his cause. He could have sent means direct from Heaven to supply his treasury, if his providence had seen that this was the best for man. He might have devised means whereby angels would have been sent to publish the truth to the world without the agency of men. He might have written the truth upon the heavens, and let that declare to the world his requirements in living characters. God is not dependent upon any man's gold or silver. He says, "Every beast

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of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Whatever necessity there is for our agency in the advancement of the cause of God, he has purposely arranged for our good. He has honored us by making us co-workers with him. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the co-operation of men, that they may keep in exercise their benevolent affections.

God has in his wise providence placed the poor always with us, that while we shall witness the various forms of suffering and of necessity in the world, we should be tested and proved, and brought into positions to develop Christian character. The poor God has placed among us to call out from us Christian sympathy and love.^[#24.p88]

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

The moral darkness of a ruined world pleads to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort, to give of their means, and of their influence, that they may be assimilated into the image of Him who, though he possessed infinite riches, yet for our sakes became poor. The Spirit of God cannot abide with those to whom he has sent the message of his truth, who need to be urged before they can have any sense of their duty to be co-workers with Christ. The apostle enforces the duty of giving from higher

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#89 grounds than merely human sympathy, because the feelings are moved. He enforces the principle that we should labor^[#24.p89] unselfishly with an eye single to the glory of God.

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

#90 Jesus made known to the lawyer that the condition of his having eternal life was to carry out in his life the special requirement of the law, which consisted in his loving God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. When the typical sacrifices ceased at the death of Christ, the original law, engraved in tables of stone, stood immutable, holding its claims upon man in all ages. And in the Christian age the duty of^[#24.p90] man was not limited, but more especially defined and simply expressed.

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

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The blessings of the Christian age were responded to by the first disciples in works of charity and benevolence. The outpouring of the Spirit of God, after Christ left his disciples and ascended to Heaven, led to self-denial, and self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul writes to the Gentile Christians in regard to works of benevolence, and says, "Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also." Here benevolence is placed by the side of faith, love and Christian diligence. Those who think that they can be good Christians, and close their ears and hearts to the calls of God^[#24.p91] for their liberalities, are in a fearful deception. There are those who abound in a profession of great love for the truth, and as far as words are concerned, have an interest to see the truth advance, but do nothing for its advancement. The faith of such is dead, not being made perfect by works. The Lord never made such a mistake as to convert a soul, and leave it under the power of covetousness. #91

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of his mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and peniless wanderer, lay down at night solitary and alone with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have his treasury replenished with unwilling offer-

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#92 ings.[#24.p92]

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

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

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to him again. He has required a tenth, and this he claims as the very least[#24.p93] that man should return to him. He says, I give you nine-tenths, while I require one-tenth; that is mine. When men withhold the one-tenth they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings, were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase.

All that is withheld of the tenth which God claims of the increase is recorded in the books of Heaven as robbery against God. Such defraud their Creator, and when this sin of neglect shall be brought before them, it is not enough to change their course and begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them

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in trust to be returned to the lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

A promise is here given, if all the tithes^[#24.p94] #94 shall be brought into the store-house a blessing from God will be poured upon the obedient.

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

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

God required of his ancient people three yearly gatherings. "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before^[#24.p95] #95 the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able,

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#92 according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." No less than one-third of their income was devoted for sacred and religious purposes.

Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out his plan in systematic benevolence, and in gifts and offerings, there has been a standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed his requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God, and complied with his requirements, honoring him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and offerings they were made to realize that they were not only robbing him but themselves; for God limited his blessings to them, just in proportion as they limited their offerings to him.

Some will pronounce this as one of the rigorous laws binding upon the Hebrews. But this was not a burden to the willing heart that loved God. It was only when their selfish natures strengthened by withholding, that men have lost sight of eternal considerations, and valued their earthly treasures above that of souls. There are even more urgent necessities upon the Israel of God in these last days than were
#96 [#24.p96] upon ancient Israel. There is a great and important work to be accomplished in a very short time, and God never designed that the law of the tithing system should be of no account among his people, but that instead of this, the spirit of sacrifice should widen and deepen for the closing work.

Systematic Benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is free-will offerings that are acceptable to God. True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love to Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom he came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender

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affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth.

Jesus has purchased us at an infinite sacrifice. All our capabilities and all our influence are indeed our Saviour's, and should be dedicated to his service. By doing this, we show our gratitude that we have been ransomed from the slavery of sin by the [#24.p97] precious blood of Christ. Our Saviour is ever #97 working for us. He has ascended up on high and pleads in behalf of the purchase of his blood. He pleads before his Father the agonies of the crucifixion. He raises his wounded hands and intercedes for his church, that they may be kept from falling under temptation.

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

We do not, as followers of Christ, realize our true position. We do not have correct views of our responsibilities as hired servants of Christ. He has advanced us the wages in his suffering life and his spilled blood, to bind us in willing servitude to himself. All the good things we [#24.p98] have are a loan from #98 our Saviour. He has made us stewards. Our smallest

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offerings, our humblest services, presented in faith and love, may be consecrated gifts to win souls to the service of the Master, to promote his glory. The interest and prosperity of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration. Those who make their pleasure and selfish interest the chief objects of their lives are not faithful stewards.

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

#99 [#24.p99] Christians forget that they are servants of the Master, that they themselves, their time, and all that they have, belong to him. Many are tempted, and the majority are overcome, by the delusive inducements which Satan presents to invest their money where it will yield them the greatest profit in dollars and cents. There are but few who consider the binding claims that God has upon them to make it their first business to meet the necessities of his cause, and let their own desires be served last. There are but few who invest in God's cause in proportion

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to their means. Many have fastened their money in property which they must sell before they can invest it in the cause of God, and thus put it to a practical use. They make this an excuse for doing but little in their Redeemer's cause. They have as effectually buried their money in the earth as the man in the parable. They rob God of the tenth which he claims as his own, and in robbing him they rob themselves of the heavenly treasure.

The plan of systematic benevolence does not press heavily upon any one man. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The poor are not excluded from the privilege of giving. They may act a part in this work, as well as the wealthy. The lesson Christ gave in regard to the widow's two mites shows us that the smallest willing offerings of the poor, if given from a heart of love, are as acceptable as the largest donations of the rich. [#24.p100]

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In the balances of the sanctuary, the gifts of the poor, made from love to Christ, are not estimated according to the amount given, but according to the love which prompts the sacrifice. The promises of Jesus will as surely be realized by the liberal poor man, who has but little to offer, but who gives that little freely, as by the wealthy man who gives of his abundance. The poor man makes a sacrifice of his little which he really feels. He really denies himself of some things that he needs for his own comfort, while the wealthy man gives of his abundance, and feels no want, and denies himself nothing that he really needs. Therefore, there is a sacredness in the poor man's offering that is not found in the rich man's gift; for the rich give of their abundance. God's providence has arranged the entire plan of systematic benevolence for the benefit of man. His providence never stands still. If God's servants follow his opening

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providence all will be active workers.

Those who withhold from the treasury of God, and hoard their means for their children, endanger the spiritual interest of their children. They place their property, which is a stumbling block to themselves, in the pathway of their children, that they may stumble over it to perdition. Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish, and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests, and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth^[#24.p101] which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the life to come. The very best legacy parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence, showing by their works that the true value of money is only to be appreciated in the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants, the necessities of others, and in advancing the cause of God.

#101

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

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a life of useful labor necessary. "Be not slothful in business," is the injunction of the inspired apostle.

No person, whether rich or poor, can glorify God by a life of indolence. All the capital that many poor men have is time and physical strength, and this is so frequently wasted in love of ease,^[#24.p102] and #102 in careless indolence, that they have nothing to bring to their Lord in tithes and in offerings. If Christian men lack wisdom to labor to the best account, and to make a judicious appropriation of their physical and mental powers, they should have meekness and lowliness of mind to receive advice and counsel of their brethren, that their better judgment may supply their own deficiencies. Many poor men who are now content to do nothing for the good of their fellow-men, and for the advancement of the cause of God, might do much if they would. They are as accountable to God for their capital of physical strength as is the rich man for his capital of money.

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

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

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites^[#24.p103] #103 them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to

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God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience was alive, she would testify of needless appropriations in the gratification of the appetite, and in ministering to pride, to vanity, and to amusements, and report the squandering of their Lord's money, which should have been devoted to his cause. Those who waste their Lord's goods will have to give an account of it to the Master, by-and-by.

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

Jesus gave his disciples a lesson upon covetousness. "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within^{#24.p104} himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

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

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

When we consider the infinite sacrifice made for the salvation of men, we are lost in amazement. When selfishness clamors for the victory in the hearts of men, and they are tempted to ^[#24.p105] withhold their due proportion in any good work, they should strengthen their principles of right by the thought that he who was rich in Heaven's priceless treasure turned away from it all, and became poor. He had not where to lay his head. And all this sacrifice was in our behalf, that we might have eternal riches. #105

Christ set his own feet in the path of self-denial and sacrifice, which all his disciples must travel, if they would be exalted with him at last. He took to his own heart the sorrows which man must suffer. The minds of worldly men frequently become gross. They can only see earthly things, which eclipse the glory and value of the heavenly. Men will compass land and sea for earthly gain, and endure privation and suffering to obtain their object, yet will turn away from Heaven's attractions, and not regard eternal riches. Men who are in comparative poverty are usually the ones who do the most to sustain the cause of God. They are generous with their little. They have

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strengthened their generous impulses by continual liberalities. When their expenditures pressed close upon the income, their passion for earthly riches had no room or chance to strengthen. But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves, they fail to become rich toward God. Their benevolence does not keep pace with their accumulation. As their passion for riches increases, their affections are bound up with their treasure. The increase of their property strengthens the eager desire for more, until their giving to the Lord a tenth is considered by some a severe and unjust tax. Inspiration has said, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Many have said, "If I were as rich as such an one, I would multiply my gifts in the treasury of God. I would do nothing else with my wealth but use it in the advancement of the cause of God." God has tested some of these by giving them riches; but with the riches came the fiercer temptation, and their benevolence was far less than in the days of their poverty. A grasping desire for greater riches absorbed their minds and hearts, and they committed idolatry.

#106

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

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Our great Exemplar was self-denying, and shall the course of his professed followers be in such marked contrast to his? The Saviour gave^[#24.p107] all #107 for a perishing world, not withholding even himself. The church of God are asleep. They are enfeebled by inaction. Voices come to us from every part of the world, "Come over and help us;" but there is no answering movement. There is a feeble effort now and then; a few show that they would be co-workers with their Master; but such are frequently left to toil almost alone. There is but one missionary from our people in all the wide field in foreign countries.

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

There are many who have looked upon the Jewish nation as a people to be pitied, because they were constantly taxed for the support of their religion; but God, who created man and provided him with all the blessings he enjoys, knew what was for his best good. And he has, through his blessing, made their nine-tenths worth more to them than the entire amount without his blessing. If any through their selfishness robbed God or brought to him an offering not perfect, disaster and loss were sure to follow them. God reads the motives of the heart. He is acquainted with the purposes of men, and will mete out to them in his own good time as they have merited.^[#24.p108] #108

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

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plan of systematic benevolence to enrich himself, but to be a great blessing to man. He saw that this system of beneficence was just what man needed.

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God, are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master. In God's dealing with the Jews and his people to the end of time, he

requires systematic benevolence proportionate to their income. The plan of salvation was laid by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness, and encourages liberality and benevolence. It is not to be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God, in his providence, is calling his people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is his mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."[#24.p109]

#109

In the teachings of Christ, he said, "If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" The spiritual health and prosperity of the church is dependent in a great degree upon her systematic benevolence. It is like the life blood which must flow through the whole being, vitalizing every member of the body. It increases love for the souls of our fellow-men; for by self-denial and self-sacrifice we are brought into a closer relation to Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor.

The more we invest in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, the closer to our hearts they will be brought. Were our numbers half as large, and

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all of these devoted workers, we should have a power that would make the world tremble. To the active workers, Christ has addressed these words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

We shall meet opposition arising from selfish motives and from bigotry and prejudice, yet with undaunted courage and living faith, we should sow beside all waters. The agents of Satan are formidable; we shall meet them and must combat them. Our labors are not to be confined to our own country. The field is the world; the harvest is ripe. The command given the disciples just before he ascended was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We feel pained beyond measure to see some of our ministers hovering about the churches, apparently putting forth some little effort, but having next to nothing to show for their labors. The field is the world. Let them go out to the^[#24.p110] unbelieving world and labor to convert souls to the truth. We refer our brethren and sisters to the example of Abraham going up to Mount Moriah to offer his only son at the command of God. Here was obedience and sacrifice. Moses was in king's courts, and a prospective crown was before him. But he turned away from the tempting bribe and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

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

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deemer, for which Paul and Silas suffered, cheered them.

And as the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also shall count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work. "Come, O my soul, to Calvary." Mark the humble life of the Son of God. He [#24.p111] was a "man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Behold his ignominy, his agony in Gethsemane, and learn what self-denial is. Are we suffering want? so was Christ, the majesty of Heaven. But his poverty was for our sakes. Are we ranked among the rich? so was he. But he consented "for our sakes to become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." In Christ we have self-denial exemplified. The sacrifice of Christ consisted, not merely in leaving the royal courts of Heaven, and in being tried by wicked men as a criminal and pronounced guilty, and being delivered up to die as a malefactor, but in bearing the weight of the sins of the world. The life of Christ rebukes our indifference and coldness. We are near the close of time, when Satan has come down, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short. He is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them which perish. The warfare has been left in our hands by our great Leader for us to carry forward with vigor. We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake. The work is retarded by love of ease and a lack of the self-denying spirit of which our Saviour has given us an example in his life.

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

Already a great deal of time has been wasted, and angels bear to Heaven the record of our neglects.

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[#24.p112] Our sleepy and unconsecrated condition has #112
lost to us precious opportunities which God has sent
to us in the persons of those who were qualified to
help us in our present need. Oh! how much we need
our Hannah More to aid us at this time in reaching
those of other nations. Her extensive knowledge of
missionary fields would give us access to those of
other tongues that now we cannot approach. God
brought this gift among us to meet our present emer-
gency; but we prized not the gift, and he took her
from us. She is at rest from her labors, but her self-
denying works follow her. It is to be deplored that our
missionary work should be retarded for the want of
knowledge how to gain access to the different nations
and localities in the great harvest field.

We feel anguish of spirit because some gifts
are lost to us that we might now have if we had only
been awake. Laborers have been kept back from the
whitening harvest. It becomes the people of God to
humble their hearts before him, and in the deepest
humiliation to pray the Lord to pardon our apathy
and selfish indulgence, and to blot out the shameful
record of duties neglected, and privileges unim-
proved. In contemplation of the cross of Calvary the
true Christian will abandon the thought of restricting
his offerings to that which costs him nothing, and will
hear in trumpet tones, "Go, labor in my vineyard,
There's resting by-and-by."

When Jesus was about to ascend on high, he
pointed to the harvest fields, and said to his[#24.p113] #113
followers, "Go ye into all the world and preach the
gospel." "Freely ye have received, freely give." Shall we
deny self that the wasting harvest may be gathered?

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

Systematic Benevolence.

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

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

#114 [24.p114] "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

God has been robbed in tithes and in offerings. It is a fearful thing to be guilty of withholding from the treasury, or of robbing God. Ministers who preach the word at our large gatherings feel the sinfulness of neglecting to render to God the things that are his. They know that God will not bless his people while disregarding his plan of benevolence. They seek

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to arouse the people to their duty by pointed, practical discourses, showing the danger and sinfulness of selfishness and covetousness. Conviction fastens upon minds, and the icy chill of selfishness is broken. And when the call is made for donations to the cause of God, some, under the stirring influence of the meetings, are aroused to give who otherwise would do nothing. As far as this class is concerned, good results have been realized. But under pressing calls many feel the deepest who have not had their hearts frozen up with selfishness. They^{#24.p115} have conscientiously kept their means flowing out to advance the cause of God. Their whole being is stirred by the earnest appeals made, and the very ones respond who may have given all their circumstances in life would justify. #115

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

There was a time at the commencement of our work when such sacrifice would have been justified, when God would have blessed all who thus ventured out to do for his cause. The friends of truth were few, and means were very limited. But the work has been widening and strengthening until there are means enough in the hands of believers to amply sustain the work in all its departments without embarrassing any, if all would bear their proportional part. The cause of God need not be crippled in the slightest degree. The precious truth has been made so plain that many have taken hold of it, who have in their hands

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#116 means which God has intrusted to them for the purpose of using to advance the interests of the truth. If these men of means do^[#24.p116] their duty, there need not be a pressure brought upon the poorer brethren.

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

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

#117 God has devised a plan by which all may give as he has prospered them, and which will make giving a habit without waiting for special calls. Those who can do this, and will not because of their selfishness, are robbing their Creator, who has bestowed upon them means to invest in his cause to advance its interests. Until all shall^[#24.p117] carry out the plan of systematic benevolence, there will be a failure in coming up to the apostolic rule. Those who minister in word and doctrine should be men of discrimination. They should, while they make general appeals, become acquainted with the ability of those who re-

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spond to their appeals, and should not allow the poor to pay large pledges. After a man has once consecrated a certain sum to the Lord, he feels that it is sacred and consecrated to a holy use. This is true, and therefore our preaching brethren should be well informed of whom they accept pledges.

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

The offerings of little children may be acceptable and pleasing to God. In accordance with the spirit that prompts the gifts will be the value of the offering. The poor, by following the rule of the apostle in laying by every week a small sum, help to swell the treasury, and the gifts are wholly acceptable with God; for they^[#24.p118] are making just as great, and even greater, sacrifices than their more wealthy brethren. The plan of systematic benevolence will prove a safeguard to every family against temptations to spend means for needless things, and especially will it prove a blessing to the rich in guarding them from indulging in extravagances. #118

Every week the demands of God upon each family are brought to mind by each of its members fully carrying out the plan, and as its members have denied themselves some superfluity in order to have means to put into the treasury, lessons of value in self-denial for the glory of God have been impressed upon the heart. Once a week, each is brought face to face with the doings of the past week, the income that

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he might have had if he had been economical, and the means he has not because of indulgence. His conscience is reined up, as it were, before God, and either commends or accuses him. He learns that if he retains peace of mind and the favor of God, he must eat, and drink, and dress, to his glory.

Systematic action in giving in accordance with the plan keeps open the channel of the heart in liberal gifts. We place ourselves in connection with God, that he may use us as channels that his gifts may flow through us to others. The poor will not complain of systematic benevolence; for it touches them lightly. They are not neglected and passed by, but are favored with acting a part in being co-workers with Christ, and will receive the blessing of God as well as the wealthy. In the very process of laying aside the little as they can spare them,^[#24.p119] they are denying self and cultivating liberality of heart. They are educating themselves to good works, and are meeting the design of God in the plan of systematic benevolence as effectually as the more wealthy who give of their abundance.

#119

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

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

God has designed that the exercise of benevolence should be purely voluntary, not having recourse even to eloquent appeals to excite sympathy. "The

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Lord loveth a cheerful giver." He is not pleased to have his treasury replenished with forced supplies. The loyal hearts of the people of God, rejoicing in the saving truth for this time, will, through love and gratitude to him for this precious light, be earnest and anxious to aid with their means in sending the truth to others. The very best manner to give expression to our love for our Redeemer, is to give^[#24.p120] #120 and make offerings to bring souls to the knowledge of the truth.

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

Epistle No. 1.

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

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

Bro. [Lee], you need to watch with the greatest care how you build. There is a storm coming which will test your hope to the utmost. You^[#24.p121] should #121

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dig deep and lay your foundation sure. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

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

You have a strong, set will, a very independent spirit, which you feel that you must preserve at all hazards. And you have carried this same spirit into your religious experience and life. You have not always been in harmony with the work of God, as carried on by your American brethren. You have not seen as they see, nor been in union with their manner of proceeding. You have had but very little acquaintance with the work in its different departments. You have not felt very anxious to become acquainted with the various branches of the work. You have looked with suspicion and distrust upon the work, and upon God's chosen leaders to carry it forward. You have been more ready to question, and surmise, and be jealous of those upon whom God has laid the heavier responsibilities of his work, than to investigate, and place yourself in connection with the work, to become^[#24.p122] acquainted with the workings and advancement of the cause of God.

God saw that you were not fitted to be a shepherd, a minister of righteousness to proclaim the truth to others, until you should be a thoroughly transformed man. He permitted you to pass through real trials, and feel privation and want, that you might know how to exercise pity and sympathy, and

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tender love for the unfortunate, and for the oppressed, and those borne down with want and passing through trial and affliction.

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

The prayers you offered in your loneliness, in your weariness and trial, God answered, not always according to your expectations, but for your good. You did not have clear and correct views of your brethren. Neither did you see yourself in a correct light. But in the providence of God he has been at work to answer the prayers^[#24.p123] you have offered in ^{#123} your distress, in a way to save you and glorify his own name. In your ignorance of yourself you asked for things which were not the best for you. God hears your prayers of sincerity; but the blessing granted is something very different from your expectations. God designed to place you in his providence, in connection with his church, more directly, that your confidence might be less in yourself, and greater in others whom he is leading out to advance his work.

God hears every sincere prayer. He would place you in connection with his work that he may more directly bring you to the light. And, unless you should seal your vision against evidence and light, you would be persuaded that, if you were more distrustful of yourself, and less distrustful of your brethren, you would be more prosperous in God. It is God

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who has led you through straight places. He had a purpose in this, that tribulation might work in you patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The trials he permitted to come upon you were, that through the exercise of them you might experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Peter denied the Man of Sorrows in his acquaintance with grief in the hour of his humiliation. But he was afterward repentant, and reconverted. He had true contrition of soul, and gave himself afresh to his Saviour. With blinding tears he makes his way to the solitudes of the garden of Gethsemane, and there prostrates himself where he saw his Saviour's prostrate form, when the bloody sweat was forced from his pores by his great agony. Peter remembered #124 [#24.p124] with remorse that he was asleep when Jesus prayed during those fearful hours. His proud heart breaks, and penitential tears moisten the sods so recently stained with the bloody sweat-drops of God's dear Son. He left that garden a converted man. He was ready then to pity the tempted. He was humbled, and could then sympathize with the weak and erring. He could caution and warn the presumptuous, and was fully fitted to strengthen his brethren.

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

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

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I saw that when you labored in God, putting self out of sight, you would realize a strength from him which would give you access to hearts. Angels of God will work with your efforts when you are humble and little in your own eyes. But when you think you know more than those whom God has been leading for years, and^[#24.p125] instructing in the truth, and fitting for the extension of his work, you are self-exalted, and will fall into temptations. #125

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

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

God has invested his church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for in thus doing he despises the voice of God. It is not safe for you to trust to impressions and feelings. It has been your misfortune to come under the power of that satanic delusion, spiritualism. This pall of death has covered you, and your imagination and nerves have been under the control of demons, and when you become self-confident and do not cling with unwavering confidence to God, you are in positive danger. You may, and frequently do, let down the bars and invite the enemy in, and he controls your thoughts and^[#24.p126] actions, while you are really deceived and flatter #126

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yourself that you are in favor with God.

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

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

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

God has placed you in connection with his

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

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

You frequently talk too long, when you do not have the vitalizing influence of the Spirit of Heaven. You weary those who hear you. It is a mistake that many make in preaching, that they do not stop at the time while the interest is up. They go on speechifying until the interest^[#24.p128] has risen in the minds of the hearers and died out, and where the people are really wearied with words of no special weight or burden of interest. Stop before you get here. Stop when you have no special matter of importance to say. Do not go on with dry words that only excite prejudice, and do not soften the heart. You want to be so united to Jesus Christ that your words will melt and burn their way to the soul. Mere prosy talk is insufficient for this time. Arguments are good; but there may be too much of the argumentative, and too little of the spirit and life from God. #128

Without the special power of God working with your efforts, your spirit subdued, your heart softened, your words flowing from a heart of love, your spirit humbled in God, your labors will be wearing to yourself, and not productive of blessed results. There

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is a point where the minister of Christ reaches, beyond which human knowledge and skill are powerless. We are struggling with giant errors, and evils are impotent to remedy, and arouse the people to see and understand; for we cannot change the heart. We cannot quicken the soul to discern the sinfulness of sin, and to feel the need of a Saviour. But if our labors bear the impress of the Spirit of God, if a higher and divine power attends our efforts in sowing the gospel seed, we shall see fruits of our labors to the glory of God. He alone can water the seed sown.

Thus with you, Bro. ----. You must not get in too great a hurry, and expect too much of darkened minds. You must cherish humble hope that God will #129 graciously impart the mysterious[#24.p129] quickening influence of his Spirit, by which alone your labors will not be in vain in the Lord. You need to cling to God by living faith, every moment realizing your dangers, and sensing your weakness, constantly seeking strength and power which God alone can give. Try the best you may, you of yourself can do nothing.

You need to educate yourself, that you may have wisdom to deal with minds. You should with some have compassion, making a difference, while others you may save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Our Heavenly Father frequently leaves us in uncertainly in regard to our efforts. We are to sow beside all waters, not knowing which shall prosper, this or that. We may stimulate our faith and energy from the Source of our strength, and lean with full and entire dependence upon him.

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

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the work of God, you need to battle with yourself vigorously, and form your character after the divine Model.

Without constant effort on your part, some development, under the influence of a corrupt mind, will appear and block up your way, which hindrance you will be inclined to charge to ^{!#24.p130}some other #130 than the true cause. Self-discipline you need. Our piety should not appear sour, and cold, and morose, but lovable and teachable. A censorious spirit will hedge up your way, and close hearts against you. You will, if not humbly dependent on God, frequently close your own path with obstacles, and charge the same to the course of others.

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

Ministers of Christ are enjoined to be examples to the flock of God. The influence of a minister can do much toward molding the character of his people. If the minister is indolent, if he is not pure in heart and life, and if he is sharp, critical, and fault-finding, selfish, independent, and lacking self-control, he will have these same unpleasant elements in a large degree to meet and deal with among his people; and it is hard work to set things in order where wrong influences have made confusion. It will make a great difference with the people in regard to the development of Christian virtue in^{!#24.p131} them, by what is #131 seen in their minister. If his life is a combination of excellencies, those whom he brings to the knowledge

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of the truth through his labors will, to a great degree, if they truly love God, reflect his example and influence; for he is a representative of Jesus Christ. Thus the minister should feel his responsibility to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

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

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

Christ was just what every minister should strive to be. We should learn to imitate the character of Christ, and combine strict justice, purity, integrity, love, and noble generosity. A pleasant face, where love is reflected, with kind and courteous manners, #132 will do more, aside from pulpit[#24.p132] efforts, than the labor in the desk with the absence of this. It becomes us to cultivate a deference to other people's judgments, when we are absolutely dependent, to a greater or less extent, upon them. We should cultivate true Christian courtesy and tender sympathy, even for the roughest, hardest cases of humanity. Jesus came from the pure courts of Heaven to save just such. You close your heart too readily to many who have apparently no interest in the message you bear, but who are still subjects of grace, and precious in the sight of the Lord. "He that winneth souls is wise."

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You must be in the position that Paul was, to become all things to all men, if by all means ye may save some. You must bend from your independence. You lack humbleness of mind. You need the softening influence of the grace of God upon your heart, that you may not irritate, but melt your way to the hearts of men, although these hearts may be affected by prejudice.

The cause of God needs earnest men very much, who abound in zeal, hope, faith, and courage. It is not self-willed men who can meet the demands for this time, but men who are in earnest. We have too many sensitive ministers, who are feeble in experience, and deficient in the Christian graces, and lacking in consecration, and are easily discouraged; who are earnest to gratify their own wills, and are persevering in their efforts to accomplish their own demands for this time. We need men in these last days who are ever awake. Minute men are wanted, who are sincere in their love for the^[#24-p133] truth, will- #133
ing to labor at a sacrifice, if they can advance the cause of God and save precious souls. Men are wanted in this work, who will not murmur or complain at hardships or trials, knowing that this is a part of the legacy Jesus has left them. They should be willing to go without the camp, and suffer the reproach, and bear burdens, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They will bear the cross of Christ without complaint, without murmuring or fretfulness, and will be patient in tribulation.

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

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have peace."

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

#134 You have loved to debate the truth, and loved discussions; but these contests have been [#24.p134] unfavorable for you to form a harmonious Christian character; for in this is a favorable opportunity for the exhibition of the very traits of character you must overcome if you ever enter Heaven. Discussions cannot always be avoided. In some cases the circumstances are such that of the two evils the choice must be made of the least, which is discussion. But whenever they can be avoided they should be; for the result is seldom honoring to God.

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

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

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tle to advance the truth.

Opponents to truth will show skill in misstating their opponent. They will make the most solemn, sacred truths subjects of ridicule. They will^[#24.p135] #135 generally sport and deride and place the truth, precious, sacred truth, in so false a light before the people, that minds that are darkened by error and polluted by sin, do not discern the motives and objects of these designing men to thus cover up and falsify precious and important truth. There are but few discussions, because of the men who engage in them, that it is possible to conduct upon right principles. Sharp thrusts are too frequently given by both parties, personalities are indulged, and frequently both parties descend to sarcasm and witticism. The love of souls is lost in the greater desire for the mastery. Prejudice, deep and bitter, is often the result of discussions.

I have beheld angels grieved as the most precious jewels of truth have been brought before men utterly incapable of appreciating the evidences in favor of the truth. Their entire being was at war with the principles of truth. Their natures were at enmity with the truth. Their object in discussing was not for the sake of getting hold of the evidences of the truth themselves, or that the people might have a fair understanding of our true position, but that they might confuse the understanding by placing the truth in a perverted light before the people. There are men who have educated themselves as combatants. It is their policy to misstate an opponent, and cover up clear arguments with dishonest quibbles. They have devoted their God-given powers to this dishonest work, for there is nothing in their hearts in harmony with the pure principles of truth. They seize any argument they can get to tear down the advocates of^[#24.p136] #136 truth when they themselves do not believe the things they urge against them. They bolster themselves up in their chosen position irrespective of justice and truth. They do not consider that before them is the

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Judgment, and that then their ill-gotten triumph, with all its disastrous results, will appear in its true character. Error, with all its deceptive policies, its windings and twistings and turnings to change the truth into a lie, will then appear in all its deformity. No victory will stand in the day of God except that which truth, pure, elevated, sacred truth, shall win to the glory of God.

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

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

#137 The truths we hold in common should be first dwelt upon, and the confidence of the hearers^[#24.p137] obtained; then we can advance slowly as the people can be brought along with the matter presented. Great wisdom is needed to present unpopular truth before a prejudiced people in the most cautious manner, that they may gain access to their hearts. Discussions place before the people, who are unenlightened in regard to our position and who are ignorant of Bible truth, a set of arguments, skillfully gotten up and carefully arranged, to cover over the clear points of truth. Some men have made it their business to cover up plain statements of facts in the word of God by their deceptive theories which they make plausible

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to those who have not investigated for themselves.

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

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

It has been very indiscreet for our ministers [#24.p138] to publish to the world the wily sophistry of error, furnished by designing men to cover up and make of none effect the solemn, sacred truth of Jehovah. These crafty men who lie in wait to deceive the unwary give their strength of intellect to pervert the word of God. The inexperienced and unsuspecting are deceived to their ruin. It has been a great error to publish to all, and furnish every class of minds with the arguments of opponents wherewith to battle the truth of God, which many had never thought of. Someone must render an account for this unwise generalship. #138

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

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

Those who are seeking to know the truth and to understand the will of God, who are faithful to the light, and zealous in the performance of their daily duties, will surely know of the doctrine; for they will
#139 be guided into all truth. God^[#24.p139] does not promise by the masterly acts of his providence irresistibly to bring men to the knowledge of his truth when they do not seek for truth and have no desire to know the truth.

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

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

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has been followed.

The word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church.^[#24.p140] #140
Unless there were church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body.

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

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

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

In the wonderful conversion of Paul we see the miraculous power of God. A brightness above^[#24.p141] #141 the glory of the midday sun shone around about him. Jesus, whose name of all others he most hated and

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despised, revealed himself to Paul for the purpose of arresting his mad, yet honest, career, that he might make this most unpromising instrument a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles. He had conscientiously done many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. In his zeal he was a persevering, earnest persecutor of the church of Christ. His convictions of his duty to exterminate this alarming doctrine, which was prevailing everywhere, that Jesus was the Prince of Life, were deep and strong.

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

Paul sees his mistaken zeal, and cries out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Jesus did not tell him, as he might have done, then and there, the work he had assigned him. Paul must receive instruction in the Christian faith, and move understandingly. Christ sends him to the very disciples he had been so bitterly persecuting to learn of them. The light of heavenly illumination had taken away the eyesight of Paul, but Jesus, the great healer of the blind, does not restore it. He answers the question of #142 Paul in these words, "Arise and go into the^[#24.p142] city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

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

The marvelous light given Paul upon that occasion astonished and confounded him. He was wholly subdued. This part of the work man could not

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do for Paul, but there was a work still to be accomplished which the servants of Christ could do. Jesus directs him to his agents in the church for a further knowledge of duty. Thus he gives authority and sanction to his organized church. The work of revelation and conviction Christ had done, and now he was in a condition to learn of those whom God ordained to teach the truth. Christ directs Paul to his chosen servants, thus placing him in connection with his church. #149

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

After Saul was directed to go to Damascus, he was led by the men who accompanied him, to help him bring the disciples bound to Jerusalem to be tried and put to death. Saul is tarrying with Judas at Damascus devoting the time to fasting and prayer. Here the faith of Saul was tested. Three days he was in darkness of mind in regard to what was required of him, and three days he was without sight. He had been directed to go to Damascus; for it should there be told him what he should do. He was in uncertainty, and he cries earnestly to God. An angel is sent to Ananias, directing him to go to a certain house where Saul is praying to be instructed in what he was to do next. Paul's pride is gone. A little before he was self-confident, thinking he was engaged in a good work for which he should receive a reward; but all is now changed. He is bowed down and humbled to the dust in penitence and shame, and his supplications are fervent for pardon. Saith the Lord through his angel to Ananias, "Behold he prayeth." The angel in- #143

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formed the servant of God that he had revealed to Saul in vision a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. Ananias could scarcely credit the words of the angel, and repeats what he has heard of Saul's bitter persecution of the saints at Jerusalem. But the command to Ananias is imperative, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

Ananias was obedient to the direction of the angel. He laid his hands upon the man who so recently was exercised with a spirit of the deepest hatred, breathing out threatenings against all who believed on his name. Ananias said to^[#24.p144] Saul, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost;" and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received his sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.

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

He learns that Jesus, whom in his blindness

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he considered an impostor, is indeed the author and foundation of all the religion of God's chosen people from Adam's day, and the finisher of the faith, now so clear to his enlightened vision. Christ he saw as the vindicator of truth, the fulfiller of all prophecies. Christ had been^[#24.p145] regarded as making of none effect the law of God; but when his spiritual vision was touched by the finger of God, he learned of the disciples that Christ was the originator and foundation of the entire Jewish system of sacrifices, that in the death of Christ, type met antitype, that Christ came into the world for the express purpose of vindicating his Father's law. #145

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

Many have the idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of his acknowledged followers in the world. But this is condemned by Jesus in his teachings and in his examples of facts given for our instruction. Here was Paul directly brought into the presence of Christ, one whom Christ was to fit for a most important work, one who was to be a chosen vessel unto him, yet he does not teach him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; and when he asks Christ, "What wilt thou have me to do?" the Saviour does not tell him directly, but places him^[#24.p146] in connection with his church. They will tell thee what thou must do. Jesus was the sinner's friend, his #146

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heart was ever open, ever touched with human woe, he has all power, both in Heaven and upon earth; but he respects the means which he has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men. He directs Saul to the church, thus acknowledging the power he has invested in it as a channel of light to the world. It is Christ's organized body upon the earth, and respect was required to be paid to his ordinances, Ananias represents Christ in the case of Saul, and he also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth who are appointed to act in Christ's stead.

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

Bro. ----, God loves you and desires to save you and bring you into working order. If you will be humble and teachable and be molded by his Spirit, he will be your strength, your righteousness, and your exceeding great reward. You^[#24.p147] may accomplish much for your brethren if you will hide in God and let his Spirit soften your spirit. You have a hard class to meet. They are filled with bitter prejudice; but no more so than was Saul. God can work mightily for your brethren, if you do not allow yourself to get in the way and hedge up your own path. Let melting love, pity, and tenderness, dwell in your heart while you labor. You may break down the iron walls of prejudice if you are only clinging to Jesus Christ

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and are ready to be counseled by your more experienced brethren.

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

Epistle No. 2.

In my last vision, I was shown the introduction of the truth and the progress of the cause of God upon the Pacific Coast. I saw that a good work had been wrought for many in California, but that there were many who professed the truth that were unready to take hold of the work of God at the right time, and move as the opening providence of God indicates their duty. There may be a great work done on this Coast^{#24.p148} in bringing souls to the knowledge of the truth if there is united action. #148

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

The people of God, with various temperaments and organizations, are brought together in church capacity. The truth of God, received in the heart will

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

#149 I was shown many families who are not living [#24.p149] as Jesus would have them; they have a work to do at home before they can make advancement in the divine life. I was shown the case of Bro. ----- and was pointed back to the time when he first accepted the truth. It then had a transforming influence upon his life. Self was in a measure lost in the interest he felt for the truth. He sought to show his faith by his works, and his personal interests were made secondary. He loved the work of the Lord, and cheerfully sought to advance the interest of his cause, and the Lord accepted his efforts to serve him, and the hand of the Lord prospered him.

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

Bro. ---- is especially weak upon some points; he loves praise and flattery; he loves pleasure and

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

He had an opportunity to sow the seed of truth which he did not improve as he should. He should have carried his religion with him while among his relatives. His holy profession and the truth of God should have blended with all his thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Christ commands his followers to walk in the light. Walking means moving onward, exerting ourselves, exercising our ability, being actively engaged. Unless we exercise ourselves in the good work to which our Saviour has called us, and feel the importance of personal effort in this work, we shall have a sickly, stunted religion. We gain new victories by our experience in working. We shall gain activity and strength by walking in the light, that we may have energy to run in the way of God's commandments. We may gain an increase of strength every step we advance heavenward. God will only bless his people when they try to be a blessing to others. Our graces are matured and developed by exercise.

I was shown that Bro. ---- while he was at ^{Battle Creek,} was weak in moral power. He had not been seeking to cling to God and preserve his soul in purity of thoughts and actions, and he was left to follow his own mind, and to receive impressions that were detrimental to his spiritual interest. #159

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He met those who perverted the truth and was led by them to believe things which were untrue, and as he had opened the door to the enemy and received him as an angel of light, he was readily overcome by temptations.

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

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

There are thousands who are traveling the road of darkness and error, the broad road which leads to death, who flatter themselves that they are in the path of happiness and of Heaven, but they never

find the one or reach the other. Bro. ---- needs the helps God has placed in the church; for he cannot constitute a church of himself, and yet his course shows that he would be satisfied to be a complete church, subject to none. Bro. ---- long since lost his consecration to God; he did not guard the avenues of his soul against the suggestions of Satan. I saw that angels of God were writing his words and actions. He was going farther and farther from the light of Heaven. When the grace of God does not especially control you, Bro. ----, you are a hard man to connect with. You have great self- confidence and firmness, which are felt in your family, and in the church. You have but little reverence and respect for any one, you do not possess the grace of humility.

Bro. ---- returned to this Coast in great darkness; he had lost his love for the truth, and his love for God. His natural feelings controlled him, and he was proud. He loved himself, and he loved money better than he loved the truth^[#24.p153] and his Redeemer. I was shown that his course after he returned to the Coast was a dishonor to the name of a Christian. I saw him joining hands with the gay lovers of pleasure. He grieved his brethren, and wounded his Saviour, and put him to open shame before unbelievers. I saw that from this time he did not take pleasure in the service of God, or enjoy the advancement of the truth. He seemed to possess a zeal to search the Scriptures and different authors, not that he might become established upon important points of present truth which the providence of God had furnished him through men of his choice, but to find a new position, and to advance new views in opposition to the established faith of the body. His researches have not been for the glory of God, but to promote himself.

When Bro. ---- once takes a position on the wrong side, it is not according to his nature to see his error and confess his wrong, but to fight it out till the last, whatever may be the consequences. This spirit is ruinous to the church, and ruinous in his family. He

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needs to soften his heart, and let in tenderness, humility, and love. He needs benevolence and noble generosity. In short, he needs a thorough conversion, to be a new man in Christ Jesus. Then his influence in the church will be all right, and he will be just the help they need. He will have the respect and love of his family, and will command his household after him. Duty and love, like twin sisters, will be his helps in the management of his children.

#154 I saw that sister ---- had much to grieve^[#24.p154] over in the course her husband had pursued toward her, that her life had been very sad when he was able to make it happy. She seemed to be dispirited, and to feel that she was neglected and unloved by her husband. In his absence, at times she felt nearly distracted, and became jealous and distrustful in regard to him. Satan was present with his temptations, and she looked upon some things in an exaggerated light. All this might have been saved had Bro. ---- preserved his consecration to God. I was carried on still farther, and saw that he was walking in unbelief and darkness, while he was flattering himself that he alone had the true light. The farther he separated from God, the less love did he have for his brethren and the truth.

I was shown Bro. ---- questioning one after another of our points of faith, which had brought us out from the world, and made us a separate and distinct people, looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His unbelief and darkness have not moved the main pillars of our faith. The truth of God is not made of none effect by him. It remains the truth still; but he has had some influence upon the minds of his brethren. His reports of lying lips in regard to my husband and myself, which he brought from the East, had their influence in casting suspicions and doubts in the minds of others. Those unacquainted with us could not stand in our defense. The church in ----, I saw, might have numbered three times as

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many as it now does, and might have had^[#24.p155] ten- #164
fold greater strength, had not Bro. ---- played himself
into the hands of the enemy. In his blind unbelief, he
has done all that he could to discourage and scatter
the believers in the truth. He has not realized in his
blindness that his course was grievous in the sight of
God. The discouragement and darkness which he has
caused have made the labors of Bro. ---- doubly hard;
for his influence has not only been felt in ----, but by
other churches.

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

Those of our brethren who had not obtained
an experience for themselves in present truth could
not answer the arguments of Bro. ----, and although
they could not receive the views advocated by him,
they were more or less affected by his talk and rea-
soning. Some have felt no spirit of freedom when they #165
met for worship. They were afraid upon the Sabbath
to speak out their real feelings and their faith, expect-
ing that he would criticize what they would^[#24.p156]
say. There has been death in the meetings, and but
little freedom.

Bro. ---- desires that others should look up to
him as a man that can explain the Scriptures; but I
was shown that he was deceived and did not under-
stand them. He has started upon a wrong track in
seeking to get up a new faith, an original theory of
faith. He would uproot and misplace those way marks

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which show us our correct bearings, that we are near the close of this earth's history. He may flatter himself that he is being led of the Lord, but it is surely another spirit. Unless he changes his course entirely, and is willing to be led and to learn, he will be left to follow his own ways and make entire shipwreck of faith.

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

He feels that it is an honor to suggest doubts and unbelief in regard to the established faith of God's commandment-keeping people. The truth that he once rejoiced in, is now darkness, and he will fall #157 back with a mixture of faith[#24.p157] held by the different denominations, but agreeing in the whole with none of them, he will unless he changes his course, be a distinct church of himself, but not under the control of the great Head of the church.

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

I was shown that if he continues in his present course blinded to his real condition, he will be glad after a while to find some pretext for giving up

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the Sabbath. Satan is surely leading him, as he has many others leading them away from the body in a course of deception and error. How much safer for Bro. ---- to bring his soul into harmony with the truth, than to misinterpret Scripture, to bring it into harmony with his ideas and actions. If he would bring his actions in harmony with the principles of God's law, he has a job on his hands that he has scarcely dreamed of. The carnal heart is at enmity with God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The insinuations and open speech of those who are our enemies in Battle Creek, were received by Bro. ---- while on his journey East, and he returned with bitter and wicked feelings in his heart against those at the heart of the work, and especially against me and my work.^[#24.p158] He had no good reason for the feeling he cherished, and the views he expressed of my labors and testimonies. The unbelief and prejudice which had corrupted his own soul, he sought to instill into others' minds. He did this with considerable effect. At first, many were influenced by his sophistry and darkness, for he can make assertions and draw inferences as though he were handling positive facts. He knows how to press matters, and is of ready speech. His words had influence with some who were unconsecrated, and wished to have it just as he represented in regard to our work and our calling. He had influence and excited prejudice in the minds of some whom we could have helped, had not he closed our way, that we could get no access to them. Of this class were Bro. and sister ----.

In this Bro. ---- may see the fruits of his course, and there are others who were influenced in the same way, with the same results, as far as their faith and confidence in the truth are concerned. As soon as Bro. ---- or any others, shall decide that the men who have had the most to do in bringing the cause of present truth up to its present condition, are

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not led of God, but are scheming and designing men deceiving the people, then the course for them to pursue in order to be consistent is to renounce the entire work as a delusion, a fraud. In order to be consistent, they must throw all overboard. This Bro. ---- has almost imperceptibly to himself been doing, and this others have done. He will at some future time, if not now, review his work with different feelings than he has. He will see the work which he has been doing during the few^[#24.p159] years past, as God sees it, and will not view it with the satisfaction he now feels. When he sees the miserable work he has been engaged in for a few years past, his proud boasting of wisdom and superior knowledge will have an end, and he will repent in bitterness of soul, for the blood of souls is in his garments.

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

God has given us our work, and if God has given us a message to bear to his people, those who would hinder us in the work, and weaken the faith of the people in its truth and verity, are not fighting against the instrument, but against God; and must answer to him for the result of their words and actions. All who have spiritual discernment may judge of the tree by its fruits. Bro. ---- stands forth as one enlightened by God to undeceive the people in regard to our work and mission. All may see, if they will, the fruit growing upon this tree. Bro. ----, is it to eternal

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life, or is it to death? after he received this special knowledge from Battle^[#24.p160] Creek, which led him to take a course to belittle our work and mission, he felt at liberty to join with the unbelieving in the dissipation of pleasure, and by his levity of conduct he brought reproach upon the cause of Christ, and great suffering upon his wife. #160

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

God will not be trifled with. He may bear long with men, but he will visit their transgressions, and render to every man as his works have been. Although men may talk boastfully, and pride themselves upon their wisdom, one breath from the lips of God can bring their honor and glorying to the dust. I was shown that Bro. ---- will be inexcusable in the day of God, when every case is weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. He knows better than to do as he has done. He has had sufficient evidence to determine the character of the work which God has committed to us. He has the fruits of this work before him, which he can see and understand if he will. #161

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Bro. ----'s self-confidence is most wonderful and is a fearful snare to him. If he does not overcome this dangerous trait in his character, it will prove his ruin. He is in his natural element when he is battling, and controverting points of doctrine; he will question, and quibble, and be at variance with his brethren, until Satan so controls his mind that he really thinks that

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he has the truth and his brethren are in error. He does not stand in the light, and has not the blessing of God; for it constitutes a part of his religion to oppose the settled points of God's commandment-keeping people. Are all these deceived? and is Bro. --- -- the only man to whom God has given correct truth? Is not God just as willing to give his devoted self-sacrificing servants the correct understanding of the Scriptures, as to give it to Bro. ---- for them?

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

Bro. ---- does not try to be in union with his brethren; his self-confidence has led him to feel no especial necessity for union. He feels that their minds have been cast in a mold inferior to his own, and that to receive their opinions and counsel as worthy of attention would be a great condescension. This self-confidence^[#24.p162] has shut him away from the love, sympathy, and union of his brethren. He feels that he is too wise and experienced to need the precautions which are indispensable to many. He has so high an opinion of his own abilities and such a reliance upon his own attainments that he believes himself prepared for any emergency. Said the heavenly angels, pointing to Bro. - ---, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall." Self-confidence leads to unwatchfulness and neglect of humble, penitential prayer. There are outward temptations to be shunned, and inward foes and perplexities to be overcome; for Satan adapts his temptations to the different characters and temperaments of individuals.

The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one

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man's mind, and one man's judgment, are not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have his followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? The prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action and mutual confidence of its members. When, at a critical time, one shall sound the alarm of danger, there is need of prompt and active work, without stopping to question and canvass the whole^[#24.p163] subject from end to end, #163 and thus letting the enemy gain every advantage by delay, when united action might have saved many souls from perdition.

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

As Jesus was about to leave his disciples, he prayed for them in a most touching, solemn manner, that they all might be one "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And

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#164 the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." The apostle in the first epistle to the Corinthians exhorts them to unity. "Now I[#24.p164] beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.'

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

#165 God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given his people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin, and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer.[#24.p165]

Bro. ---- is doubting point after point of our

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

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

I was shown that the only safe position for Bro. ---- was to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn the way of life more perfectly. His doctrine shall drop as the rain, and his speech shall distill as the dew upon the heart of the humble and teachable. Bro. ---- must [#24.p166] obtain a teachable disposition. He is not to sit #166 as a judge, but as a learner, not to cavil, but to believe, not to question and find fault and oppose, but to listen. Pride must give way to humility, and prejudice must be exchanged for candor, or the gracious words of Christ will be vain to him. You may reason, my brother, until the day of God, with your blind judgment and unsanctified mind, and advance not a step toward Heaven; you may debate and investigate

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and search learned authors, and even the Scriptures, and grow more and more self-deceived, and become darker and darker, as did the Jews in reference to Christ. What was their fault? They rejected the light which God had already given them, and were seeking for some new light by which they might so interpret Scriptures as to sustain their actions.

You are doing the same; you pass over the light God has seen fit to give you in the publications upon present truth, and in his word, and are seeking doctrines of your own, theories which cannot be sustained by the word of God. When you become as a little child, willing to be led, and with your understanding sanctified, and your will and prejudices surrendered, such a light will then be shed abroad in your heart, as will illumine the Scriptures, and show you present truth in its beautiful harmony. It will appear like a golden chain, link joined to link in a perfect whole. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." "Learn of me," says Christ, "for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."^[#24.p167]

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

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opinions, and if you have already settled your faith, then you will be boastful, self-confident, and unyielding.

Bro. ---, with your present self-willed, stubborn spirit, you will go farther and farther from the truth; and unless you are converted, you will prove to be a great hindrance to the cause of God in any place where you have any influence. You are persistent to carry your points. Your self-sufficient spirit must be yielded, before you can see anything clearly. You have led your wife to think that you knew the truth better than any of our ministers; you have taken the key of knowledge in your own hands, so far as she is concerned, and have kept her in darkness. God has given his church^[#24.p168] men of judgment, experience, and faith. They know the way of truth, and of salvation, for they have searched for it while in agony of spirit, because of the opposition they had to meet from men who turned the truth of God into a lie; and the benefit of the labor of these faithful servants of God is given to the world. #179

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

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

When Christ was upon the earth, there were men who had no respect or reverence for God's messengers, and no more regard for their warning than for their own judgment; also in this age of the world there are those who will not respect the testimony of God's chosen servants, so highly as their own opinions. Such cannot be benefited by the labors of God's servants, and time should not be lost in degrading the work of God to meet such minds. Christ said to the servants whom he sent forth, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

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

#170 God has given to his church men who have an experience, those who have fasted, and wept, and prayed, even through the entire night, for the Lord to open the Scriptures to their minds. These men in humility have given the benefits of their mature experience to the world. Is this light of Heaven, or of men? Is it of any value, or is it worthless? Bro. ---- is doing a work in disseminating erroneous views of Bible truth that he will wish one day to undo; but it will

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be in vain. He may repent, he may yet be saved as by fire; but oh! how much precious time will have been lost that never can be redeemed! How much seed has he sown that has borne only briars and thorns! How many souls lost that might have been saved had he tried as earnestly to let the true light shine as he has to scatter his darkness!

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

I saw that he would question the men upon whom God has seen fit to lay the responsibility of his work. He would exalt his own opinions and views above the light God had given through them, and he would boast of his knowledge, and would be an accuser of his brethren, not excepting the ambassadors of Christ. All this overbearing influence to belittle the judgment of the servants of God, and to accuse them of weaknesses and errors, exalting his own opinions above theirs, if not repented of, will be found written [#24.p171] against him in the books, which he will see #171 with shame in the day of God.

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

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God. He has a hard work before him. Said Christ, "It must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!"

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

I was shown that a harsh, pharisaical spirit would grow upon Bro. ---- and control him unless he sees the terrible defects in his character, and obtains grace from God to correct the evil.[#24.p172]

Before Bro. ---- embraced the truth, his hand seemed to be against every one, his combative spirit would strengthen at any provocation, and his self-esteem would be injured; he was a hard man, getting into and making trouble. The truth of God wrought a reformation in him. God accepted him, and his hand held him up. But since Bro. ---- lost the spirit of consecration, his old, turbulent spirit, at variance with others, has been strengthening, and seeking to gain the mastery. When he dies to self, and humbles his proud heart before God, he will find how weak is his strength; he will feel the need of heavenly succor, and will cry, Unclean, unclean, before thee, O God. All his proud boasting in self will have an end.

Life in this stormy world where moral darkness triumphs over truth and virtue, will be to the Christian a continual conflict; and he will find that he must keep the armor on, for he will have to fight against forces that never tire, and foes that never

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sleep. We shall find ourselves beset with countless temptations, and we must find strength in Christ to overcome them, or be overcome by them, and lose our souls. We have a great and solemn work to do, and how terrible will be our loss if we fail. If the work which our Master has left us be found undone, we cannot have a second probation granted us. It must remain undone forever.

I was shown the life of Bro. ---- in his family. Angels wept as they viewed his course at home, as they viewed the unloved wife, who receives no respect from her husband whose duty it was to love and cherish^[#24.p173] her as his own body, even as Christ #173 has loved and cherished the church. You take pains to make her defects apparent, and to exalt your own wisdom and judgment. You make her feel her inferiority in company and alone.

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

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

account for bringing children into the world T #24
 and letting them come up untrained, unloving, and
 unloved. These children cannot be saved in the
 #174 kingdom of Heaven without a great change in their
 characters.

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

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

#175 You may say, "Why does sister White come
 [#24.p175] to me with this? I have no faith in the visions."
 I knew this before I attempted to write, but I feel that
 the time has come for me to set these things before
 you. I must tell you the truth, for I expect to meet in
 the Judgment what I have here imperfectly written. I

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have waited, hoping that I might say something that would reach your heart, and soften it for the very words I have here written. But I lost all hope in that direction, for you were fortified with an armor as impenetrable as steel. You will not accept of anything that does not meet your mind. I was shown that it would have been better for the cause of present truth if you had never embraced the Sabbath. Your conscience is not a very sensitive one, you are blinded by the enemy.

I gave up all hope of doing anything for the church in --- - while you were as a stumbling block to them. You once loved the truth, and had you followed on in the pathway of truth and holiness, you would have now been an ambassador for Christ. You will have a fearful account to give in the great day of God for your talents which have been unimproved. You had good abilities. God lent these talents to you for you to put to a good account, but you have abused these gifts. Had you used the ability God has given you on the right side, you would have done much in winning souls to Christ; and you would see in the kingdom of Heaven souls saved through your instrumentality. But you have scattered abroad, instead of gathering with Christ. Your brethren have been discouraged from trying to rise and advance; because you, ^{#24.p176} like an opposing body, counteract the good they would do. #176

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

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forces he can command are diligently employed by him in these last days to compass the ruin of souls. Every artifice he can use he seizes to deceive, perplex, and confuse the people of God.

#177 He has used you as his agent to scatter darkness and confusion, and he finds that you work admirably in his hands. You are the very instrument he can handle with good effect, to hurt, discourage, and tear down. You are not zealous in putting your shoulder under the load, with the people of God; but when they would move, you throw yourself as an additional load, to prevent them from doing what they might do in advancing in the right direction. Satan is at work upon those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. The most bitter hatred exists within him against all who are loyal to God, obeying his commandments. He sleeps not; he does not abate his vigilance for one^[#24.p177] moment. Would that God's professed followers were half as wise, diligent, and persevering, in the work of God as is Satan in his work.

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

Satan will frequently appear as an angel of light, arrayed in the livery of Heaven; he will assume friendly airs, manifesting great sanctity of character

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and high regard for his victims, the souls he means to deceive and destroy. Perils lie in the path which he invites souls to travel, but he succeeds in concealing these, and presents the attractions only. The great Captain of your salvation has conquered in your behalf, that through him you might conquer, if you would, on your own behalf. But Christ saves none against their choice; he compels none to obedience. #178 He has made the infinite sacrifice that^[#24.p178] they may overcome in his name, and his righteousness be imparted unto them.

But in order for you to be saved you must accept the yoke of Christ, and lay off the yoke you have fashioned for your neck. The victory Jesus gained in the wilderness, is a pledge to you of the victory you may gain through his name. Your only hope and salvation is in overcoming as Christ overcame. The wrath of God now hangs over you. You love the attractions of the world above the heavenly treasure. The lust of the eye and the pride of life have separated you from God. Your confidence in your own poor, weak, faulty self, must be broken. You must feel your weakness before you will drop, with your burden, into the hands of God. The soul that trusts fully and entirely in God will never be confounded.

God would not have us consult our own convenience in obeying him. Christ pleased not himself when he was a man among men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Majesty of Heaven had not where to lay his head, no place that he could claim as his own. He became poor for our sakes, that through him we might be rich indeed. Let us not talk of sacrifice; for we know not what it is to sacrifice for the truth. As yet, we have scarcely lifted the cross for Christ's dear sake. Let us not seek for a way which is easier than the path our Redeemer has traveled before us. How incompetent are you, with all your boasted wisdom, to guide yourself. How liable are you to follow the dictates of a deceived conscience, to run in the way of error and drag others #179

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with you.[#24.p179]

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

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

God makes a proposition to you to accept you as his child, and make you a member of the royal family, a child of the Heavenly King, upon the conditions that you come out from the [#24.p180]world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. The Monarch of Heaven would have you possess and enjoy all that can ennoble, expand, and exalt your being, and fit you to dwell with him forever, your existence measuring with the life of God. What a prospect is the life which is to come! What charms it possesses! How broad and deep and measureless is the love of God manifested to man! No words can describe this love;

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it surpasses all thought and imagination, but it is a reality that you may learn by experience; you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And with such a prospect before you, how can you narrow your mind to the compass of worldly thoughts, and to the range of worldly occupations, seeking gain and yielding one point after another of present truth. Truth, principle, and conscience, are desirable for you to retain. The favor of God is better than houses of silver and of gold. The deepest joy of the heart comes from the deepest humiliation. Trust and submission to God work out strength and nobleness of character. Tears are not in every case evidences of weakness. In order for you to build up a character which is symmetrical in the sight of a pure and holy God, you must begin at the foundation. The heart must be broken before God, and true repentance for sin must be shown, till you meet the demands of truth and duty as they are. Then you will have true respect for yourself, and true confidence in God. You will have a tenderness of feeling. All that #181 braggadocio spirit will be gone. In the place of harshness will be great #24.p181 tenderness blended with firmness of purpose to stand for the truths at all events. You will see much in the world and in your own heart to make you weep. E. G. W.

Epistle, No. 3.

Bro. ----: I have designed to write to you for some time past, but have not found an opportunity to do so until now. While speaking to the people last Sabbath, I felt so clearly impressed with your case, that I could with difficulty refrain from calling your name in public. I will get this burden off my mind by writing to you. In my last vision I was shown the deficiencies of those who professed to labor in word and in doctrine. I saw that you had not been improving your abilities, but had been growing less and less efficient to teach the truth. You need a thorough conversion. You have a strong, set will, even to stubbornness. You might

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now have been fitted for the solemn work of bearing the message of truth to others, had you been less self-confident, and more humble and meek in spirit.

You do not love close application, nor the taxation of a continued effort. You have not been a persevering student of the word of God, neither have you been a zealous worker in the cause of God. Your life has been far from representing the life of Christ.

#182 You are not discriminating. You are not a judicious and wise[#24.p182] worker. You do not study to win souls to Christ, as every minister of Christ should.

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

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

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

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

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thorough changes. Unless you realize a decided and thorough conversion in^[#24.p183] almost every respect, you are entirely unfitted to preach the truth; and unless you can have a proper and becoming elevation of character, manners, and address, you will do greater harm than you can do good. You have not done much in advancing the truth, for you have lingered about the churches too much, when you could not do them good, but only injury. Your ways and manners need refining and sanctifying. You should no longer mar the work of God by your deficiencies, since you have shown no decided improvement in becoming a workman in the cause of God. #183

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

You are not elevated in your ideas, or aspiring in your labors. You are content to be commonplace, and to make a cheap minister. You do not aspire to perfection of Christian character, and to that position in the work that Christ requires every one of his chosen ministers to attain. No one professing to bear the truth to others is fitted for the responsible work unless he is making advancement in knowledge, and in consecration to the work, and is improving his manners and temper, and growing in true wisdom from day to day. Close communion with^[#24.p184] God is necessary for every man who would guide souls into the truth. #184

It should ever be borne in mind by those who take upon themselves the burden of guiding souls out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light that they themselves must be advancing in that light, else how can they lead others? If they are walking in dark-

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ness themselves, it is a most fearful responsibility which they assumed in pretending to teach others the way.

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

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

#185 Unbelievers have been disgusted, for they think the Seventh-day Adventists have been fairly represented by you, and they have decided that it is enough, and that they want no more of such doctrines. Our faith is unpopular at best, and is in wide contrast to the faith and practices of other denominations. In order to reach men and women who are in the darkness^[#24.p185] of false theories and errors, we must approach them with the utmost caution, and with the greatest wisdom, agreeing with them on every point that we conscientiously can.

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

Who but yourself will be responsible for the souls you have turned away from the truth by your

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unsanctified labors? Who can break down the walls of prejudice which your injudicious labor has built up? I know of no greater crime against God than for men to engage in the ministry who labor in self, and not in Christ.

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

Bro. ----, you have narrow ideas, and your labor has a tendency to lower rather than to elevate the truth. This is not because you have^{#24.p186} no ability. You could have made a good workman, but you were too indolent to make the effort necessary to attain the object. You would rather come down upon those who differ with you, in a harsh and overbearing manner, than to take the trouble to elevate your tone of labor. You take positions, and then when they are questioned, you are not humble enough to yield your ideas and notions, though shown to be wrong, but stand up in your independence, and firmly hold to your ideas, when concession on your part is essential, and is required of you as a duty. You have stubbornly and unyielding held to your own judgment and opinions, to the sacrifice of souls.

Bro. ----, your set positions, and strong, determined will, to carry out your points at all hazards, were felt and deplored by your wife, and her health suffered in consequence. You were not gentle and tender to this sensitive child of God; your strong spirit overbore her more gentle disposition. She grieved over many things. You could have made her life happier had you tried; but you sought to have her see things as you saw them, and instead of trying to assimilate yourself to her refined temperament, you tried to mold her to

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your coarser nature and your extreme ideas. She was warped in her nature, and could not act out herself. She withered like a plant transplanted to an uncongenial soil.

#187 You should not seek to mold minds and characters after your pattern, but should allow your own character to be molded after the divine pattern. If this world was composed of men like^{#24.p187}yourself in character and temperament, woe be to it! As like would meet like, whichever way you might turn, you would be disgusted with your fellow-associates, the exact pattern of yourself, and would wish to be out of the world.

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

In your labors, you frequently start out well, and raise an interest, and conviction is upon minds that the arguments used cannot be controverted; but just at the time when souls are balancing in favor of the truth, ---- ---- appears so plainly, that all which might have been gained, had Jesus shone forth in your words and deportment, is lost, because self is prominent.

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

#188 Unless you are thoroughly converted, your efforts to convert others might as well cease now as

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for you to labor longer, mangling and[#24.p188] perverting the religious standard by your narrow and bigoted ideas. You have not an experimental knowledge of the divine will, but your own righteousness seems to you to be of value, when it is valueless. You need to be transformed before you can be of use in the cause of God. When you are converted, then you can labor to acceptance.

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

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

You may overcome the deficiencies in your character which disqualify you for laboring in the cause of God, if you will take hold of the work earnestly, and without making any apology[#24.p189] for sin, will condemn sin in the flesh, and reach up in faith and hope for divine grace and right judgment. You have not advanced or improved for many years. You are farther today from the standard of Christian perfection, and the qualifications which should be found in the minister of the gospel, than you were a few months after you had received the truth. #189

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

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

#190 For you to chase through books superficially clogs the mind, and you become a mental dyspeptic. You cannot digest and use one-half you read. If you should read with the one object in view to improve the mind, and read only as much^[#24.p190] as the mind can comprehend and digest, such a course of reading, patiently persevered in, would accomplish some good results. You, as well as other ministers, need to attend school, and commence like a child to master the first branches of knowledge. You can neither read, spell, nor pronounce correctly, and yet there are but few who have had less taxations and less burdens of responsibility to bear than yourself.

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

Your life thus far has been unprofitable. You have some very good ideas, but the Spirit of God does not dwell in your heart. You are not quickened by his

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power, and you have not genuine faith, hope and love. The Spirit of Christ dwelling in you will enable you to take of the things of God and reveal them to others. You can be of no benefit to the cause of God till the work of a faithful minister of Christ is more exalted in your mind. You want a purpose in your life to do good as did Jesus. The self-denial and love you manifest in this work will tell upon the lives and characters of others.

You should get rid as soon as possible of your cold, frozen formality. You need to cultivate feelings of tenderness and friendliness in your every-day life. You should exhibit true courteousness and Christian politeness. The heart that really loves Jesus, loves those for^{#24.p191} whom he died. Just as truly as the needle points to the pole, so will the true follower of Christ, with a spirit of earnest labor, seek to save souls for whom Christ has given his life. Working for the salvation of sinners will keep the love of Christ warm in the heart, and will give that love a proper growth and development. Without a correct knowledge of the divine will, there will be a lack of harmonious development in the Christian character.

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

Oh! what a position are you and many other ministers in. Having forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, you and they have hewn out to yourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. I entreat of you to be alarmed and turn to the Lord with

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#192 that deep and earnest repentance which will secure to you his forgiveness, and the enduring strength of his might, that you may indeed be filled with all the fullness of God. God frowns upon your course, for [#24.p192] you have been as a stumbling block to souls. You have depended on your own works and righteousness for success, and have not a knowledge of the divine will.

May the Lord reveal to you your true character, and let you see your real deficiencies. When you are enlightened by the Spirit of God to understand this, you will have such a sense of your sinful neglect and unimproved life as will strike terror to your soul, and cause you sorrow that will lead to repentance that needeth not to be repented of. E. G. W.