

Book Pg.

**THE
TESTIMONIES
TO THE CHURCH,
Testimonies Nos. 25-26**

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 Number 25

By Ellen G. White

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Importance of the Work

I was shown, Jan. 3, 1875, many things relative to the great and important interests at Battle Creek, in the work of the Publishing Association, the School, and the Health Institute. If these institutions were properly conducted they would greatly advance the cause of God in the spread of the truth, and in the salvation of souls. We are living amid the perils of the last days. Consecration to God can alone fit any of us to act a part in the solemn and important closing work for this time. There are but few wholly unselfish men to fill responsible positions who have given themselves unreservedly to God, to hear his voice and study his glory. There are but few who would, if required, give their lives to advance the cause of God. Just such devotion as this God claims.

Men are deceived in thinking they are serving God when they are serving themselves and making the interest of the cause and work of God a secondary matter. Their hearts are not consecrated. God_[#25p4] takes no pleasure in the services of this class.. #4

From time to time, as the cause has progressed, he has, in his providence, designated men to fill positions at Battle Creek. These men could fill important positions if they would be consecrated to God, and devote their energies to his work. These men of God's selection needed the very discipline that a devotion to the work of God would give them. He would honor these men by connect-

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ing them with himself, and giving them his Holy Spirit to qualify them for the responsibilities they were called to bear. They could not gain that breadth of experience and knowledge of the divine will without they were in positions to bear burdens and responsibilities. None should be deceived in thinking that, in connecting themselves with the work of God in Battle Creek, they will have less care, less hard labor, and less trials. Satan is more active where there is the most being done to advance the truth and to save souls.

He understands human nature, and he will not let these men alone if there is any prospect of their becoming more like Christ and more useful workers in the cause of God. Satan lays his plans to press his temptations upon the very men
#5 whom God has signified he would accept^[#25p5] to act a part in connection with his work. It is Satan's study how he can best war against and defeat the purposes of God. He is acquainted with the weak points as well as the strong points in the characters of men. And in a subtle manner he works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness to thwart the purposes of God by assailing the weak points in the character. And when this is done he has the way prepared to attack and overcome the stronger points of character. He gains control of the mind and blinds the understanding. He leads men who are bewildered and overcome by his devices to self-confidence and self-sufficiency at the very time when they are the weakest in moral power. They become self-deceived, and think they are in good spiritual condition.

The enemy will seize everything possible to use in his favor and to destroy souls. Testimonies have been borne in favor of individuals occupying important positions. They commenced well to lift the burdens and act their part in connection with

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the work of God. But Satan was pursuing them with his temptations, and they were finally overcome.

As others look upon their course of wrong, Satan suggests to their minds that there must be a mistake in the testimonies given for these persons, else these men^[#25p6] would not have proved themselves unworthy to bear a part in the work of God. This is just as Satan designed it should be. He would throw doubt in regard to the light God had given. These men might have withstood the temptations of Satan had they been watchful and guarded, feeling their own insufficiency, and trusting in the name and strength of Jesus to stand faithful to duty. But it should be borne in mind that conditions have ever been connected with the encouragement given these men, that if they would maintain an unselfish spirit and feel their weakness, and rely upon God, trusting not in their own wisdom and judgment, but making him their strength, they could be a great blessing in his cause and work. #6

But Satan has come in with his temptations, and has triumphed, almost without an exception. He has so arranged circumstances as to assail the weak points in the characters of these men, and they have been overcome. How shamefully they have injured the cause of God! How fully they have separated themselves from him by following their own corrupt hearts, their own souls may answer! But the day of God will reveal the true cause for all our disappointments in man. God is not at fault. Upon conditions he gave them encouraging promises, but they did^[#25p7] not comply with these conditions. They trusted to their own strength, and fell under temptations. #7

That which under certain circumstances could be said of men, could not be said of them under other circumstances. Men are weak in

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moral power, and so supremely selfish, so self-sufficient, and easily puffed up with vain conceit, that God cannot work in connection with them, and they are left to move like blind men, and reveal so great weakness, and their folly is so manifest that many are astonished that such individuals should ever have been accepted, and acknowledged as worthy of having any connection with God's work.

This is just what Satan designed. This was his object from the time he first especially tempted these men to reproach the cause of God, and to cast reflections upon the testimonies. Had they remained where their influence would not have especially been felt upon the cause of God. Satan would not have beset them so fiercely, for he could not accomplish his purpose by using them as his instruments to do a special work.

In the advancement of the work of God, that which may be said in truth of individuals at one time may not correctly be said of them at another time. The reason of this is that one month they may have^{#8}_[#25p8] stood in innocency, living up to the best light they had, while the month following was none too short for them to be overcome by Satan's devices, and through self-confidence, fall into grievous sins, and become unfitted for the work of God.

Minds are so subject to change through the subtle temptations of Satan that it is not the best policy for my husband or myself to take the responsibility of even stating our opinions or judgment of the qualifications of persons to fill different positions, because we are made responsible for the course such individuals pursue. Notwithstanding they may have been the very persons for the place, if they had maintained the humility and firm trust in God which they had when recommended to take responsibilities. These per-

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sons change, yet are not sensible of the change in themselves. They fall under temptation, are led away from their steadfastness, and separate their connection from God. They then are controlled by the enemy, and do and say things which dishonor God and reproach his cause. Then Satan exults to see our brethren and sisters looking upon us with doubt, because we have given them encouragement and influence. [#25p9]

#9

State of the World.

The state of the world was shown me as fast filling up the cup of iniquity. Violence and crime of every description are filling our world; and Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular.

The youth who walk the streets are surrounded with handbills and notices of crime and sin, presented in some novel, or to be acted at a theater. Their minds are educated into familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before them in the periodicals of the day. Everything which can excite curiosity and arouse the animal passions is brought before the young in thrilling and exciting stories.

The literature that proceeds from corrupted intellect poisons the minds of thousands in our world. Sin does not appear exceedingly sinful. They hear and read so much of debasing crime and vileness that the once tender mind, which would have recoiled with horror, becomes blunted, so that it can dwell upon the low and vile sayings and actions of men with greedy interest.

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man."

God will have a people zealous of good works, [#25p10] standing firm amid the pollutions of #10 this degenerate age. There will be a people who hold so fast to the divine strength that they will

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be proof against every temptation. Evil communications, in flaming handbills, may seek to speak to their senses and corrupt their minds, yet they are so united to God and angels that they are as those who see not, and those who hear not. They have a work to do which no one can do for them, which is to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. They will not be self-confident and self-sufficient. They know their weakness, and unite their ignorance to Christ's wisdom, their weakness to his strength.

Youth may have firm principles that the most powerful temptations of Satan will not draw them away from their allegiance. Samuel was a child surrounded with the most corrupting influences. He saw and heard things that grieved his soul. The sons of Eli, who ministered in holy office, were controlled by Satan. These men polluted the whole atmosphere which surrounded them. Men and women were daily fascinated with sin and wrong; yet Samuel walked untainted. His robes of character were spotless. He did not fellowship or have the least delight in the sins which filled all Israel with fearful^[#25p11] reports. Samuel loved God, and kept his soul in such close connection with Heaven that an angel was sent to talk with him in reference to the sins of Eli's sons, which were corrupting Israel.

Appetite and passion are overcoming thousands of Christ's professed followers. The senses become so blunted on account of familiarity with sin that they do not abhor it, but view sin as attractive. The end of all things is at hand. Not much longer will God bear with the crimes and debasing iniquity of the children of men. Their crimes have indeed reached unto the heavens, and will soon be answered by the fearful plagues of God upon the earth. They will drink the cup of God's wrath, unmixed with mercy.

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I have seen the danger of even the professed children of God being corrupted. Licentiousness is binding men and women as captives. They seem to be infatuated, powerless to resist and overcome upon the point of appetite and passion. In God there is power; in him there is strength. If they will take hold upon it, Jesus will stimulate everyone who has named the name of Christ with his life-giving power. Dangers and peril surround us. And we are only safe when we feel our weakness and cling with the grasp of faith to our mighty Deliverer. It is a fearful time in [#25p12] which we live. We cannot cease watchfulness and prayer for a moment. Our helpless souls must rely on Jesus our compassionate Redeemer. #12

I was shown the greatness and importance of the work before us. But few feel and sense the true state of things. All will be overcome who are asleep, and who cannot realize any necessity for vigilance and alarm. Young men are arising to engage in the work of God, some of whom have scarcely any sense of the sacredness and the responsibility of the work. They have but little experience in exercising faith, and in earnest soul-hunger for the Spirit of God, which ever brings returns. Some men of good capabilities who might fill important positions do not know what spirit they are of. They can run in a jovial mood as naturally as the water flows down hill. They will talk nonsense and sport with young girls while almost daily listening to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths. These men have a head religion, but their hearts are not sanctified by the truths they hear. Such can never lead others to the fountain of living waters until they have drank of the stream themselves.

It is no time now for lightness, for vanity, or trifling. The scenes of this earth's history are

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#13 soon to close. Minds that have_[#25p13] been left to loose thought need change. Says the apostle Peter, "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

These loose thoughts must be gathered up and centered on God. The very thoughts should be in obedience to the will of God. Praise should not be given or expected, for this will have a tendency to foster self-confidence rather than to increase humility, to corrupt rather than purify. Men who are really qualified, and feel that they have a part to act in connection with the work of God will feel pressed beneath the sense of the sacredness of the work as a cart beneath sheaves. Now is the time for the most earnest efforts to overcome the natural feeling of the carnal heart.

Reformation Needed.

There is great necessity for a reformation among the people of God. The present state of the
#14 church leads to the inquiry,_[#25p14] Is this the correct representation of Him who gave his life for us? Are these the followers of Christ, and thus brethren of those who counted not their lives dear unto themselves? The Bible standard and the Bible description of Christ's followers will be found rare indeed. Having forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, they have hewn them out cisterns, "broken cisterns that can hold no water." Said the angel, "Lack of love and faith are the great sins of which God's people are now guilty." Lack of faith leads to carelessness, and to love of self and the world. Those who separate

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themselves from God and fall under temptation indulge in gross vices, and the carnal heart leads to great wickedness. And this state of things is found among many of God's professed people. They are professedly serving God while they are to all intents and purposes corrupting their ways before him. Appetite and passion will be indulged by many notwithstanding the clear light of truth points out the danger, and lifts its warning voice, Beware, restrain, deny. The wages of sin is death. Notwithstanding there are those who have made shipwreck of faith, and their example stands as a beacon to warn others from pursuing the same course, yet many will rush madly on. Satan has control of their^[#25p15] minds and seems to have #15 power over their bodies.

Oh! how many flatter themselves that they have goodness and righteousness when the true light of God reveals that all their lives they have lived to please themselves. Their whole conduct is abhorred of God. And how many are alive without the law. In their gross darkness they view themselves with complacency, but let the law of God be revealed to their consciences, as it was to Paul, and they would see that they were sold under sin, and must die to the carnal mind. Self must be slain.

How sad and fearful the mistakes many are making. They are building on the sand, and flatter themselves that they are riveted to the eternal Rock. Many who profess godliness are rushing on recklessly and are insensible of their danger, as though there was no future Judgment. A fearful retribution awaits them, and yet they are controlled by impulse and gross passion, and are filling out the dark life record for the Judgment. I lift my voice of warning to all who name the name of Christ to depart from all iniquity. Purify your souls by obeying the truth. Cleanse yourselves

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#16 from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. You to whom this applies know what I mean. Even you who have corrupted your ways^[#25p16] before the Lord, partaken of the iniquity that abounds, and blackened your souls with sin, Jesus still invites you to turn from your course of sin, and take hold of his strength, and find in him that peace, power, and grace, that will make you more than conquerors in his name.

The corruptions of this degenerate age have stained many souls who have been professedly serving God. But even now it is not too late for wrongs to be righted, and for the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour to atone in your behalf, if you repent and feel your need of pardon.

We need now to watch and pray as never before, lest we fall under the power of temptation and leave our example as a miserable wreck. We must not, as a people, become careless and look upon sin indifferently. The camp needs purging. All who name the name of Christ need to watch and pray, and guard the avenues of the soul; for Satan is at work to corrupt and destroy if he has the least advantage given him.

#17 My brethren, God calls upon you as his followers to walk in the light. You need to be alarmed. Sin is among us, and it is not seen to be exceedingly sinful. The senses of many are benumbed by the indulgence of appetite and the familiarity with sin. We need to advance nearer^[#25p17] Heaven. We may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Walking in the light, and running in the way of God's commandments, do not give us the idea that we can stand still and do nothing. We must be advancing.

In self-love and self-exaltation and pride, there is great weakness, while in humility there is great strength. Our true dignity is not maintained

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when we think most of ourselves, but when God is in all our thoughts, and our hearts are all aglow with love to our Redeemer and love to our fellow-men. Simplicity of character and lowliness of heart will give happiness, while self-conceit will bring discontent, repining, and continual disappointment. It is learning to think less of ourselves and more of making others happy that will bring to us divine strength.

In our separation from God, in our pride and darkness, we are constantly seeking to elevate ourselves, and we forget that lowliness of mind is power. Our Saviour's power was not in strong array of sharp words that would pierce the very soul through, but it was his gentleness and plain, unassuming manners that made him a conqueror of hearts. Pride and self-importance, when compared with lowliness and humbleness of mind, are indeed weakness. We are invited to learn of Him who was^[#25p18] meek and lowly of heart; then we shall experience that rest and peace so much to be desired. #18

Love of the World.

The temptation presented by Satan to our Saviour upon the exceeding high mountain is one of the leading temptations which humanity must meet. The kingdoms of the world in their glory were presented to Christ by Satan as a gift upon condition that he would yield to him honor as to a superior. Our Saviour felt the strength of this temptation. He met it in our behalf, and conquered. He would not have been tested on this point if man were not to be tried with the same temptation. In his example of resistance, he gave us a copy of the course we should pursue when Satan should come to us individually, to lead us from our integrity.

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No man can be a follower of Christ and yet place his affections upon the things of the world. John in his epistle writes, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Our Redeemer, who met this temptation of Satan in its fullest power, is acquainted with man's danger of yielding to temptation to love the world.
#19 world.[#25p19]

Christ identifies himself with humanity by bearing the test upon this point and overcoming in man's behalf. He has guarded with warnings those very points where Satan would best succeed in his temptations to man. He knew that Satan would gain the victory over man unless he was especially guarded upon the points of appetite and the love of worldly riches and worldly honor. He says:--

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Here Christ has brought before us two masters, God and the world, and has plainly presented the fact that it was simply impossible for us to serve both. If our interest in, and love for, this world predominate, we shall not appreciate the things above all others worthy of our attention. The love of the world excludes the love of God, and makes our highest considerations
#20 God, and makes our highest considerations [#25p20] subordinate to our worldly interests. Thus God

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does not hold so exalted a place in our affections and devotions as do the things of the world.

Earthly treasures have our supreme affections, exactly as our works show. The greatest care, anxiety, and labor, are devoted to worldly interests, while eternal considerations are made secondary. Here Satan receives the homage of man, which he claimed of Christ, and failed to obtain. It is the selfish love of the world which corrupts the faith of the professed followers of Christ, and makes them weak in moral power. The more they love their earthly riches the farther they depart from God, and the less do they partake of his divine nature that would give them a sense of the corrupting influences in the world, and the dangers to which they are exposed.

In Satan's temptations, it is his purpose to make the world very attractive. He has a bewitching power to gain the affections of even the professed Christian world through love of riches and worldly honor. Any sacrifice is made by a large class of professedly Christian men to gain riches, and the better they succeed in their object, the less love they have for precious truth and the less interest for its advancement. They lose their love for God, and act like insane men. The more they are prospered_[#25p21] in securing riches, the poorer #21 they feel because they have not more, and the less they will invest in the cause of God.

The works of these men who have an insane love for riches, show that it is not possible for them to serve two masters, God and mammon. Money is their God. They yield homage to its power. They serve the world to all intents and purposes. Their honor, which is their birthright, is sacrificed for worldly gain. This ruling power controls their minds, and they will violate the law of God to serve personal interests, that their earthly treasure may increase.

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Many may profess the religion of Christ who love not and heed not the letter or principles of Christ's teachings. They give the best of their strength to worldly pursuits, and bow down to mammon. It is alarming that so many are deceived by Satan, and their imaginations excited by their brilliant prospects of worldly gain. They become infatuated with the prospect of perfect happiness if they can gain their object in acquiring honor and wealth in the world. Satan tempts them with the alluring bribe, "All this will I give thee," all this power, all this wealth, with which you may do a great amount of good. But when the object for which they have labored is gained they have not a_[#25p22] connection with the self-denying Redeemer, which would make them partakers of the divine nature. They hold to their earthly treasures, and despise the requirements of self-denial and self-sacrifice for Christ. They have no desire to part with the dear earthly treasures upon which their hearts are set. They have exchanged masters, and accepted mammon in the place of Christ. Mammon is their god, and mammon they serve.

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Satan has secured to himself the worship of these deceived souls through their love of worldly riches. The change has been so imperceptibly made, and the deceptive power of Satan is so wily, that they are conformed to the love of the world, and perceive not that they have parted with Christ, and are no longer his servants, except in name.

Satan deals with men more guardedly than he dealt with Christ in the wilderness of temptation, for he is admonished that there he lost his case. He was a conquered foe. He does not come to man directly and demand homage by outward worship. He simply asks men to place their affections upon the good things of this

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world. If he succeeds in engaging the mind and affections, the heavenly attractions are eclipsed.

All he wants of man is for him to fall^[#25p22] #23 under the deceitful power of his temptations, to love the world, to love rank and position, to love money, and to place his affections upon earthly treasures. If he secures this, he gains all he asked of Christ.

The example of Christ shows us that our only hope of victory is in continual resistance of Satan's attacks. He who triumphed over the adversary of souls in the conflict of temptation understands Satan's power over the race, and has conquered him in our behalf. As an overcomer, he has given us the advantage of his victory, that in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan we may unite our weakness to his strength, our worthlessness to his merits. And sustained by his enduring might under the strength of temptation, we may resist in his all-powerful name, and overcome as he overcame.

It was through inexpressible suffering that our Redeemer placed redemption within our reach. He was in this world unhonored and unknown, that through his wonderful condescension and humiliation he might exalt man to receive heavenly honors and immortal joys in his kingly courts. Will fallen man murmur because Heaven can be obtained only by conflict, self-abasement, and toil?

The inquiry of many proud hearts is, Why need I go in humiliation and^[#25p24] penitence #24 before I can have the assurance of my acceptance with God, and attain the immortal reward? Why is not the path to Heaven less difficult, and more pleasant and attractive? We refer all these doubting, murmuring ones to the great Example, while suffering under the load of man's guilt, and enduring the keenest pangs of hunger. He was

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sinless, and, more than this, he was the Prince of Heaven; but, on man's behalf, he became sin for the race. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Christ sacrificed everything for man, in order to make it possible for him to gain Heaven. Now it is for fallen man to show what he will sacrifice on his own account, for Christ's sake, that he may win immortal glory. Those who have any just sense of the magnitude of salvation, and of its cost, will never murmur that their sowing must be in tears, and that conflict and self-denial are the Christian's portion in this life.

The conditions of salvation for man are ordained of God. Self-abasement and cross-bearing are the provisions made for the repenting sinner to find comfort and peace. The thought that Jesus submitted to humiliation and sacrifice, that man will never^[#25p25] be called to endure, should hush every murmuring voice. The sweetest joy comes to man through his sincere repentance toward God because of the transgression of his law, and faith in Jesus Christ as the sinner's redeemer and advocate.

Men labor at great cost for the treasures of this life. They suffer toil and endure hardships and privations to gain some worldly advantage. Why should the sinner be less willing to endure, and suffer, and sacrifice, for an imperishable treasure, a life that runs parallel with the life of God, a crown of immortal glory that fadeth not away? The infinite treasures of Heaven, the inheritance which passeth all estimate in value, which is an eternal weight of glory, must be obtained by us at any cost. We should not murmur at self-denial; for the Lord of life and glory endured it before us.

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Suffering and deprivation we will not avoid; for the Majesty of Heaven accepted these in behalf of sinners. Sacrifice of convenience and ease should not cause one thought of repining, because the world's Redeemer has accepted all these in our behalf. It costs us far less in every respect, making the largest estimate of every self-denial, privation, and sacrifice, than it did the Prince of life. Any sacrifice that we_[#25p26] may #26 make sinks into insignificance in comparison with that which Christ made in our behalf.

Presumption.

There are those who have a reckless spirit which they term courage and bravery. They needlessly place themselves in scenes of danger and peril, which exposes them to temptations, out of which it would require a miracle of God to bring them unharmed and untainted. Satan's temptation to the Saviour of the world to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple, was firmly met and resisted. He quoted a promise of God as security, that he might with safety do this on the strength of the promise. Christ met this temptation with scripture: "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The only safe course for Christians is to repulse the enemy with God's word. Satan urges men into places where God does not require them to go, presenting scripture to justify his suggestions.

The precious promises of God are not given to strengthen man in a presumptuous course, or for him to rely upon when he rushes needlessly into danger. God requires us to move with an humble_[#25p27] dependence upon his #27 providence. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. In God is our prosperity and our life. Nothing can be done prosperously without the permission and blessing of God. He can set his

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hand to prosper and bless, or he can turn his hand against us. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." We are required, as children of God, to maintain the consistency of our Christian character. We should exercise prudence, caution, and humility, and walk circumspectly toward them that are without. Yet we are not in any case to surrender principle.

Our only safety is in giving no place to the devil; for his suggestions and purposes are ever to injure us and hinder us from relying upon God. He transforms himself into an angel of purity, that he may, through his specious temptations, introduce his devices in such a manner that we may not discern his wiles. The more we yield, the more powerful will be his deceptions over us. It is unsafe to controvert or to parley with him. For every advantage we give the enemy, he will claim more. Our only safety is to reject firmly the first insinuation to presumption. God has given us grace through the merits of Christ sufficient to withstand Satan, and be more than conquerors.

#28 Resistance^[#25p28] is success. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Resistance must be firm and steadfast. We lose all we gain if we resist today only to yield tomorrow.

The sin of this age is disregard of God's express commands. The power of influence in a wrong direction is very great. Eve had all that her wants required. There was nothing lacking to make her happy; but intemperate appetite desired the fruit of the only tree God had withheld. She had no need of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but she permitted her appetite and curiosity to control her reason. She was perfectly happy in her Eden home by her husband's side; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered that there was a higher sphere than that which God had as-

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signed her. Eve, in order to climb higher than her original position, fell far below it. This will most assuredly be the result with the Eves of the present generation if they overlook a cheerful taking up of their daily life-duties in accordance with God's plan.

There is a work for women even more important and elevating than the duties of the king upon his throne. They may mold the minds of their children and shape their characters for usefulness in this world, that they may become sons and daughters of God. Their time will be valued as_[#25p29] too important to be passed in the ballroom or in needless labor. There is enough labor necessary and important in this world of need and suffering without wasting precious moments for ornamentation or display. Daughters of the heavenly King, members of the royal family, will feel a burden of responsibility to attain to a higher life, that they may be brought into close connection with Heaven, and work in unison with the Redeemer of the world. Those who are engaged in this work will not be satisfied with the fashions and follies which absorb the mind and affections of women in these last days. If they are indeed the daughters of God, they will be partakers of the divine nature. Their souls will be stirred with deepest pity, as was their divine Redeemer's, as they see the corrupting influences in society. They will be in sympathy with Jesus Christ, to work in their sphere, as they have ability and opportunity to save perishing souls, as Christ worked in his exalted sphere for the benefit of man. #29

A neglect on the part of woman to follow God's plan in her creation, by reaching for important positions she is not qualified of God to fill, leaves vacant the position that she could fill to acceptance. In getting out of her sphere she loses

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#30 true womanly dignity and nobility. When God created Eve he designed that she should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but in all things should be his equal. The holy pair were to have no interest independent of each other; and yet each had an individuality in thinking and acting for themselves. But after Eve's sin, as she was first in the transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in subjection to her husband, which was a part of the curse. The curse in many cases has made the lot of woman very grievous, and life a burden. God has given superiority to man which he has in many respects abused in exercising his arbitrary power. Infinite wisdom devised the plan of redemption, which place the race on a second probation by giving him another trial.

Satan uses men as his agents to lead those who love God to presumption; especially is this the case with those who are deluded by spiritualism. The spiritualists generally do not accept Christ as the Son of God, and they lead many souls to presumptuous sins through their infidelity. They even claim superiority over Christ, as did Satan in contest with the Prince of Life. Spiritualists whose souls are dyed with sins of a revolting character, and whose consciences are seared, dare to take the name of the spotless Son of God in their polluted lips, and blasphemously unite his most exalted name with the vileness which marks their own polluted natures.

Men who bring in these damnable heresies will dare those who teach the word of God to enter into controversy with them, and some who are teaching the truth have not had the courage to withstand the challenge from this class, who are marked characters in the word of God. Some of

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our ministers have not had the moral courage to say to these men, God has warned us in his word in regard to you. He has given us a faithful description of your character and the heresies you hold. Some of our ministers, rather than to give this class any occasion to triumph, or charge them with cowardice, have met them in open discussion. But in discussing with spiritualists they do not meet merely the man, but Satan and his angels. They place themselves in communication with the powers of darkness, and encourage evil angels about them.

Spiritualists desire to give publicity to their heresies. And ministers who advocate Bible truth are helping them to do this when they consent to engage in discussion with them. They improve opportunities to get their heresies before the people, and^[#25p32] in every discussion with spiritualists some will be deceived by them. The very best course for us to pursue is to let them alone. #32

Power of Appetite.

One of the strongest temptations to man is upon the point of appetite. Between the mind and the body there is a mysterious and wonderful relation. They react upon each other. To keep the body in a healthy condition to develop its strength, that every part of the living machinery may act harmoniously, should be the first study of our life. To neglect the body is to neglect the mind. God cannot be glorified by his children's having sickly bodies, or dwarfed minds. To indulge the taste at the expense of health is a wicked abuse of the senses. Those who engage in any species of intemperance, in eating or drinking, waste the physical energies and weaken moral power. They will feel the retribution which follows the transgression of physical law.

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The Redeemer of the world knew that the indulgence of appetite would bring physical debility and deaden the perceptive organs, so that sacred and eternal things would not be discerned. Christ knew that the world was given up to gluttony,^[#25p33] and that this indulgence would pervert the moral powers. If the indulgence of appetite was so strong upon the race as to require a fast of nearly six weeks by the divine Son of God, in behalf of man, to break its power, what a work is before the Christian in order that he may overcome, even as Christ overcame. The strength of the temptation to indulge perverted appetite can be measured only by the inexpressible anguish of Christ in that long fast in the wilderness.

Christ knew that in order to successfully carry forward the plan of salvation he must commence the work of redeeming man just where the ruin began. Adam fell upon the point of appetite. In order to impress upon man his obligations to obey the law of God, Christ began his work of redemption by reforming the physical habits of man. The declension in virtue and the degeneracy of the race were chiefly attributable to the indulgence of perverted appetite.

There is a solemn responsibility upon all, especially upon ministers who teach the truth, to overcome upon the point of appetite. The usefulness of ministers of Christ would be much greater if they had control of their appetites and passions; and their mental and moral powers would be stronger if they should combine physical^[#25p34] labor with mental exertion. They could, with strictly temperate habits, with mental and physical labor combined, accomplish a far greater amount of labor and preserve clearness of mind. If they would pursue such a course their thoughts and words would flow more freely, their religious

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exercises would be more energized, and the impressions made upon their hearers would be more marked.

Intemperance in eating, even of food of the right quality, will have a prostrating influence upon the system, and will blunt the keener and holier emotions. Strict temperance in eating and drinking is highly essential for the healthy preservation and vigorous exercise of all the functions of the body. Strictly temperate habits, combined with the exertion of the muscles as well as the exercise of the mind, will preserve both mental and physical vigor, and give power of endurance to those engaged in the ministry, to editors, and to all others whose habits are sedentary.

As a people, with all our profession of health reform, we eat too much. Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies at the foundation of feebleness which is apparent everywhere.

Intemperance commences at our tables, in the use of unhealthful food. After a [#25p35] time, #35 through continual indulgence, the digestive organs become weakened, and the food taken does not satisfy the appetite. Unhealthy conditions are established, and there is a craving for more stimulating food. Tea, coffee, and flesh-meats, produce an immediate effect. Under the influence of these poisons the nervous system is excited. In some cases, for the time being, the intellect seems to be invigorated and the imagination is more vivid. Because this is the result of these stimulants many conclude that they really need them, and continue the use of those things which produce for the time being such agreeable results. But there is always an after result. There is reaction. The nervous system has been unduly excited to borrow power from the future resources of strength for present use.

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All this temporary invigoration of the system is followed by depression. In proportion as these stimulants temporarily invigorate the system, will there be a letting down of the power of the of the organs that have been thus excited after the stimulus has lost its force. The appetite is educated to crave something stronger, which will have a tendency to keep up and increase the agreeable excitement, until indulgence becomes habit, and there is a continual craving for stronger stimulus, as tobacco, wines, and liquors.

#36 As the appetite is indulged^[#25p36] the demand will be more frequent and the power of control more difficult. The more the appetite is indulged the more the system becomes debilitated and unable to do without this unnatural stimulus, and the passion for these things increases until the will is overborne, and there seems to be no power to deny the unnatural craving for these indulgences.

The only safe course is to touch not, taste not, and handle not, tea, coffee, wines, tobacco, opium, and alcoholic drinks. There is double necessity for the men of this generation to call to their aid the power of the will, strengthened by the grace of God, in order to withstand the temptations of Satan, and resist the least indulgence of perverted appetite. The present generation have less power of self-control than those who have lived several generations back. Those who have indulged the appetite for these stimulants have transmitted their depraved appetites and passions to their children, and greater moral power is required to resist the indulgence of intemperance in all its forms. The only perfectly safe course to pursue is to stand firmly on the side of temperance and not venture in the path of danger.

#37 The great end for which Christ endured that long fast in the wilderness was to teach us the necessity of self-denial and^[#25p37] temperance.

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This work should commence at our tables, and should be strictly carried out in all the concerns of life. The Redeemer of the world came from Heaven to help man in his weakness, that he might become strong in the power which he came to bring him, to overcome appetite and passion, and might be victor on every point.

Many parents educate the tastes of their children, and form their appetites. They indulge them in eating flesh-meats, and in drinking tea and coffee. The highly seasoned flesh-meats, and tea and coffee, which some mothers encourage their children to use, are preparing the way for them to crave stronger stimulants, as tobacco, and the use of tobacco encourages the appetite for liquor. The use of tobacco and liquor invariably lessens nerve power.

If Christians would have their moral sensibilities aroused upon the subject of temperance in all things, they could, by their example, commencing at their tables, help those who are weak in self-control, and almost powerless to resist the cravings of appetite. If we could realize that our eternal destiny depends upon strictly temperate habits, and that the habits we form in this life will affect our eternal interests, we should work to the point of strict temperance in eating and in drinking. By^[#25p38] our example and personal effort we ^{#38} may be the means of saving many souls from the degradation of intemperance, crime, and death. Our sisters can do much in the great work of the salvation of others, by spreading their tables with only healthful, nourishing food. They may employ their precious time in educating the tastes and appetites of their children, and in forming habits of temperance in all things, and encouraging self-denial and benevolence for the good of others.

Notwithstanding the example Christ has given us in the wilderness of temptation by denial

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of appetite and overcoming its power, there are many Christian mothers who are, by their example, and in the education of their children, preparing them to become gluttons and wine-bibbers. Children are frequently indulged in eating what they choose, and when they please, without reference to health. There are many children who are educated gormands from their babyhood. Through indulgence of appetite they are made dyspeptics at an early age. Intemperance in eating, and self-indulgence, grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength. Mental and physical vigor are sacrificed through the indulgence of parents. A habit becomes established for certain articles of food from which they^[#25p39] can receive no benefit, but only injury; and as the system is taxed, the constitution becomes debilitated.

Ministers, teachers, and students, do not become intelligent as they should in regard to the necessity of physical exercise in the open air. They neglect this most essential duty for the preservation of health. They closely apply their minds to books, and eat the allowance of a laboring man. Under such habits some grow corpulent, because the system is clogged; while others become lean, feeble, and weak, because their vital powers are exhausted in throwing off excess of food; the liver becomes burdened and unable to throw off the impurities in the blood, and sickness is the result. If physical exercise were combined with mental exertion, the blood would be quickened in its circulation, the action of the heart would be more perfect, impure matter would be thrown off, and new life and vigor would be experienced in every part of the body.

When the minds of ministers, school teachers, and students, are continually excited by study, and the body is allowed to be inactive, the

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nerves of emotion are taxed, while the nerves of motion are inactive. The wear is all upon the mental organs, and they become overworked and enfeebled, the muscles lose their vigor for^[#25p40] #40 want of being employed, and there is not an inclination to exercise the muscles by engaging in physical labor, because exertion seems to be irksome.

Ministers of Christ, professing to be his representatives, should follow his example, and above all others should form habits of the strictest temperance. They should keep the life and example of Christ before the people by their own lives of self-denial, self-sacrifice, and active benevolence. Christ overcame appetite on man's behalf; and in his stead they are to set an example, worthy of imitation, to others. Those who do not feel the necessity of engaging in the work of overcoming upon the point of appetite, will lose precious victories which they might gain, and will become slaves to appetite and lust which are filling the cup of iniquity of those who dwell upon the earth.

Men who are engaged in giving the last message of warning to the world, which is to decide the destiny of souls, should make a practical application in their own lives of the truths they preach to others. They should be examples to the people in their eating, in their drinking, and in their chaste conversation and deportment. Gluttony, indulgence of the baser passions, and grievous sins, are hid under the garb^[#25p41] of sanctity #41 by many professed representatives of Christ throughout our world.

There are men of excellent natural ability whose labors are not half what they might be if they were temperate in all things. Indulgence of appetite and passion beclouds the mind, lessens physical strength, and weakens moral power.

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Their thoughts are not clear. Their words are not in power, vitalized by the Spirit of God to reach the hearts of the hearers.

As our first parents lost Eden through the indulgence of appetite, our only hope of regaining Eden is through the firm denial of appetite and passion. Abstemiousness in diet, and control of all the passions, will preserve the intellect so that men may have mental and moral vigor, to bring all their propensities under control of the higher power, and to retain clearness of intellect to discern between right and wrong, between sacred and common things.

All who have a true sense of the sacrifice made by Christ in leaving his home in Heaven to come to this world that he might show man by his own life how to resist temptation, will cheerfully deny self and choose to be partakers with Christ of his sufferings.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Those who overcome as Christ overcame #42 will need to constantly guard[#25p42] themselves against the temptations of Satan. The appetite and passions should be restricted and under the control of enlightened conscience, that the intellect may be unimpaired, the perceptive powers clear, so that the workings of Satan and his snares may not be interpreted to be the providence of God. Many desire the final reward and victory which are to be given to overcomers, but are not willing to endure the toil, privation, and denial of self, as did their Redeemer. It is only through obedience and continual effort that we shall overcome as Christ overcame.

The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of thousands, when, if they had conquered on this point, they would have moral power to gain victory over every other temptation of Satan. But slaves to appetite will fail in perfect-

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ing Christian character. The continual transgression of man for six thousand years has brought sickness, pain, and death, as its fruits. And as we near the close of time, Satan's temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome.

Leadership.

Bro. ----, your experience in reference to leadership two years since was an^[#25p43] #43 experience for your own benefit, which was highly essential to you. You had very marked and decided views in regard to individual independence and right to private judgment. These views you carried to extremes. You reasoned that you must have the light and evidence for yourself in reference to your duty.

I have been shown that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any one man. But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority God has upon the earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered. Your error was in persistently maintaining your private judgment of your duty against the voice of the highest authority the Lord has upon the earth. After you had taken your own time, and after the work had been much hindered by your delay, you came to Battle Creek in answer to the repeated and urgent calls of the General Conference.

You very firmly maintained that you had done right in following your own convictions of duty. You considered it a virtue in you to persistently maintain your position of independence. You did not seem to have a true sense of the power God had given to his church in the^[#25p44] #44 voice of the General Conference. You thought that, in responding to the call made to you by the

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General Conference, you were submitting to the judgment and mind of one man. You accordingly manifested an independence, and a set, willful spirit, which was all wrong.

God gave you a precious experience at that time, which was of value to you, and which has greatly increased your success as a minister of Christ. Your proud, unyielding will was subdued. You had a genuine conversion. This led to reflection, and to your position upon Leadership. Your principles in regard to Leadership are right, but you do not make the right application of them. If you should let the power in the church, the voice and judgment of the General Conference, stand in the place you have given my husband, then there could be no fault found with your position. But you greatly err in giving to one man's mind and judgment that authority and influence which God has invested in his church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference.

When this power which God has placed in the church is accredited to one man, and he is invested with the authority to be judgment for other minds, then the true Bible order is changed. Satan's efforts upon such a man's mind will be
#45 the most^[#25p45] subtle and sometimes overpowering, because through this mind he thinks he can affect many others. Your position on Leadership is correct if you give to the highest organized authority in the church what you have given to one man. God never designed that his work should bear the stamp of one man's mind and one man's judgment.

The great reason why Brn. ---- and ---- are at this time deficient in the experience they should now have is because they have not been self-reliant. They have shunned responsibilities, because in assuming them their deficiencies

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would be brought to the light. They have been too willing to have my husband lead out and bear responsibilities, and have allowed him to be mind and judgment for them. These brethren are weak where they should be strong. They have not dared to follow their own independent judgment, lest they should make mistakes and be blamed for it; while they have stood ready to be tempted, and to make my husband responsible if they thought they could see mistakes in his course. They have not lifted the burdens with him. They have referred continually to my husband, making him bear the responsibilities they should have shared with him, until these brethren are weak in those qualifications_[#25p46] where they should be strong. #46 They are weak in moral power when they might be giants, qualified to stand as pillars in the cause of God.

These brethren have not that self-reliance or confidence that God will indeed lead them, if they follow the light he has given them. God never intended that strong, independent men, of superior intellect, should live clinging to others, like the ivy to the oak, for support. All the difficulties, the backsets, the hardships, and disappointments, God's servants shall meet with in active labor, will only strengthen them in the formation of a correct character. In putting their own energies of mind to use, the obstacles they will meet will prove to them positive blessings. They are gaining mental and spiritual muscle to be used upon important occasions with the very best results. They learn self-reliance, and gain confidence in their own experience that God is really leading and guiding them. And as they meet peril, and are obliged to meditate as they have real anguish of spirit, and feel the necessity of prayer in their effort to move understandingly and work to advantage in the cause of God, they find that con-

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flict and perplexity call for the exercise of faith and trust in God, and firmness which develops
#47 power. Necessities_[#25p47] are constantly arising for new ways and means to meet emergencies. Faculties are called into use that would lie dormant were it not for these pressing necessities in the work of God. This gives a varied experience, so that there will be no use for men of one idea, and those who are only half developed.

Men of might and power in this cause, whom God will use to his glory, are men who have been baffled and opposed, and thwarted in their plans. These men might have turned their own failures to important victories; but instead of this, they have shunned the responsibilities which would make liability to mistakes possible. These precious brethren have failed to gain that education which is strengthened by experience, which reading and study, and all the advantages otherwise gained, will never give them.

You have had strength to bear some responsibilities. God has accepted your energetic labors, and blessed your efforts. You have made some mistakes, but because of some failures you should in nowise misjudge your capabilities, nor distrust the strength that you may find in God. You have not been a man willing and ready to assume responsibilities. You would naturally be inclined to shun them, and to choose an easier position, to write and_[#25p48] exercise the mind where
#48 no special, vital interests are involved. You are making a mistake in relying upon my husband to tell you what to do. This is not the work God has given my husband. You should search out what is to be done, and lift the disagreeable burdens yourself. God will bless you in so doing. You must bear your burdens in connection with the work of God according to your best judgment. You must be guarded, lest your judgment shall be

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influenced by the opinions of others. If it is apparent that you have made mistakes, it is your privilege to turn these failures into victories by avoiding the same in the future. You will never gain the experience necessary for any important position in being told what to do.

The same is applicable to all who are standing in the different positions of trust in the various offices in Battle Creek. They are not to be coaxed and petted, and helped at every turn; for this will not make men competent for important positions. It is obstacles that make men strong. It is not helps, but difficulties, conflicts, rebuffs, that make men of moral sinew. Too much ease and avoiding responsibility have made weaklings and dwarfs of those who ought to be responsible men of moral power and strong spiritual muscle.

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Men who ought to be as true in every emergency as the needle to the pole have become inefficient by their efforts to shield themselves from censure and by evading responsibilities for fear of failure. Men of giant intellect are babes in discipline, because they are cowardly in regard to taking and bearing the burdens they should. They are neglecting to become efficient. They have too long trusted one man to plan for them, and to do the thinking they are highly capable of doing themselves in the interest of the cause of God. Mental deficiencies meets us at every point. Men who are content to let others plan and do their thinking for them are not fully developed. If they were left to plan for themselves they would be found judicious, close-calculating men. But when brought into connection with God's cause, it is to them entirely another thing; they lose this faculty almost altogether. They are content to remain as incompetent and inefficient as though others must do the planning and much of the thinking

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for them. Some men appear to be utterly unable to hew out a path for themselves. Must they ever rely upon others to do their planning and their studying, and to be mind and judgment for them? God is ashamed of such soldiers. He is not honored by their having any part to act in
#50 [#25p50] his work while they are mere machines.

Independent men of earnest endeavor are needed, not men as impressible as putty. Those who want a work all made ready to their hand, where they have a fixed amount to do and a fixed salary, and where they will prove an exact fit without trouble of adaptation or training, are not the men God calls to do a work in his cause. A man who cannot adapt his abilities, to fill almost any place if necessity requires, is not the man for this time. Men whom God will connect with his work are not to be fiberless and limp, without muscle or moral force of character.

It is only by continued and persevering labor that men can be disciplined to bear a part in the work of God. These men should not become discouraged if circumstances and surroundings are the most unfavorable. They should not give up their purpose as complete failure until they are convinced beyond a doubt that they cannot do much for the honor of God and the good of souls.

There are men who flatter themselves that they might do something great and good if they were only circumstanced differently, while they are making no use of the faculties they already have in working in the positions where providence has placed them. Man can make his circum-
#51 stances, [#25p51] but circumstances should never make the man. Man should seize circumstances as his instruments with which to work. He should master circumstances, but should never allow circumstances to master him. Individual independence and individual power is what is

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now needed. Individual character need not be sacrificed, but modulated, refined, elevated.

I was shown that it was my husband's duty to lay off the responsibilities others would be glad to have him bear because it excuses them from many difficulties. My husband's ready judgment and clear discernment, which have had to become so through training and exercise, have led him to take on many burdens which others should have borne.

You are too slow. You should cultivate opposite qualities. The cause of God demands men who can see quickly and act instantaneously at the right time and with power. If you wait to measure every difficulty and balance every perplexity you meet, you will do but little. You will have obstacles and difficulties to encounter at every turn, and you must with firm purpose decide to conquer them or they will conquer you.

Sometimes various ways and purposes, different modes of operation in connection with the work of God, are about evenly^[#25p52] balanced #52 in the mind; but it is at this very point that the nicest discrimination is necessary. And if anything is accomplished to the purpose, it must be done at the golden moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be seen and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels. It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be in a universal waving position, hesitating, sometimes inclined in one direction, then in the other. More perplexity and wretched results attend this hesitating and doubting than to sometimes move too hastily.

I have been shown that the most signal victories, or the most fearful defeats, have been on the turns of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and

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indecision, frequently give the enemy every advantage.

#53 My brother, you need to reform. The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. Victories are frequently lost through delays. There will be crises in this cause. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain a glorious triumph, while delay and neglect will prove a great failure and positive dishonor to God. Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy, and he is disappointed_[#25p53] and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice.

God wants men connected with his work in Battle Creek whose judgment is at hand, whose minds when necessary will act like the lightning. The greatest promptness is positively necessary in the hour of peril and danger. Every plan may be well laid to accomplish certain results, and yet a delay of a very short time may leave things to assume entirely a different shape, and the great objects which might have been gained are lost through lack of quick foresight and prompt dispatch. Much may be done in training the mind to overcome indolence. There are times when caution and great deliberation are necessary; rashness would be folly. But even here, much has been lost by too great hesitancy. Caution up to a certain point was required; but hesitancy and policy on particular occasions have been more disastrous than to have failed through rashness.

#54 My brother, you need to cultivate promptness. Away with your hesitating manner. You are slow, and neglect to seize the work and accomplish it. You must get out of this narrow manner of labor; for it is of the wrong order. When unbelief takes hold of your soul, your labor is of such a hesitating, halting, balancing kind that you accomplish nothing yourself and_[#25p54] hinder others

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from doing. You have just enough interest to see difficulties and start doubts, but have not the interest or courage to overcome the difficulties or dispel the doubts. At such times you need force of character, less stubbornness and set willfulness, and you need to surrender to God. This slowness, this sluggishness of action, is one of the greatest defects in your character, and stands in the way of your usefulness.

Your slowness of decision in connection with the cause and work of God is sometimes painful. It is not at all necessary. Prompt and decisive action may accomplish great results. You are generally willing to work when you feel just like it, ready to do when you can see clearly what is to be done; but you fail to be the benefit to the cause you might, if you were prompt and decisive at the critical moment, and would overcome the hesitation and delay which have marked your character, and which have greatly retarded the work of God.

This defect, unless overcome, will prove, in instances of great crises, disastrous to the cause, and fatal to your own soul. Punctuality and decisive action at the right time must be required; for you have not these qualities. In the warfare and battles of nations, there is often more gained by good management in prompt_[#25p55] action than in earnest, dead encounter with the enemy. #55

To do up business with dispatch, and yet do it thoroughly, is a great acquisition. My brother, you have really felt that your cautious and hesitating course was commendable, rather a virtue than a wrong. But from what the Lord has shown me in this matter, these sluggish movements on your part have greatly hindered the work of God, and left undone many things which in justice ought to have been done with promptness. It will be difficult for you now to make

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changes in your character which God requires you to make, because it was difficult for you to be punctual and prompt of action in youth. When the character is formed, the habits fixed, and the mental and moral faculties have become firm, to then unlearn wrong habits, to be prompt in action, is most difficult. You should realize the value of time. You are not excusable for leaving the most important, though unpleasant, work, hoping to get rid of doing it altogether, thinking it will become less unpleasant, while you occupy your time upon pleasant matters not really taxing. You should do the work which must be done, and which involves the vital interests of the cause, first, and then take up the less important matters only after the more essential are accomplished. Punctuality and decision in the work and cause of God are highly essential. Delays are virtually defeats. Minutes are golden, and should be improved to the very best account. Earthly relations and personal interests should ever be secondary. Never should the cause of God be left to suffer, in a single particular, because of earthly friends of the dearest relations.

"And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. and another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home in my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

No earthly ties, no earthly considerations, should weigh one moment in the scale against duty to the cause and work of God. Jesus severed his connection from everything to save a lost world. He requires of us a full and entire consecration. There are sacrifices to be made for the

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interests of God's cause. The sacrifice of feeling is the most keen, yet after all it is a small sacrifice required of us. You have plenty of friends, and if the feelings are^[#25p57] only sanctified you need not feel that you are making a very great sacrifice. #57 You do not leave your wife among heathen. You are not called to tread the burning African desert, or to face prisons, and encounter trial at every step. Be careful how you appeal to your sympathies and let human feelings and personal considerations mingle with your efforts and labors for the cause of God. He demands unselfish and willing service. You can render this, and yet do all your duties to your family; but hold this as a secondary matter. My husband and myself have made mistakes in consenting to take responsibilities that others should carry.

In the commencement of this work, there was needed a man to propose, to execute with determination, and to lead out, battling with error and surmounting obstacles. My husband bore the heaviest burden, and met the most determined opposition. But when we became a fully organized body, and several men were chosen to act in responsible positions, then was the proper time for my husband to act no longer as one man to stand under the responsibilities, and carry the heavy burdens. This labor devolved on more than one. Here is where the mistake has been made by his brethren in urging him, and himself consenting, to stand under the burdens and responsibilities^[#25p58] that he had borne alone for years. He #58 should have laid down these burdens years ago, and they should have been divided with other men chosen to act in behalf of the people. Satan would be pleased to have one man's mind and one man's judgment control the minds and judgment of those who believe the present truth. My husband has frequently been left almost alone

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to see and feel the wants of the cause of God, and to act promptly.

His leading brethren were not deficient in intellect, but they lacked a willing mind to stand in the position which my husband has occupied. They have inconsistently allowed a paralytic to bear burdens and responsibilities of this work which no one of them alone could endure with their strong nerves and firm muscles. He has sometimes used apparent severity. He has spoken and given offense. When he has seen others who might have shared his burdens avoiding responsibilities, it has grieved him to the heart, and he has spoken impulsively. He has not been placed in this unreasonable position by his Lord, but by his brethren. His life has been but little better than a species of slavery. The constant trial, the harassing care, the exhausting brain-work, have not been valued by his brethren. He has led an unenjoyed life. And he has increased his unhappiness^{#25p59]} by complaining of his brother ministers who neglected to do what they might have done. Nature has been outraged time and again. While his brethren have found fault with him for doing so much, they have not come up to take their share of the responsibility, but have been too willing to make him responsible for everything. You came nobly up to bear responsibilities when there were no others who would lift them. If his brethren in the ministry would have cultivated a willingness to lift the burdens they should have borne, my husband would not have seen and done so much work which needed to be done, and which he thought must not be neglected.

God has not suffered the life of my husband to end ingloriously. He has sustained him. But the man who performs double labor, who crowds the work of two years into one, is burning

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his candle at both ends. There is yet a work for my husband to do which he should have done years ago. He should now have less of the strife, perplexity, and responsibility of life, and be ripening, softening, and elevating, for his last change. He should now husband his strength. He should not allow the responsibilities of the cause to rest upon him so heavily, but should stand free, where [#25p60] the prejudices and suspicions of his brethren would not disturb his peace. #60

God has permitted the precious light of truth to shine upon his word, and illuminate the mind of my husband. He may reflect the rays of light from the presence of Jesus upon others by his preaching and writing. But while serving tables, doing business matters in connection with the cause, he has been deprived to a great degree of the privilege of using his pen and of preaching to the people.

He has felt that he was called of God to stand in defense of the truth, and those who were not doing justice to the work he has felt it his duty to reprove, and that sometimes severely. The pressure of care and the affliction of disease have often thrown him into discouragements, and he has sometimes viewed matters in an exaggerated light. His brethren have taken advantage of his words, and of his prompt manners, which have been in such marked contrast with their tardiness of labor and their narrow plans of operation. They have accredited to my husband motives and feelings which were not due him. The wide contrast between themselves and him seemed like a gulf; but this might easily have been bridged had these men of intellect put their undivided interests and whole hearts into the work of building up [#25p61] and advancing the precious cause of God. #61

We might exert a constant influence in this place, at the head of the work, which would

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advance the prosperity of these institutions. But the course of others who do not do what they might, who are subject to temptation, if their track is crossed, and who would reflect upon our most earnest efforts for the prosperity of God's cause, compels us to seek an asylum elsewhere, where we may work to better advantage with less danger of being crushed under burdens. God has given us great freedom and power with his people at Battle Creek. When we came to this place last summer, our work commenced in earnest, and it has continued ever since. One perplexity and difficulty has followed closely upon another, calling forth taxing labor to set things right.

When the Lord showed that Bro. *Abbey* might be the man for the place if he remained humble and would rely upon his strength, he did not make a blunder and select the wrong man. For a time, Bro. *Abbey* had a true interest and acted as a father at the Health Institute. But he became self-exalted, self-sufficient. He pursued a wrong course. He yielded to temptation.

#62 The excuses the directors have made for their neglect of duty are all wrong. Their^[#25p62] shifting responsibilities upon Bro. and sister White is marked against them. They simply neglected their duty because it was unpleasant.

I saw that help was needed upon the Pacific Coast. But God would not have us take the responsibilities or bear others' perplexities. We may stand as counselors, and help them with our influence and with our judgment. We may do much if we will not be induced to get under the load and bear the weight which others should bear, and which it is important for them to bear in order to gain a necessary experience. We have important matter to write out which the people greatly need. We have precious light on Bible truth which we may speak to the people.

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I was shown that God did not design that my husband should bear the burdens he has borne for the last five months. The working part in connection with the cause has been left to fall upon him. This has brought perplexity, weariness, and nervous debility, which have resulted in discouragement and depression. There has been a lack of harmonious action on the part of his brethren from the commencement of the cause. His brethren in the ministry have loved freedom. They have not lifted the responsibilities which they might, and have failed to gain the experience ^{#63} they might have had to stand in most responsible positions relative to the vital interests of the cause of God at the present time. They have excused their neglect of bearing responsibilities because they feared being reflected upon afterward.

The religion we profess is colored by our natural dispositions and temperaments, therefore, it is of the highest importance that the weak points in our character become strengthened by exercise, and the strong, unfavorable points be weakened by working in an opposite direction, and by strengthening opposite qualities.

But some brethren have not done what they might and should have done which would have given my husband sufficient encouragement and help to continue to bear some responsibilities at the head of the work. His fellow-laborers did not move independently and look to God for light and for duty for themselves, and follow in his opening providence, and consult together upon plans of operations, and unite in their plans and manner of labor.

Since coming to Michigan last summer, the Lord has especially blessed the labors of my husband. He has been sustained in a most remarkable manner to do work that so much

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#64 needed to be done. Had those associated with him been awake to see and understand the wants of the cause of God[#25p64] at our last Michigan Camp meeting, the many things not done might have been done. There was a lack to meet the wants of the occasion. Had Bro. *Butler* stood cheerful in God, walking in the light, ready to see what was to be done, and executing the work with dispatch, we should now be months advanced in our work, and long ago we might have been working to the point to establish the press upon the Pacific Coast. God cannot be glorified by our falling into singular gloom, and then remaining under the cloud. The light does shine, although we may not realize its blessing; but if we make all diligence to press to the light, and if we move ahead just as though the light did shine, we shall soon pass out of the darkness and find light, light all around us.

At our last camp meeting, the angels of God in a special manner came with their power to lighten and heal, and to bless both my husband and Bro. Waggoner. A precious victory was there gained which should never lose its influence.

I was shown that God in a most marked manner had given my husband tokens of his love and care, and also of his sustaining grace. This should ever lead to humility and gratitude on the part of my husband. God has regarded his zeal and devotion to his cause and his work.[#25p65]

#65 God wants minute men. He will have men who are as true when important decisions are to be made as the needle to the pole; men whose special and personal interests are swallowed up in the one great general interest for the salvation of souls, as were our Saviour's. Satan plays upon the human mind where any chance has been left for him to do so, and he seizes upon the very time and place where he can do the most service to himself, and the greatest injury to the cause of

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God. A neglect to do what we might do, and that which God requires we should do in his cause, is a sin which cannot be palliated with excuse of circumstances or conditions; for Jesus has made provision for all in every emergency.

My brother, in doing the work of God you will be placed in a variety of circumstances, all requiring self-possession and self-control that will qualify you to adapt yourself to circumstances and the peculiarities of the situation. Then can you act yourself unembarrassed. You should not place too low an estimate upon your ability to act your part in the various callings of practical life. Where you are aware of deficiencies, go to work at once to remedy these defects. Do not trust to others to supply your deficiencies and you go on indifferently, as though it were a a[#25p66] matter of #66 course that your peculiar organization must ever remain so. Apply yourself earnestly to cure these defects, that you may be perfect in Christ Jesus, wanting in nothing.

If you form too high an opinion of yourself, you will think your labors are of more real consequence than they will bear, and you will plead individual independence which borders on arrogance. If you go to the other extreme and form too low an opinion of yourself, you will feel inferior, which will greatly limit the influence you might have for good. You should avoid either extreme. Feeling should not control you; circumstances should not affect you. You may form a correct estimate of yourself which will prove a safeguard from both extremes. You may be dignified without vain self-confidence; you may be condescending and yielding without sacrificing self-respect or individual independence, and your life may be of great influence with those in the higher as well as the lower walks of life.

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Bro. *Butler*, your danger now is of being affected with reports. Your labors are decidedly practical, close, and cutting. You rein up the people to very close tests and requirements. This is necessary at times, but your labors are getting #67 to be_[#25p67] too much of this character, and will lose their force unless mingled with more of the softening, encouraging grace of the Spirit of God. You allow the words of your relatives and special friends to influence your propositions and affect your decisions. You credit too readily and incorporate their views into your own ideas, and are too often led astray. You need to be guarded. The families in *Battle Creek* so closely related have had an influence. Your judgment, your feelings, your views, influence them, and in turn, they influence you, and a strong current will be set flowing in a wrong direction unless you are all thoroughly consecrated and humble before God. All the elements of these family connections are naturally independent, conscientious, and inclined to extremes, unless especially balanced and controlled by the Spirit of God.

Never, never be influenced by reports. Never let your conduct be influenced by your dearest relatives. The time has come when the greatest wisdom needs to be exercised in reference to the cause and work of God. Judgment is needed to know when to speak and when to keep silent. Hunger for sympathy frequently leads to imprudence of a grave character in opening the feelings to others. Your appearance claims sympathy frequently_[#25p68] when it were better for you if you did not receive it. #68

It is an important duty for all to become familiar with the tenor of their conduct from day to day, and the motives which prompt their actions. They need to become acquainted with the particular motives which prompt particular ac-

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tions. Every action of their lives is judged, not by the external appearance, but from the motive which dictated the action.

All should guard their senses, lest Satan gain victory over them, for these are the avenues to the soul. We may be severe as we like in disciplining ourselves, but be very cautious and not push souls to desperation. Some feel that Bro. White is altogether too severe in speaking in a decided manner to individuals, in reproofing what he thinks is wrong in them. He may be in danger of not being as careful in his manner of reproof as to give no occasion for reflection. But some of those who complain of his manner of reproofing use the most cutting, reproofing, condemnatory language, too indiscriminating to a congregation, and they feel that they have relieved their souls and done a good work. But the angels of God do not always approve such labor. If Bro. White makes one individual feel that he is not doing right, if he is too severe toward that one, and needs to be ^{#69}taught to modify his manners, to soften his spirit, how much more necessary for his ministering brethren to feel the inconsistency of making a large congregation suffer from cutting reproofs and strong denunciations, when the really innocent must suffer with the guilty.

It is worse, far worse, to give expression to the feeling in a large gathering, firing at any one and everyone, than to go to the individuals who may have done wrong and personally reprove them. The offensiveness of this severe, overbearing, denunciatory talk in a large gathering is of as much more grave a character in the sight of God than giving personal, individual reproof, as the numbers are greater and the censure more general.

It is ever easier to give expression to the feelings before a congregation, because there are

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many present, than to go openly, frankly, and plainly state their wrong course face to face with the erring. But bringing into the house of God strong feelings against individuals, and making all the innocent as well as the guilty suffer, is a manner of labor that God does not sanction, and which does harm rather than good. It has too often been the case that criticising and denunciatory discourses have been given before a congregation. These do not encourage a spirit of love in the brethren. #70 They have not tended to make them spiritually minded, and lead them to holiness and Heaven. But a spirit of bitterness has been aroused in hearts.

These very strong sermons that cut a man all to pieces are sometimes positively necessary to arouse, alarm, and convict. But unless they bear especial marks of being dictated by the Spirit of God, they do a far greater injury than they can do good.

I was shown that my husband's course has not been perfect. He has erred sometimes in murmuring, and in giving too severe reproof. But from what I have seen, he has not been so greatly at fault in this respect as many have supposed, and as I have sometimes feared.

Job was not understood by his friends. He flings back upon them their reproaches. He shows them that if they are defending God in avowing their faith in him and their consciousness of sin, he had a more deep and thorough knowledge of it than they ever had. Miserable comforters are ye all, is the answer he makes them to their criticisms and censures. I also, says Job, could speak as ye do if your soul were in my soul's stead. I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you. But he declares he would not do this. I, he says, would strengthen you with my

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mouth, and^[#25p71] the moving of my lips should #71
assuage your grief.

Well-meaning brethren and sisters, but having narrow conceptions and looking only at externals, may attempt to help matters which they have no real knowledge of. Their limited experience cannot fathom the feelings of a soul who has been urged out by the Spirit of God, and has felt to the depths that earnest and inexpressible love and interest for the cause of God and for souls that they have never experienced, and who have borne burdens in the cause of God they have never lifted.

The narrow vision of some short-sighted, short-experienced friends, cannot appreciate the feelings of a soul who has been in close harmony with the soul of Christ in connection with the salvation of souls. The motives are misunderstood and the actions misconstrued by those who would be his friends, until, like Job, the earnest prayer goes forth from his lips, Save me from my friends.

God takes the case of Job in hand himself. His patience has been severely taxed; but when God speaks, all his pettish feelings are changed. His self-justification, which he felt necessary to withstand the condemnation of his friends, is not necessary toward God. He never misjudges. God never errs. Says the Lord to Job,^[#25p72] Gird up #72
now thy loins like a man; and Job no sooner hears the divine voice than his soul is bowed down with a sense of his sinfulness, and he says before God, I abhor myself in dust and ashes.

When God has spoken, my husband has hearkened to his voice. But to bear the condemnation and reflection of his friends who do not seem to discriminate, has been a great trial. When his brethren shall have stood under the same circumstances, bearing the responsibilities he has borne with as little encouragement and

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help as he has had, then they may be able to understand how to sustain, how to comfort, how to bless, without torturing his feelings by reflections and censures he in no way deserves.

Call for Means.

I was shown that there had been unhappy results in making urgent calls for means at our camp meetings. This matter has been pressed too hard. There were many men of means who would not have done anything had not their hearts been softened and melted under the influence of the testimonies borne to them. The poor were deeply affected, and, in the sincerity of their souls, pledged means which they had a_[#25p73] heart to give, but were unable to pay. The urgent call for means in most instances left a wrong impression upon some minds. Some thought that it was money that was the burden of our message. Many went to their homes blessed because they had donated to the cause of God. But there are better methods of raising means in free-will offerings than in urgent calls at our large gatherings. If all come up to the plan of systematic benevolence, and if our tract and missionary workers are faithful in their department of the work, the treasury will be well supplied without these urgent calls at our large gatherings.

But there has been a great neglect of duty. Many have withheld means which God claims as his, and in thus doing have committed robbery toward God. Their selfish hearts have not given the tenth of all their increase, which God has claimed. Neither have they come up to the yearly gatherings with their free-will offerings, their thank offerings, and their trespass offerings. Many have come before the Lord empty-handed. "Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes

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and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the^[#25p74] 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." #74

There would sin rest upon us as a people if we did not make most earnest efforts to ascertain those who had donated for the different enterprises who are too poor to give anything. All that they have in the liberality of their souls given should be returned to them with an additional gift to relieve their necessities.

The raising of money has been carried to extremes. It has left a bad impression on many minds. This is not the best plan of raising means. There has been an indifference manifested to investigate the cases of the poor and make returns to them, that they should not suffer for the necessities of life.

A neglect of duty in this respect to become acquainted with the necessity of the needy and relieve their pressing wants in returning means that has been given to advance the cause of God, would be on our part a neglect of our Saviour in the persons of his saints.^[#25p75] #75

Epistle Number One.

I have been shown some things in reference to our duty to the unfortunate which I feel it my duty to write at this time.

I saw that in the providence of God he had placed, inclose Christian relation to his church, widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, to prove his people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these

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persons who need our sympathy, or love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character. If we have the true religion of the Bible, we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest, is due to Christ in behalf of his brethren, and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for the unmeasurable love of Christ to us while we were sinners unworthy of his grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren, and who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments, and the last six, hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer who was his neighbor, in the illustration of the man who was #25p76 traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves who robbed him, and beat him, and left him half dead. The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help, he did not question whether he was of their country, or of their creed, or a relative; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was a work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast and carried him to an inn, and made provision for his wants at the expense of his purse. This Samaritan, said Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class in the church who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy and help. This class, notwithstanding their position in the church, are commandment-breakers. The Samaritan represents a class who

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are true helpers with Christ, and are imitating his example in doing good.

Those who have pity for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment-keepers, who shall have eternal life. There is in ---- a great lack of personal religion and_[#25p77] individual obligation to feel for others woes, and with disinterested benevolence #77 to work for the prosperity of the unfortunate and afflicted. Some have no experience in these duties. They have all their lives been like the Levite and priest, who passed by on the other side. There is a work for the church to do, which, if left undone, will bring darkness upon them. The church as a whole and individually should bring their motives under faithful examination, and compare their lives with the life and teachings of the only correct Pattern. Christ preserves in the heavenly records, as done to himself, all acts of mercy and benevolence and thoughtful consideration for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the sick, the widows, and orphans, and the works of these shall be rewarded. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and Levite for the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice, and every neglect of the afflicted among us. Everyone will finally be rewarded as his works have been.

I was shown in regard to Bro. T----, _[#25p78] #78 that he has not been dealt justly with by his brethren. Brn F----, W----, and others, pursued a course toward him which was displeasing to God. Bro. F---- had no special interest in Bro. T----, only so far as he thought he could advantage

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himself through him. I was shown that some looked upon Bro. T---- as being penurious and dishonest. God is displeased with this judgment. Bro. T---- would have had no trouble, and would have had means to abundantly sustain himself, had it not been for the selfish course of his brethren who had eyesight and property, and who worked against him by seeking to turn his abilities to their own selfish interest.

Those who take advantage of the hard study of a blind man, to benefit themselves with the inventions he has made, commit robbery, and are virtually commandment-breakers.

There are those in the church who are transgressors of the law of God who profess to be keeping the law of Jehovah. These are men who do not discern their own defects. They possess a selfish, penurious spirit, and blind their own eyes to their sin of covetousness, which the Bible defines as idolatry. Men of this character may have been esteemed by their brethren as most exemplary Christians; but the eye of God reads the heart and discerns the motives. He sees that which man cannot see in the thoughts and character. In his providence he brings these persons into positions which will, in time, reveal the defects in their character, that if they wish to see them and correct them they can do so. There are those who have through their lives studied their own interest and been swallowed up in their own selfish plans, anxious to advantage themselves without much thought of others, whether they would be distressed or perplexed through any plans or actions of theirs. Selfish interest overbears mercy and the love of God. The Lord sometimes permits this class to go on in their selfish course in spiritual blindness until their defects are apparent to all who have

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spiritual discernment. They evidence by their works that they are not genuine Christians.

Men who have property and a measure of health, and who enjoy the inestimable blessing of sight, have every advantage over a blind man. They have many ways open to them in their business career that are closed to a man who has lost his sight. Persons enjoying the use of all their faculties should not look to their own selfish interest and deprive a blind brother of one iota of his opportunity to gain means. Bro. T---- is a poor man. He is a feeble man. He is also a blind man. He has [#25p80] had an earnest desire to help himself, and although living under a weight of discouraging infirmities, his affliction has not dried up the generous impulses of his soul. In his limited circumstances he has had a heart to do, and has done more in the sight of God for those who were in need of help than many of his brethren who are blessed with sight, and who have a good property. Bro. T---- has a capital in his business calculation and inventive faculty. He has worked earnestly with high hopes of inventing a business by which he might support himself and not be dependent upon his brethren. #80

I could wish that we all might see as God sees. I wish all could realize how God looks upon those men who profess to be followers of Christ, who have the blessing of sight and the advantage of means in their favor, and yet would envy the little prosperity opened to the poor blind man, and would benefit themselves to increase their stock of means to the disadvantage of their afflicted brother. This is regarded of God as the most criminal selfishness and robbery, and is an aggravating sin, which God will surely punish. God never forgets. He does not look upon these things with human eyes and with cold, unfeeling, human judgment. He views things, not from the

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#81 worldling's standpoint, but from^[#25p81] the standpoint of mercy, pity, and infinite love.

Bro. ---- tried to help Bro. T----, but not with unselfish motives. At first his pity was excited. He saw that he needed help. But soon he lost his interest, and selfish feelings gathered strength, until the course of his brethren resulted in Bro. T----'s being disadvantaged rather than benefited.

These things have greatly discouraged Bro. T----, and have had a tendency to shake his confidence in his brethren. They have resulted in his being involved in debts which he could not pay. As he has realized the selfish feelings exercised toward him by some of his brethren, it has grieved him, and sometimes stirred him. His feeling at times have been almost uncontrollable as he has realized his helpless condition, without sight, without means, and without health, and with some of his brethren working against him; which added greatly to his affliction, and told fearfully upon his health.

I was shown that Bro. T---- has some good qualities of mind which would be better appreciated if he had greater power of self-control, and would not become excited. Every exhibition of impatience and fretfulness tells against him, and is
#82 made the most of by some who are guilty^[#25p82] of much more grievous sins in the sight of God.

I was shown that Bro. T----'s principles are good. He has integrity. He is not a dishonest man. He would not knowingly defraud any man. But he has faults and sins which he most overcome. He has human nature to deal with, as well as other men. He is too often impatient, and sometimes overbearing. He should cherish a more kindly, courteous spirit, and should cultivate gratitude of heart to those who have felt an interest in his case. He has naturally an impetuous temper

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when suddenly aroused or when unreasonably provoked. But, notwithstanding this, he has a heart to do right, and he feels sincere repentance toward God when he reflects upon his wrongs.

If he sees his brethren inclined to do him justice, he will be generous to forgive, and humble enough to desire peace, even if he has to make great sacrifices to obtain it. But Bro. T---- is easily excited. He is of a nervous temperament. He has need of the subduing influence of the Spirit of God. If those who are ready to censure him would consider their own wrongs, and kindly overlook his faults as generously as they should, they would manifest the Spirit of Christ. Bro. T---- has a work to do in overcoming. His words and deportment^[#25p83] to others should be gentle, kind, and pleasant. He should strictly guard everything which savors of a dictatorial spirit, or of overbearing manners or words.

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While God is a friend to the blind and unfortunate, he does not excuse their sins. He requires them to overcome, and perfect Christian character in the name of Jesus who overcame on their behalf. But Jesus pities our weakness, and he is ready to give strength to bear up in trial and to resist the temptations of Satan if we will cast our burden upon him. Angels are sent to minister to the children of God who are physically blind. They guard their steps and save them from a thousand dangers which, unknown to them, beset their path. But his Spirit will not attend them unless they cherish a spirit of kindness, and seek earnestly to have control over their natures, and bring their passions and every power into submission to God. They must cultivate a spirit of love, and control their words and actions.

I was shown that God requires his people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are. "Pure religion and unde-

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filed before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

#84 Here is genuine religion defined. The[#25p84] same consideration that should be given to the widow and fatherless, God requires to be given to the blind and those suffering under the affliction of physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world.

I was shown in Bro. T----'s case, that those who would in any way deal unjustly with him, and discourage him in his efforts to help himself, or would covet the poor blind man's prosperity, and would advantage themselves to his disadvantage, will bring upon themselves the curse of God, who is the blind man's friend. Special injunctions were given to the children of Israel in reference to the blind:-

"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear thy God; I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; and all the people shall say, Amen."

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God, and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places them under responsibilities to care for the unfortunate, the blind, the

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lame, the widow and the fatherless, which many make no effort to regard. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction, and places them in similar positions to those who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

God will hold the church at ---- responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and unsympathizing spirit is allowed to exist with any of its members toward the unfortunate, the widow, the orphan, the blind, the lame, or those who are sick in body or mind, he will hide his face from his people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any one professing the name of Christ so far misrepresents their Saviour as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate, and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church ^[#25p86]accountable for the #86
sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of his people while the orphan and fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick, are neglected in their midst.

There is more meant by "being on the Lord's side" than merely saying so in meeting. The Lord's side is ever on the side of mercy, pity, and sympathy for the suffering, as Jesus has given us an example in his life. We are required to imitate his example. But there are those who are not on the Lord's side in regard to these things, but are on the side of the enemy. Jesus said in giving to his hearers an illustration of this subject:--

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

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for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then [#25p87] shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

Here Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity, and plainly impresses upon us all, in his sermon, that indifference or injustice done to the least of his saints is done to him. Here is the Lord's side, and whoever will be on the Lord's side, let him come over with us. The dear Saviour is wounded when we wound one of his humblest saints.

Righteous Job moans because of his affliction, and pleads his own cause when unjustly accused by one of his comforters. He says, "I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth."

The sin of one man discomfited the entire army of Israel. A wrong course pursued by one toward his brother, will turn the light of God from his people until the wrong is searched out and the cause of the oppressed is vindicated. God requires his people to be tender in their feelings and discriminations, while their hearts [#25p88] should be enlarged, their feelings broad and deep, not narrow, selfish, and penurious. Noble sympathy, largeness of soul and disinterested benevolence are needed. Then can the church triumph in God.

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But just as long as the church suffers selfishness to dry up kindly sympathy and tender, thoughtful, love and interest for their brethren, every virtue will be corroded. Isaiah's fast should be studied, and close self-examination made with a spirit to discern whether there is in them the principles which are required of God's people in order that they may receive the rich blessings promised.

God requires that his people should not allow the poor and afflicted to be oppressed. If they break every yoke and release the oppressed, and are unselfish and kindly considerate of the needy, then shall the blessings promised be theirs. If there are those in the church who would cause the blind to stumble, they should be brought to justice, for God has made us guardians of the blind, the afflicted, the widows, and the fatherless. The stumbling block referred to in the word of God does not mean a block of wood placed before the feet of the blind to cause him to stumble; but it means much more than this. It means any course that may be pursued to injure the influence or to work_[#25p89] against the interest #89 of their blind brother's prosperity.

A brother who is blind and poor, and diseased, and who is making every exertion to help himself, that he may not be dependent, should be encouraged in every way possible by his brethren. But those who profess to be his brethren, who have the use of all their faculties, who are not dependent, but who so far forget their duty to the blind as to perplex, and distress, and hedge up the way of their blind brother, are doing a work which will require repentance and restoration before God will accept their prayers. And the church of God who have permitted their unfortunate brother to be wronged are guilty of sin until they

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shall do all in their power to have the wrong righted.

All are doubtless familiar with Achan's case. It is recorded in sacred history for all generations, but more especially for those upon whom the ends of the world are come. Joshua lay moaning upon his face before God, because they were obliged to make a disgraceful retreat before their enemies. The Lord bade Joshua arise, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou upon thy face?" Have I humbled without cause by removing my presence from thee? Does God forsake his people without a cause? No; he tells Joshua that there is a work for_[#25p90] him to do before he can answer his prayer. "Israel hath sinned, and they 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," He declares, "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." We have here in this example some idea of the responsibility resting upon the church, and the work God requires them to do in order to have his presence.

It is a sin in any church not to search for the cause of their darkness and the afflictions which have been in their midst. The church in ---- cannot be a living, prosperous church until they are more awake to the wrongs among them, which hinder the blessing of God from coming upon them. The church should not suffer their brethren in affliction to be wronged, the very ones that should awaken the sympathy of all hearts and call into exercise noble and benevolent feelings from all the followers of Christ. The true disciples of Christ will work in harmony with him and help those who need help, as they have him for example. Bro. T-- --'s blindness is a terrible affliction, and all should seek to be eyes for the

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blind, and thus make him feel his loss as little as possible. There are those who improve^[#25p91] their #91 eyes in watching opportunities to work for their own advantage to get gain; but God may bring confusion upon them in a manner they do not expect.

If God in his mercy has given the blind man inventive faculties that he can use for his own good, God forbid that any one should begrudge him this privilege, and rob him of the benefits he might derive from God's gift to him. The blind man has disadvantages to meet on every side in the loss of his sight. If pity and sympathy are not excited in the hearts of everyone in seeing a blind man groping his way in a world clothed to him in darkness, that heart is hard indeed, and must be softened by the grace of God. Not even a face can the blind man look upon, and there read kindly sympathy and true benevolence. He cannot look upon the beauties of nature and trace the finger of God in his created works. Their cheering gladness does not speak to him to comfort and to bless, when despondency broods over him. He is shut up to a world of darkness, and his God-given rights have been trampled upon that others might get gain. How quickly would Bro. T---- exchange his blindness and every temporal blessing for the blessing of sight. E.G.W.

[#25p92]

#92

Epistle Number Two.

I have been shown some things in regard to Bro. ----'s family, which have pressed upon my mind so strongly since I have been in this place that I venture to write them out.

I have been shown that there exists in your family an element of selfishness which clings to you like the leprosy. This selfishness must be

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seen and overcome, for it is a grievous sin in the sight of God.

You, as a family, have so long consulted your own wishes, your own pleasure and convenience, that you do not feel that others have claims upon you. Your thoughts, plans, and efforts, are for yourselves. You live for self, and do not cultivate disinterested benevolence; which, if exercised, would increase and strengthen until it would be your delight to live for other's good. You would feel that you had an object in life, a purpose that would bring your souls into closer connection with Christ and would be imbued with his Spirit, so that you would cleave to him with so firm a tenacity that nothing could separate you from his love.

#93 Christ is the living vine; and if you are branches in that vine, the life nourishment^[#25p93] which flows through it will nourish you, that you will not be barren or unfruitful. You have, as a family, and as individuals, professedly connected yourselves with the service of Christ; and yet you are weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and found wanting. All of you need to have an entire transformation before you can do those things which an unselfish and devoted Christian should do. Nothing but a thorough conversion can give you a correct sense of your defects of character. You all have the spirit and love of the world to a great extent. Says the apostle, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Your selfish spirit narrows and dwarfs your minds to your own interests. You need pure and undefiled religion. The simplicity of the truth will lead you to feel a sympathy for others' woes. There are those who need your sympathy and your love. To exercise these traits of character, is a part of the life work which Christ has given us all to do.

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God will not excuse you for not taking up the cross, and practicing self-denial, in doing good to others with unselfish motives. You may, if you will take the trouble to make the self-denial required of Christians, be qualified, by the grace of God, to win souls to Christ. God has claims upon you to which you have never responded. There are many all around us who hunger for [#25p94] sympathy and love. But, like many others, #94 you have been nearly destitute of that humble love which naturally flows out in pity and sympathy for the destitute, the suffering, and the needy. The human countenance itself is a mirror of the soul, read by others, and leaving a telling influence upon them for good or evil. God does not call upon any of us to watch our brethren and to repent of their sins. He has left us a work to do, and he calls upon us to do it resolutely, in his fear, with an eye single to his glory.

Everyone must give to God an account of himself, not of others, whether he is faithful, or otherwise. Seeing faults in other professors, and condemning their course, will not excuse or offset one error of ours. We should not make others our criterion, nor excuse anything in our course because others have done wrong. God has given us consciences for ourselves. Great principles have been laid down in his word, which are sufficient to guide us in our Christian walk and general deportment. You, my dear friends, as a family, have not kept the principles of the law of God. You have never felt the burden of the duty devolving man to his fellow-men.

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What [#25p95] is written in the law? how readest thou? #95 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

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and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said,

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, he_[#25p96] that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."

Here the conditions of inheriting eternal life are plainly stated by our Saviour in the most simple manner. The man wounded and robbed represents those who are subjects of our interest, sympathy, and charity. If we neglect the cases of the needy and the unfortunate that are brought under our notice, no matter who they may be, we have no assurance of eternal life; for we do not answer the claims that God has upon us. We are not compassionate and pitiful to humanity, be-

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cause they may not be kith or kin to us. You have been found transgressors of the second great commandment, upon which the last six commandments depend. Whosoever offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all. Those who do not open their hearts to the wants and sufferings of humanity, will not open their hearts to the claims of God stated in the first four precepts of the decalogue. Idols claim the heart and affections, and God is not honored and does not reign supreme.

You have, as a family, made a sad failure. You are not, in the strictest sense, commandment-keepers. You may be quite exact in some things, yet neglect the weightier matters, judgment, mercy, and the love of God. Although the customs of the world are no criterion for us, yet I have been shown that the pitying sympathy and the benevolence of the world for the unfortunate, in many cases, shame the professed followers of Jesus Christ. Many manifest indifference to the cases of those whom God has thrown in their midst, for the purpose of testing and proving them, and developing what is in their hearts. God reads. He marks every act of selfishness, every act of indifference to the afflicted, the widows, and fatherless; and he writes against their names, *Guilty, wanting, law-breakers*. We shall be rewarded as our works have been. Any neglect of duty to the needy and to the afflicted is a neglect of duty to Christ in the person of his saints. #97

When the cases of all come in review before God, the question, What did they profess? is never asked, but, What have they done? Have they been doers of the word? Have they lived for themselves, or have they been exercised in works of benevolence, in deeds of kindness, in love, preferring others before themselves, and denying themselves that they might bless others? If the record shows that this has been their life, that

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their characters have been marked with tenderness, self-denial, and benevolence, they will receive the blessed assurance and benediction from #98 [#25p98] Christ, "Well done," "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Christ has been grieved and wounded by your marked selfish love, and indifference to the woes and needs of others.

Many times our efforts may be disregarded and apparently lost upon others. But this should be no excuse for us to become weary in well-doing. How often has Jesus come to find fruit upon the plants of his care, and found nothing but leaves! We may be disappointed as to the result of our best efforts; but this should not lead us to be indifferent to others' woes, and to do nothing. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." How often is Christ disappointed in those who profess to be his children! He has given them unmistakable evidences of his love. He became poor, that through his poverty we might be made rich. He died for us, that we might not perish, but have eternal life. What if Christ had refused to bear our iniquity, because he was rejected by many, and so few appreciated his love and the infinite blessings he came to bring them? We need to encourage #99 patient, painstaking efforts. Courage is now [#25p99] wanted, not lazy despondency and fretful murmuring. We are in this world to do work for the Master, and not to study our inclination and pleasure, and to serve and glorify ourselves. Why, then, should we be inactive and discouraged because we do not see the immediate results we desire?

Our work is to toil in the vineyard of the Lord, not merely for ourselves, but for the good of

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others. Our influence is a blessing or a curse to others. We are here to form perfect characters for Heaven. We have something to do besides repining and murmuring at God's providence, and writing bitter things against ourselves. Our adversary will not allow us to rest. If we are indeed God's children, we shall be harassed and sorely beset, and we need not expect that Satan, or those under his influence, will treat us well. But there are angels who excel in strength, who will be with us in all our conflicts, if we will only be faithful. Christ conquered Satan in our behalf in the wilderness of temptation. He is mightier than Satan, and he will shortly bruise him under our feet.

You have, as a family, and as individuals, excused yourselves from earnest, active service in your Master's cause. You have been too indolent, and have left^[#25p100] many of the heavier burdens, ^{#100} which you could and should bear, for others to carry. Your spiritual strength and blessing will be proportionate to the labor of love and good works which you perform. The injunction of the apostle is, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Keeping the commandments of God requires of us good works, self-denial, self-sacrifice and devotion for the good of others; not that our good works alone can save us, but that we surely cannot be saved without good works. After we have done all that we are capable of doing, we are then to say, We have done no more than our duty, and at best are unprofitable servants, unworthy of the smallest favor from God. Christ must be our righteousness, and the crown of our rejoicing.

Self-righteousness and carnal security have closed you about as a wall. As a family, you possess a spirit of independence and pride. This element separates you from God. It is a fault, a

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defect which must be seen and overcome. It is almost impossible for you to see your errors and wrongs. You have too good an opinion of yourselves, and it is difficult for you to see and remove by confession the mistakes in your lives. You are inclined to justify and defend your course in almost everything, whether it be right or wrong.

#101 While^[#25p101] it is not too late for wrongs to be righted, bring your hearts near to Jesus by humiliation and prayer, seeking to know yourselves. You must be lost unless you arouse yourselves and work with Christ. You encase yourselves in a cold, unfeeling, unsympathizing armor. There is but little life and warmth in your associations with others. You live for yourselves, not for Jesus Christ. You are careless and indifferent to the needs and conditions of others less fortunate than yourselves. All around you there are those who have soul hunger, and who long for love expressed in words and deeds. Friendly sympathy and real feelings of tender interest for others would bring to your souls blessings that you have never yet experienced and bring you into close relation to our Redeemer, whose advent to the world was for the purpose of doing good, and whose life we are to copy. What are you doing for Christ? "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

There are many in our world who are starving for the love and sympathy which you can give them. There are men who love their wives, but are too selfish to manifest it. They have a false dignity and pride, and will not show their love by words and deeds. There are many men
#102 ^[#25p102] who never know how starved is the heart of the wife for words of tender appreciation and affection. They bury their loved ones from their sight, and murmur at the providence of God that

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has deprived them of their companions, when, could they look into the inner life of this companion, they would see that their own course was the cause of her premature death. The religion of Jesus Christ will lead us to be kind and courteous, and not so tenacious of our opinions. We should die to self, and esteem others better than ourselves.

God's word is our standard; but how far have his professed people departed from it! Our religious faith must not only be theoretical, but practical. Pure and undefiled religion will not allow us to trample upon the rights of the least of God's creatures, much less the members of God's body, and the members of our own family. God is love; and whoso dwelleth in God, dwelleth in love. The influence of worldly selfishness, which is carried about by some like a cloud, chilling the very atmosphere that others breathe, causes sickness of soul, and frequently chills to death.

It will be a great cross for you to cultivate pure, unselfish love and disinterested benevolence. To yield your opinions and ideas, to give up your judgment and follow the counsel of others, would be ^{#103} a great cross to you. The several members of your family now have families of their own. But the same spirit which existed to a greater or less extent in their father's home, is carried to their own firesides, and is felt by those outside of their family circles. They lack sweet simplicity, Christlike tenderness and unselfish love. They have a work to do in overcoming these selfish traits of character, in order to be fruitful branches in the true vine. Said Christ, "It is my Father's good pleasure that ye bear much fruit." You need to bring Jesus near you, to have him at your homes and in your hearts. You should not only have a knowledge of what is right, but should practice it from right motives, having an

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eye single to the glory of God. You may be helps, if you will comply with the conditions given in the word of God.

#104 The religion of Jesus Christ means something more than talk. The righteousness of Christ consists in right actions and good works from pure, unselfish motives. Outside righteousness, while the inward adorning is wanting, will be of no avail. "This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, [#25p104] we lie, and do not the truth; but 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." If we have not the light and love of God, we are not his children. If we gather not with Christ, we scatter abroad. We all have an influence, and that influence is telling upon the destiny of others, for their present and future good, or for their eternal loss.

#105 C---- and E---- both lack sympathy and love for those outside of their own families. They are in danger of watching others, to see defects, while greater evils exist undiscerned with themselves. If these dear souls enter Heaven, they must die to self, and obtain an experience in well doing. They have lessons to learn in the school of Christ, in order to perfect Christian characters, and have a oneness with Christ. Said Christ to his disciples, "Unless ye be converted and become as this little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven." He explained his meaning to them. He did not wish them to become children in understanding, but in malice. Little children do not manifest feelings of superiority and aristocracy. They are simple and natural in their appearance. Christ would have his followers [#25p105] cultivate

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unaffected manners, that their whole bearing might be humble and Christlike. He has made it our duty to live for others' good. He came from the royal courts of Heaven to this world to show how great an interest he had in man; and the infinite price paid for the redemption of man shows that man is of so great value that Christ could sacrifice his riches and honor in the royal courts, to lift him from the degradation of sin.

If the Majesty of Heaven could do so much to evidence his love for man, what ought not men to be willing to do for each other, to help one another up out of the pit of darkness and suffering? Said Christ, "Love one another as I have love you;" not with a greater love, for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Our love is frequently selfish; for we confine it to prescribed limits. When we come into close union and fellowship with Jesus Christ, our love and sympathy, and our works of benevolence, will reach down deeper, and will widen and strengthen with exercise. The love and interest of Christ's followers must be as broad as the world. Those who live merely for "me and mine" will fail of Heaven. God calls upon you, as a family, to cultivate love, to become less sensitive in regard to yourselves, and more sensitive to ^{#106} the griefs and trials of others. This selfish spirit that you have cherished all your lives is correctly represented by the priest and Levite who passed by the unfortunate on the other side. They saw that he needed help, but purposely avoided him.

All and each of you need to awake and face square about, to get out of the cart-rut of selfishness. Improve the short probationary time given you in working with your might to redeem the failures of your past life. God has placed you in a world of suffering to prove you, to see if you will be found worthy of the gift of eternal life.

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There are those all around you who have woes, who need words of sympathy, love, and tenderness, and our humble, pitying prayers. Some are suffering under the iron hand of poverty, some with disease, and others with heartaches, despondency, and gloom. Like Job, you should be eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, and you should inquire into the cause of them which you know not, and search it out, with the object to relieve their necessities, and help just where they most need help.

J---- needs to cultivate love for his wife, love that will find expression in words and deeds. He should cultivate tender affection. His wife has a sensitive, clinging nature, and needs to be nourished. Every word of tenderness, every word of #107 [#25p107] appreciation and affectionate encouragement, will be cherished by her, and reflected back in blessings upon her husband. His unsympathizing nature needs to be brought into close contact with Christ, that that stiffness and cold reserve may be subdued and softened by Christ's divine love. It will not be weakness, or a sacrifice of manhood and dignity, to give his wife expressions of tenderness and sympathy in words and acts; and let it not end with the family circle but extend to those outside the family. J---- has a work to do for himself that no other can do for him. He may grow strong in the Lord by bearing burdens in his cause. His affection and love should be centered upon Christ and heavenly things, and he should be forming a character for everlasting life.

Dear E---- has very limited ideas of what constitutes a Christian. She has freed herself from burdens which Christ has borne for her. She is not willing to bear his cross, and has not exercised to the best account the ability and talents given her of God. She has not grown strong in moral fortitude and courage, nor felt the weight of

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individual responsibility. She has not loved to bear reproach for Christ's sake, considering the promise, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God_[#25p108] resteth upon you." "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." The Master has a work #108 for each to do. None can be idle, none can be careless and selfish, and yet perfect Christian character. He wants all of your family to unclothe their hearts to the benign influence of his love and grace, that their compassion for others may overflow the boundaries of self and the enclosures of family walls, as did the Samaritan's to the poor, suffering stranger who was neglected and left to die by the priest and Levite. I was shown that there are many who need our sympathy and advice; and when we consider that we can pass through this world but once, how important that we go through it as we ought; for we can never return to repair the errors and mistakes we have made.

I was shown the case of C---- some time ago. Her errors and wrongs were faithfully portrayed before her; but in the last view given me, I saw that the wrongs still existed, that she was cold and unsympathizing with her husband's children. Correction and reproof are not given by her for merely grave offenses, but for trivial matters that should pass by unnoticed.

Constant fault-finding is wrong, and the Spirit of Christ cannot abide in the heart where it exists. She is disposed to pass over the good in her children without a_[#25p109] word of approval, #109 but is ever ready to bear down with censure if any wrong is seen.

This ever discourages children, and will lead to habits of heedlessness. It stirs up the evil in the heart, and causes it to cast up mire and dirt. In children who are habitually censured,

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there will be a spirit of "I don't care," and evil passions will frequently be manifested, regardless of consequences.

Whenever the mother can speak a word of commendation for the good conduct of her children, she should do so. She should encourage them by words of approval and a look of love. This will be as sunshine to the heart of a child, and will lead to the cultivation of self-respect and pride of character. Sister C---- should cultivate love and sympathy. She should manifest tender affection for the motherless children under her care. This would be a blessing to these children of God's love, and would be reflected back upon her in affection and love.

Children have sensitive, loving natures. They are easily pleased, and easily made unhappy. By gentle discipline in loving words and acts, mothers may bind their children to their hearts. To manifest severity, and to be exacting with children, is a great mistake. Uniform firmness and unimpassioned control are necessary to the discipline of every family. Say what you mean calmly, move with consideration, and carry out what you say without deviation.

It will pay to manifest affection in your association with your children. Do not repel them by lack of sympathy in their childish sports, joys, and griefs. Never let a frown gather upon your brow, or a harsh word escape your lips. God writes all these words in his book of records. Harsh words sour the temper and wound the hearts of children, and in some are difficult to heal. Children are sensitive to the least injustice, and some become discouraged under it, and will neither heed the loud, angry voice of command, nor care for threatenings of punishment. Rebellion is too frequently established in the hearts of children through the wrong discipline of the par-

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ents, when if a proper course had been taken, the children would have formed good and harmonious characters. A mother who does not have perfect control of herself is unfit to have the management of children.

Bro. ---- is molded by the positive temperament of his wife. He has become in a degree selfish like her. His mind is almost completely occupied by "me and mine," to the exclusion of other things of infinitely more importance. He does not_[#25p111] take his position in his family as father of his flock, and, unprejudiced and uninfluenced, pursue a uniform course with his children. His wife is not, and never can be, a true mother to his motherless children unless she is transformed. And Bro. ---- stood in the position God would have him. These motherless children are God's little ones, precious in his sight. Bro. --- - has naturally a tender, refined, loving, generous, sensitive nature, while his wife is exactly the opposite. Instead of Bro. ----'s molding and softening the character of his wife, she is transforming him. #111

He thinks that in order to have peace he must let things pass which trouble his mind. He has learned that submission and the yielding of her opinion are not to be expected. She will rule. She will carry out her ideas at any cost. Unless they are both in earnest in their efforts to reform, they will not obtain eternal life. They have had light, but have neglected to follow it. Selfish love of the world has blinded their perceptions and hardened their hearts. C---- needs to see that unless she lays aside her selfishness, overcomes her will and her temper, she cannot have Heaven. She would mar all Heaven with these elements in her character. I warn sister C---- to repent._[#25p112] #112
I call upon her in the name of my Master to arouse quickly from her stupid indifference, and

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to heed the counsel of the True Witness and zealously repent, or she imperils her soul.

God is merciful. He will now accept the offering of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Will sister C---- excuse herself as did the Levite and the priest, in not seeing and feeling others' woes, by passing by on the other side? God holds her accountable for neglect of duty in not exercising sympathy and tenderness for the unfortunate. She does not keep the commandments of God which plainly show her duty to her neighbor. Said Christ to the lawyer, "This do, and thou shalt have life." Thus a neglect of duty to our neighbor will result in our loss of eternal life.

E----, poor child, like many others, has a work to do that she has never dreamed of. She has backslidden from God. Her thoughts are too much of herself, and she seeks to please the world, not by disinterested love for souls and in seeking to turn them to Christ, but in her absence of spirituality, in her conformity to the world in spirit and works. She should die to self and obtain an experience in well-doing. She is cold and unsympathizing. She needs to have all this icy, unapproachable spirit subdued, and melted away by the_{#25p113} sunshine of Christ's love. E---- is very much shut up within herself. God saw that she was a poor, dwarfed plant, bearing no fruit, nothing but leaves. Her thoughts were almost exclusively occupied by "me and mine." He has in mercy been pruning this plant of his love, by lopping off the branches, that the root might strike down deeper. He has been seeking to draw this child to himself. Her religious life has been almost entirely without fruit. This child is accountable for the talent God has given her. She may be useful. She may be a co-worker with Christ if she will break down the wall of selfish-

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ness which has shut her away from God's light and love.

There are many who need our sympathy and advice, but not that advice which implies superiority in the giver, and inferiority in the receiver. E---- needs the softening, melting love of God in her heart. Every look, and the tone of the voice, should be modulated by thoughtful consideration, and tender, respectful love. The tone of the voice and every look that implies, "I am superior," chills the atmosphere of her presence, and is more like an icicle than a ray of light that gives warmth. Your influence is positive. You mold those who associate with you, or else you cannot agree with them. You have not^{#25p114} the least ^{#114} thought of being molded yourself by the better influence of others, and of yielding your judgment and your opinions to them. You will reason for your way, and justify your ideas and your course. If you do not convince others, you will recur again and again to the same point. This trait in your character will be a valuable one if sanctified to God, and controlled by his Holy Spirit; but if not, it will prove a curse to yourself and a curse to others. Assertions and advice which savor of a dictatorial spirit are not good fruit. You need the softening, melting love of Christ in your heart, which will be reflected in all your acts toward your family, and to all who are brought under your influence.

I fear, greatly fear, that C---- will fail of Heaven. She loves the world and the things of the world so well that she has no love to spare for Jesus. She is so encrusted in selfishness that the illuminating light from Heaven cannot penetrate the cold, dark walls of self-love and self-esteem which she has been building up for a lifetime. Love is the key to open hearts; but the precious plant of love has not been cherished. C---- has so

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#115 long blinded her eyes to her selfishness that she cannot now discern it. She has had so little experimental religion that she is, in heart, of the world, and I fear that this world will be_[#25p115] all the Heaven she will ever have. Her influence over her husband is not good. He does not see the necessity of being fortified by the grace of God to stand with true moral fortitude for the right. He is swayed by his wife's influence.

Not only does she not feel and do the works God requires her to do, but she exerts an overpowering influence to hold her husband and tie his hands. And she has succeeded to a great extent. He is blinded. Bro. ---- should consider that God has claims upon him which are above every earthly relationship. He needs the eyesalve, the white raiment, and the gold, that he may have a symmetrical character, and an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. Nothing short of an entire conversion can ever open the soul of his wife to see her errors, and to confess her wrongs.

#116 C---- has great changes to make, which she has not made because she did not realize her true condition and could not see the necessity of reform. So far from being willing to learn of the heavenly Teacher who was meek and lowly of heart, she considers meekness servility; and the becoming spirit and lowliness of mind to esteem others better than herself, she regards as degrading and humiliating. C---- has a positive, imperious, proud, self-willed spirit. She does not see_[#25p116] anything particularly desirable in a meek and quiet spirit, that she should covet it. This valuable ornament possesses so little value for her that she cannot consent to wear it. She has, too frequently, a spirit of resentment which is as opposite to the Spirit of God as the east is from the west.

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True gentleness is a gem of great value in the sight of God. A meek and quiet spirit will ever be looking out, not for happiness for itself, but will seek for self-forgetfulness, and find sweet content and true satisfaction in making others happy.

In the providence of God, sister P---- has been separated from her father's family. And although she bore the characteristics of the family association, with others, bearing grave responsibilities has led her out of herself, and has given her an interest in others' woes. She has, in a measure, opened her heart in sympathy and love for God's family, taking an interest in others. The work and cause of God have engaged her attention. She has felt, in some degree, that poor fallen mortals were one great brotherhood. She has had to educate herself to think for others, and do for others, and forget self; and yet she has not cultivated as thoroughly as she should that interest, sympathy, and affection for others that are necessary for the followers of Christ. She needs to have greater sympathy and ^{#117} less terse and rigid justice. As she has given her interest and her time to the great subject of health reform, she has reached out beyond self. As she has done this, she has been blessed. The more she does for others' good, the more she sees to do, and the more she feels inclined to do.

This working for others frequently brings her into trying positions, where the exercise of faith is necessary to bring her through hard and trying scenes. The answer is realized to earnest prayers; and faith, love, and confidence in God are strengthened. Through oft-repeated perplexities and trials, experience is obtained. God is molding the heart into something more like himself. And yet self clamors constantly for the victory. Sister P---- needs to cultivate more tender-

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ness and thoughtful care in her daily connection with others. She needs to study to subdue self. If P---- is indeed a Christian, she will feel that she must devote the best part, and if need be, the whole, of her life to unselfish, patient toil, and thus show her love for the Master. Without this experience she would fall far short of the perfection of Christian character.

#118 Sister P---- has taken some advance steps, and the family feel that she has left them, and this is a crucifixion to them. They do not feel that she now has the same^[#25p118] interest and affections and objects in life with themselves. They feel that they can no longer enjoy, as formerly, the society of their sister. They feel that she is to blame, that she has changed, and her sympathy is no longer one with theirs. The reason of this lack of assimilation of feeling is, that sister P---- has been advancing in feeling for others' woes, while they have been slothful servants, not doing the work God has given them to do on earth. They have been, consequently retrograding. The family have selfishly shut up their interest and affection to themselves and the love of the world. P---- has been a worker in a good cause. The subject of health reform has been to her one of great importance, for her experience has shown her its necessity.

Her father's family have not seen the necessity of health reform. They have not seen the part that it acts in the closing work of these last days, because they were not inclined to see. They have dropped into the cart-rut of custom, and to make the effort required to get out, is a difficult work. They would rather be let alone. It is a terrible thing to rust, from inaction. This family will surely be weighed in the balances and found wanting unless they begin at once to do something. "Now if any man have not the spirit of

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Christ, he is none of his." This is_[#25p119] close lan- #119
guage. Who can stand the test? The word of God
is to us a daguerreotype of the mind of God and of
Christ, also of man fallen, and man renewed after
the image of Christ, possessing the divine mind.
We may compare our thoughts, feelings, and in-
tentions, with the picture of Christ. We have no
relationship with him unless we are willing to
work the works of Christ.

Christ came to do his Father's will. Are we
following in his steps? All who have named the
name of Christ should be constantly seeking for a
more intimate acquaintance with him, that they
may walk even as he walked, and do the works of
Christ. We should appropriate the lessons of his
life to our lives. "Christ gave himself for us that he
might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify
unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good
works. Hereby perceive we the love of God; be-
cause he laid down his life for us; and we ought to
lay down our lives for the brethren." Here is the
work of self-denial which we must enter upon
with cheerfulness, in imitation of the example of
our Redeemer. The Christian's life must be one of
conflict and of sacrifice. The path of duty should
be followed; not the path of inclination and of
choice.

When the family of Bro. L---- see the work
before them, and do the work God_[#25p120] has left #120
them to do, they will not be so widely separated
from Bro. and sister W---- and sister P----, and
those who are workers in union with the Master.
It may take time to attain perfect submission to
God's will, but we can never stop short of it and
be fitted for Heaven. True religion will lead its pro-
fessor on to perfection. Your thoughts, your
words, and your actions, as well as your appetites
and passions, must be brought into subjection to
the will of God. You must bear fruit unto holiness.

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You will be exercised to defend the poor, the fatherless, the motherless, and the afflicted. You will do justice to the widow and relieve the needy. You will deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God.

We must let Christ into our hearts and homes if we would walk in the light. Home should be made all that the name implies. It should be a little Heaven upon earth, a place where the affections are cultivated instead of being studiously repressed. Our happiness depends upon this cultivation of love, sympathy, and polite courtesy to one another. Why there are so many hard-hearted men and women in our world is because true affection has been regarded as weakness, and has been discouraged and repressed. The better part of the nature of those of this class^{#25p121} was perverted and dwarfed in childhood, and unless rays of divine light can melt away their coldness and hard-hearted selfishness, the happiness of such is buried forever. If we would have tender hearts, such as Jesus had when he was upon the earth, and sanctified sympathy, such as the angels have for sinful mortals, we must cultivate the sympathies of childhood, which are simplicity itself. Then we shall be refined, elevated, and directed by heavenly principles.

A cultivated intellect is a great treasure; but without the softening influence of sympathy and sanctified love, it is not of the highest value. We want words and deeds of tender consideration for others. A thousand little attentions we can manifest in friendly words and pleasant looks, which will be reflected back upon us again. Thoughtless Christians manifest in their neglect of others that they are not in union with Christ. It is impossible to be in union with Christ and yet be forgetful of others' rights, and be unkind to others. Many long intensely for friendly sympathy.

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God has given each of us an identity of our own, which cannot be submerged in another; but our individual characteristics will be much less prominent if we are indeed Christ's, and his will is ours. Our lives should be, as was our^[#25p122] Saviour's, consecrated to the good and happiness of others. We should be self-forgetful, and ever looking out for opportunities, even in little things, to show gratitude for the favors we have received of others, and watching for opportunities to cheer and lighten, and relieve the sorrows and burdens of others, by acts of tender kindness and little deeds of love. These thoughtful courtesies in our families, that extend outside the family circle, help make up the sum of life's happiness; and the neglect of these little things makes up the sum of life's bitterness and sorrow. #122

It is the work we do, or do not do, that tells with tremendous power upon our lives and destinies. God requires us to improve every opportunity for usefulness that is offered us. Neglect in doing this is perilous to our spiritual growth. We have a great work to do. Let us not pass, in idleness, the precious hours that God has given us in which to perfect characters for Heaven. We must not be inactive or slothful in this work; for we have not a moment to spend without a purpose or object. God will help us to overcome our wrongs, if we will pray, and believe on him. We shall be more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us. When this short life in this world is ended, and we see as we are seen and know as we are known, how short in^[#25p123] duration and how small will appear to us the things of this world in comparison with the glory of the better world. Christ would never have left the royal courts and taken humanity, and become sin for the race, had he not seen that man might, with his help, become infinitely happy, and attain durable riches, #123

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and a life that would run parallel with the life of God. He knew that without his help sinful man could not attain these things.

We should have the spirit of progress. We must guard continually against being fixed in our views, feelings and actions. The work of God is onward. Reforms must be carried on, and we must take hold and help move on the car of reform. Energy, tempered with patience and ambition, balanced by wisdom, is now needed by every Christian. The work of saving souls is yet left to us, the disciples of Christ. We are not one of us excused. Many in their Christian life have become dwarfed and stunted, from inaction. We should employ our time diligently while in this world. How earnestly should we improve every opportunity of doing good, of bringing others to the knowledge of the truth. Our motto should ever be, Onward, higher, surely, steadily onward to duty and to victory.

#124 I have been shown, in regard to theC[#25p124] individuals mentioned, that God loves them, and would save them if they would be saved in his appointed way. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Here is the process, the refining, purifying process, to be carried on by the Lord of hosts. The work is most trying to the soul, but it is only through this process that the rubbish and defiling impurities can be removed. Our trials are all necessary to bring us close to our Heavenly Father, in obedience to his will, that we may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. God has given each of you, whose names are here mentioned, capabilities, talents to im-

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prove. You each need a new and living experience in the divine life, in order to do the will of God. No amount of past experience will suffice for the present, or will strengthen us to overcome the difficulties in our path. We must have new grace and fresh strength daily in order to be victorious.

We are seldom, in all respects, placed in the same condition twice. Abraham,^[#25p125] Moses, #125 Elijah, Daniel, and many others, were all sorely tried, but not in the same way. Everyone has his individual tests and trials in the drama of life, but the very same trials seldom come twice. Each has his own experience, peculiar in its character and circumstances, to accomplish a certain work. God has a work, a purpose, in the life of each and all of us. Every act, however small, has its place in our life experience. We must have the continual light and experience that come from God. We all need it, and God is more than willing we should have it, if we will take it. He has not closed the windows of heaven to your prayers, but you have felt satisfied to pass on without the divine help you so much need.

How little you know the bearing of your daily acts upon the history of others. You may think that what you may do and what you may say are of little consequence, when the most important results for good or evil are the consequence of our words and actions. The words and actions looked upon as so unimportant and so small, are links in the long chain of human events. You have not felt the need of God's manifesting his will to us in all the acts of our daily life. With our first parents, the desire for a single gratification of appetite opened the flood-gate of woe and sin to this^[#25p126] world. #126 Would that you, my dear sisters, might feel that every step you take may have a lasting and controlling influence upon your own lives and the characters of others.

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Oh! how much need, then, of communion with God. What need of divine grace to direct every step and show us how to perfect Christian characters.

Christians will have new scenes and new trials to pass through, where our past experience cannot be a sufficient guide. We need to learn of the divine Teacher as much now, and even more, than at any period of our lives. And the more experience we gain, the nearer we draw toward the pure light of Heaven, the more shall we discern in ourselves that needs reforming. We may all do a good work in blessing others, if we will seek counsel of God, and follow on in obedience and faith. The path of the just is a progressive one, from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory. The divine illumination will increase more and more, corresponding with our onward movements, qualifying us to meet the responsibilities and emergencies before us.

When trials press you, when despondency and dark unbelief control your thoughts, when selfishness molds your actions, you do not see your need of God, and a deep and thorough #127 knowledge of his will; you₁[#25p127] know not the will of God; neither can you know it when you live for self. You rely upon your good intentions and resolutions, and the principal sum of life is composed of resolutions made and resolutions broken. What you all need is to die to self, cease clinging to self, and surrender to God. Gladly would I comfort you if I could. Gladly would I praise your good qualities, and good purposes, and good acts; but God was not pleased to show me these. He presented before me the hindrances to your gaining the noble, elevated, character of holiness needful for you to have, that you may not lose the heavenly rest and immortal glory he would have you attain. Look away from yourselves to Jesus. He is all,

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and in all. The merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour will avail to cleanse from the least and greatest sin. Commit, in trusting faith, the keeping of your souls to God, as unto a faithful Creator. Be not continually in fear and apprehension that God will leave you. He never will unless you depart from him. Christ will come in and dwell with you if you will open the door of your hearts to him. There may be perfect harmony between you and the Father, and with his Son if you will die to self and live unto God.

How few are aware that they have darling idols, that they have cherished^[#25p128] sins. God #128 sees these sins to which you may be blinded, and he works with his pruning knife to strike deep and separate these cherished sins from you. You all want to choose for yourselves the process of purification. How hard it is for you to submit to the crucifixion of self; but when the work is all submitted to God, to him who knows our weaknesses and our sinfulness, he takes the very best way to bring about the desired results. It was through constant conflict and simple faith that Enoch walked with God. You may all do the same. You may be thoroughly converted and transformed, and be indeed children of God, enjoying not only the knowledge of his will, but leading others, by your example, in the same path of humble obedience and consecration. Real godliness is diffusive and communicative. The psalmist says, "I have not hid Thy righteousness in my heart. I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Wherever the love of God is, there is always a desire to express it.

May God help you all to make earnest efforts for everlasting life, and earnest efforts to lead others in the path of holiness. E.G.W.^[#25p129] #129

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Epistle Number Three.

Dear Bro. ----: I would make one more effort to warn you to be in earnest to gain the kingdom. Warning after warning has been given you, which you have not heeded. But oh! if you would even now repent of your past wrong course and turn to the Lord, it might not be too late for wrongs to be righted. All the powers of your mind have been devoted to money getting. You have worshiped money. It has been your god. The rod of God is hanging over you. His judgments may overtake you at any moment, and you go down to the grave unready, your garments spotted and stained with the corruptions of the world. What is your record in Heaven? Every dollar you have accumulated has been like an extra link in the chain that fastens you to this poor world. Your passion to get gain has been continually strengthening. The burden of your thoughts has been how you could obtain more means. You have a fearful experience, which should be a warning to those who allow the love of the world to take possession of their souls. You have become mammon's slave. What will you say when the Master shall demand of you an account of your stewardship? You have allowed the love of money getting to become the [#25p130] ruling passion of your life. You are as much intoxicated with the love of money as the #130 inebriate is with his liquor.

Jesus has plead that the unfruitful tree might be spared a little longer; and I make one more plea for you to make no faint effort, but a most earnest one, for the kingdom. Rescue yourself from the snare of Satan before the word, "He is joined to his idols, let him alone," shall be spoken in regard to you in Heaven. All money lovers, like yourself, will one day cry in bitter anguish, Oh! the deceitfulness of riches. I have sold my soul for money. Your only hope now is to make no

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feeble move, but to turn square about. Resolutely call to your aid the power of the will that you have so long exercised in the wrong direction, and now work in the opposite direction. This is the only way for you to overcome covetousness.

God has opened ways in which covetousness can be overcome, by performing benevolent deeds. You are saying, by your life, that you esteem the treasures of the world greater than immortal riches. You are saying, Farewell Heaven; farewell immortal life; I have chosen this world. The pearl of great price is being bartered away for present gain. While thus admonished of God, while in his providence he has already, as it were, placed_[#25p131] your feet in the dark river, will you, dare you, cultivate your money-loving propensities? Will you, in the last act of a misspent life, overreach and retain that which is another's just due? Will you reason yourself into the belief that you are doing justice to your brother? Will you add another act of scheming and overreaching to those already existing against you, and written in the records above? Shall the blow of God's retributive judgment fall upon you, and you be called without warning to pass through the dark waters?

Our Saviour frequently and earnestly rebuked the sin of covetousness. "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for

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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^[#25p132] things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

God has made a law for his people that a tenth of all the increase should be his. I have given you, saith God, nine-tenths, I ask one-tenth of all the increase. That one-tenth the rich man had withheld from God. If he had not done this, if he had loved God supremely, instead of loving and serving himself, he would not have accumulated so great treasures that there would be lack of room to bestow them. Had he bestowed his goods upon his needy brethren, to supply their necessities, there would have been no need of tearing down and building greater barns. But he had disregarded the principles of the law of God. He had not loved the Lord with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. Had he used his wealth as a bounty lent him of God, with which to do good, he would have laid up treasure in Heaven and been rich in good works.

The length and usefulness of life do not consist in the amount of our earthly possessions. Those who use their wealth in doing good will see no necessity for large accumulation in this world; for the treasure which is used to advance the cause of God, and which is given to the needy in Christ's name, is given to Christ, and he^[#25p133] lays it up for us in the bank of Heaven in bags which wax not old. He who does this is rich toward God, and his heart will be where his treasures are secured. He who humbly uses what God has given for the honor of the Giver, freely giving as he has received, may feel the peace and assurance in all his business that God's hand is over

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him for good, and he himself will bear the impress of God, having the Father's smile.

Many have pitied the lot of the Israel of God, in being compelled to give systematically, besides other liberal offerings yearly. An all-wise God knew best what system of benevolence would be in accordance with his providence, and has given his people directions in regard to it. It has ever proved that nine-tenths were worth more to them than ten-tenths. Those who thought to increase their gain by withholding from God, or in bringing to him an inferior offering, the lame, the blind, or diseased, were sure to suffer loss.

Providence, though unseen, is ever at work in the affairs of men. God's hand can prosper or withhold; and he frequently withholds from one while he seems to prosper another. All this is to test and prove men, and to reveal the heart. He lets misfortune overtake one brother, while he prospers another, to see if the man he he_[#25p134] has favored has his fear before his eyes, and will follow out the direction enjoined upon him in his word to love his neighbor as himself, and help his poorer brother from a love to do good. Acts of generosity and benevolence were designed by God to keep the hearts of the children of men tender and sympathetic and to encourage in them an interest and affection for one another, in imitation of the Master, who for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The law of tithing was founded upon an enduring principle, and was designed to be a blessing to man.

The system of benevolence was arranged to prevent the great evil, covetousness. Christ saw that in the prosecution of business the love of riches would be the greatest evil to root out of the heart true godliness. He saw that the love of money would freeze deep and hard into men's souls, stopping the flow of generous impulses,

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and closing their senses to the wants of the suffering and afflicted. "Take heed," was his oft-repeated warning, "and beware of covetousness." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The oft-repeated and striking warnings of our Redeemer are in marked contrast with the actions of his professed followers who evidence in their lives so great eagerness to be rich, and who show that the words of Christ are lost upon them. Covetousness is one of the most common and popular sins of these last days, and this sin has a paralyzing influence upon the soul.

Bro. ----, the desire for wealth has been central idea of your mind. This one passion for money getting has deadened every high and noble consideration, and has made you indifferent to the needs and interests of others. You have made yourself nearly as unimpressible as a piece of iron. Your gold and silver are cankered, and have become an eating canker to the soul. Had your benevolence grown with your riches, you would have regarded money as a means with which you could do good. Our Redeemer, who knew man's danger in regard to covetousness, has provided a safeguard against this dreadful evil. He has arranged the plan of salvation so that it shall begin and end in benevolence. Christ offered himself, an infinite sacrifice. This, in and of itself, bears directly against covetousness and exalts benevolence.

Constant, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the cankering sin of covetousness and selfishness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain his cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death. Systematic be-

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nevolence is designed in the order of God to tear away treasures from the covetous as fast as they are gained, and to consecrate them to the Lord, to whom they belong.

This system is so arranged that men may give something from their wages every day, and lay by for their Lord a portion of the profits of every investment. The constant practice of God's plan of systematic benevolence weakens covetousness and strengthens benevolence. If riches increase, men, even professing godliness, set the heart upon them, and the more they have, the less they give into the treasury of the Lord. Thus, riches make men selfish, and hoarding feeds covetousness, and these evils strengthen by active exercise. God knows our danger, and has hedged us about with means to prevent our own ruin. God requires the constant exercise of benevolence, that the force of habit in good works may break the force of habit in an opposite direction.

God required an appropriation of means for benevolent objects, every week, that in the frequent exercise of this good quality the heart might be kept open like a flowing stream, and not allowed to close up,^[#25p137] By exercise, benevolence ^{#137} is constantly enlarging and strengthening until it becomes a principle, and reigns a queen in the soul. It is highly dangerous to spirituality to allow selfishness and covetousness the least room in the heart.

The word of God has much to say in regard to sacrificing. Riches are from the Lord, and belong to him. "Both riches and honor come of thee." "The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." It

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is the Lord thy God that giveth thee power to get wealth.

Riches are in themselves transient and unsatisfying. We are warned not to trust in uncertain riches. "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away." "Lay not up for yourself treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal."

Riches bring no relief in man's greatest distress. "Riches profit not in the day of wrath." "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke; then a great ransom [#25p138] cannot deliver thee." This warning, my brother, is appropriate in your case.

What provision, Bro. ----, have you made for eternal life? Have you a good foundation against the time to come that will secure to yourself eternal joys? Oh! may God arouse you. May you, my dear brother, now, just now, commence to work in earnest to get some of your gain and riches into the treasury of God. Not a dollar of it is yours. All is God's, and you have claimed for your own that which God has lent you to devote to good works. Your time is very short. Work now with all your might. By repentance you may now find pardon. You must loosen your grasp of earthly possessions, and fasten your affections upon God. You must be a converted man. Agonize with God. Do not be content to perish forever; but make an effort for salvation before it shall be everlastingly too late.

It is not now too late for wrongs to be righted. Show your repentance for past wrongs by redeeming the time. Make restitution where you have wronged any one, as it comes to your mind. This is your only hope of the pardoning love of

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God. It will be like taking out the right eye, or cutting off the right arm; but there is no other way for you. You have made efforts repeatedly, and failed, because you^[#25p139] love money that has not ^{#139} all been very honestly gained. You would not try to redeem the past by restitution. When you begin to do this, there will be hope for you. If you choose, for the few remaining days of your life, to go on as you have done, your case will be hopeless; you will lose both worlds; you will see the saints of God glorified in the heavenly city, and yourself thrust out; you will have not part in that precious life, purchased for you at an infinite cost, which you valued so little as to sell it for earthly riches.

Now there is a little time left you. Will you work? will you repent? or will you die all unready, worshiping money, glorying in your riches, and forgetting God and Heaven? No faint struggle or feeble efforts will wean your affections from the world. Jesus will help you. In every earnest effort you make, Jesus will be near you, and will bless your endeavors. You must make earnest efforts, or you will be lost. I warn you not to delay one moment, but commence just now. You have long disgraced the Christian's name by your covetousness and small dealing. Now you may honor it by working in an opposite direction, and let all see that there is a power in the truth of God to transform human nature. You may, in the strength of God, save your soul if you will.^[#25p140] ^{#140}

You have a work to begin at once. Satan will stand by your side, as he did by the side of Christ in the wilderness of temptation, to overcome you with reasonings, to pervert your judgment, and to paralyze your sense of right and equity. If you do justice in one instance, you must not wait for Satan to overpower your good impulses by his reasoning. You cannot trust your-

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self, you have so long been controlled by selfishness and covetousness. I do not want you to lose Heaven. I have been shown the selfish acts of your life, your close scheming and figuring, your bartering, and the advantage you have taken of your brethren and fellow-men. God has every instance written in the book. Will you pray God to enlighten your mind to see where you have overreached? and then will you repent and redeem the past?

Bro. ----, may God help before it is for you too late. E.G.W.

Epistle Number Four.

I have been shown that there was danger of our young ministers entering the field, and engaging in the work of teaching the truth to others, who are not fitted for the sacred work of God.

#141 They have^[#25p141] not a just sense of the sacredness of the work for this time. They feel a desire to be connected with the work, but they fail to bear the burdens lying directly in the pathway of duty. They do that which costs them but little taxation and inconvenience, and neglect to put their whole souls into the work.

Some are too indolent to make a success in life in business matters, and they are deficient in the experience necessary to make good Christians in a private capacity; yet they feel competent to engage in the work of all others the most difficult, to deal with minds and try to convert souls from error to the truth.

The hearts of some of these ministers are not sanctified by the truth. All such ministers are merely stumbling blocks to sinners, and are standing in the way of real laborers. It will take more stern labor to educate them to right ideas, that they may not injure the cause of God, than to do the work. God cannot be glorified, or his

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cause advanced, by unconsecrated workmen who are entirely deficient in the necessary qualifications to make a gospel minister. Some young ministers who go forth to labor for others need to be thoroughly converted themselves to the genuine religion of the Bible.

I was shown the case of Bro. ---- of[#25p142] - #142 ---, which represents the cases of others in many respects. I was shown that Bro. ---- was no real advantage to the cause of God, and never can be unless he has a thorough conversion. He has many defects in his character which he should and must see before he can be accepted of God as a laborer in his vineyard. The work of God is sacred. In the first place, Bro. ---- has not met with that change of heart which transforms the man, which is called conversion. He has head work, but needs the work of the grace of God upon the heart to be carried out in the life, before he can point others understandingly to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. The work for this time is altogether too solemn and too important to be handled with unclean hands and impure hearts.

Bro. ---- has a temperament that is very unhappy, which makes trouble for himself and for his best friends. He is naturally jealous, suspicious, and fault-finding. Those the most closely connected with him will feel this the most deeply.

Bro. ---- has much self-love, large self-esteem, and if he is not especially regarded and made an object of attention, he feels as though some one were to blame. The fault exists in himself. He loves to have his vanity flattered. He is suspicious of[#25p143] others' motives, shows in #143 these feelings a very narrow, selfish mind. He thinks he sees much to question, to find fault with, and to censure, in the plan of others' labors, when the real evil exists in his own unhumiliated,

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unconsecrated heart. Self, in him, must die, and he must learn of Jesus who is meek and lowly of heart, or he will fail of perfecting Christian character, and fail of Heaven at last.

Bro. ---- has made a failure in his manner of seeking to teach the truth to others. His spirit is not winning. He has self mixed in with all his efforts. He is quite particular about the externals, as far as his apparel is concerned, as though this would designate him as a minister of Christ; but he has neglected the inward adornment of the soul. He has not felt the necessity of seeking for a beautiful, harmonious character, resembling the character of Jesus Christ, the correct pattern. The meekness and humility which characterized the life of Jesus would win hearts, and give him access to souls; but when Bro. ---- speaks in his own spirit, the people see so much self exhibited, so little of the spirit of humility, that their hearts are not touched, but grow hard and cold under his preaching, because it lacks divine unction.

The self-confident, self-exalted spirit of
#144 [#25p144] Bro. ---- must be put away, and he must see that he is sinful and in need of continual grace and power from God to press through the moral darkness of this degenerate age and reach souls who need to be saved. He has put on the dignity of a gospel minister too much outside, while the real experience in the mystery of godliness and a knowledge of the divine will he has not felt to be essential in making a success of presenting the truth.

Bro. ---- is too cold and unsympathizing. He does not come directly to hearts by the Christian simplicity, tenderness, and love, which characterized the life of Christ. In this respect it is essential that every man who labors for the salvation of souls should imitate the pattern given them in the life of Christ. If they fail to educate

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themselves to become workers in the vineyard of the Lord, they might better be spared than not. It would be poor policy to support men from the treasury of God who really mar and injure the work of God, and who are constantly lowering the standard of Christianity.

In order for a man to become a successful minister, more than book knowledge is essential. The laborer for souls needs integrity, intelligence, industry, energy and tact. All these are highly essential for the success of a minister of Christ. No man can_[#25p145] be inferior with these qualifications, but he will have a commanding influence. #145 Unless the laborer in God's cause can gain the confidence of those for whom he is laboring, he can do but little good. The worker in God's vineyard must daily derive strength from above to resist wrong and to maintain uprightness through the varied trials of life. And his must be brought into harmony with his Redeemer. He can co-worker with Jesus, to work as he worked, to love as loved, and to possess, like him, moral power to stand the strongest tests of character.

Bro. ---- should cultivate simplicity. He should lay aside his false dignity, and let the Spirit of God come in and sanctify, elevate, purify, and ennoble his life. Then he can bear the burden for souls which a true gospel minister must feel when presenting a message of solemn warning to those in peril, who must perish in their darkness unless they accept the light of truth. This dignity borrowed from his Redeemer will adorn with divine grace, for he is brought into close union with Jesus Christ.

I was carried forward in the life of Bro. ----, and then carried back to review the result of his labors while he was attempting to teach others the truth. I saw that some few would listen, and might be, as far_[#25p146] as the head is concerned, #146

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convinced; but as Bro. ---- has not an experimental, daily, living knowledge of the grace of God and his saving power, he cannot convey to others what he does not himself possess. He has not the experience of a truly converted man. How, then, can God make him a blessing to sinners? He is blind himself, while trying to lead the blind.

I was shown that his work had spoiled good fields for others. Some men who were truly consecrated to God, and who felt the burden of the work, might have done good and brought souls into the truth, in places where he had made attempts without success, and after his superficial work, the golden opportunity was gone. The minds that might have been convinced, and the hearts that might have been softened, have been hardened and prejudiced under his efforts.

I looked to see what souls of value were holding on to the truth as the result of his labors. I watched closely to see what watchcare he had felt for souls, to strengthen them and to encourage them, which labor should ever accompany the ministry of the word. I could not see one who would not have been in a far better condition had he not received the first impressions of the truth from him. It is about impossible for a stream to rise higher than its fountainhead. [#25p147] The man who bears the truth to sinners stands in a fearfully responsible position. He will either convert souls to Christ, or his efforts will balance them in the wrong direction.

I have been shown that Bro. ---- is an indolent man. He loves his pleasure and his ease. He does not love physical labor, neither does he love close application of the mind to the study of the word. He wants to take things lazily. He will go to a place and attempt to introduce the truth there, when his heart is not in it. He feels no weight of the work, no real burden for souls. He

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has not the love of souls at heart. He will let his inclinations divert him from the work, will suffer his feelings to control him, and will leave the work and go back to his family. He has not an experience in self-denial, and in sacrificing his ease and his inclinations. He labors too much with respect to wages. He does not closely apply himself to his work, but merely touches it here and there without perseverance or earnestness, and so makes a success of nothing. God frowns upon all such professed workers. They are unfaithful in everything. Their consciences are not sensitive and tender.

To introduce the truth into places, and then lack courage, energy, and tact, to carry the matter through, is a great error;[#25p148] for the work is left without making that thorough and persevering effort that it is positively essential some one should make in these places. If matters go hard, if opposition arises, there is a cowardly retreat, instead of fleeing to God with fasting and praying and weeping before the Lord, hanging by faith to the source of light and power and strength until the clouds break away and the darkness disperses. Faith grows strong by coming in conflict with doubts and opposing influences. The experience gained in these trials is of more value than the most costly jewels. #148

The result of your labors, Bro. ---- should make you ashamed. God cannot accept your labors. It would be better for the cause of God if you should cease preaching, and take up a work which involves less responsibility. It would be better for you to go to work with your hands. Humble your heart before God; be faithful in temporal matters; and when you show that you are faithful in the smaller responsibilities, God may commit to you higher trusts. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he

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#149 that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." You need a deeper experience in religious things. I advise you to go to work with your hands, and earnestly plead with God for an experience for yourself. [#25p149] Cling to Jesus, and never, never dare to assume the responsibilities of a gospel minister until you are a converted man in heart, and have a meek and peaceable spirit. You need to tarry away from the work of God till you are endowed with power from on high. No man can make a success of saving souls unless Christ works with his efforts, and self is put out of sight.

A minister of Christ should be thoroughly furnished to all good works. You have made a miserable failure. You must show in your family that kindly consideration, that tenderness, love, gentleness, noble forbearance and true courtesy, that are becoming to the head of a family, before you can make a success in winning souls to Christ. If you have not wisdom to manage the small number whom you are closely united with, how can you make a success of managing a larger company, who are not especially interested in yourself. Your wife needs to be truly and thoroughly converted to God. Neither of you are in a condition to correctly represent our faith. You both need a thorough conversion.

#150 Retirement from the work of God at present is best for you. Bro. ----, you have not perseverance or moral backbone. You are very deficient in those traits of [#25p150] character which are necessary for the work of God at this time. You have not received that education in practical life that is necessary for you in order to make a success as a practical minister of Christ. Your education has been deficient in many respects. Your parents have not read your character, nor trained you to overcome its defects, to the end that you might

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develop a symmetrical character, and possess firmness, self-denial, self-control, humility and moral power. You know very little of practical life or perseverance under difficulties. You have a strong desire to controvert others' This is the result of and of following your ideas, and to press forward your own. your feelings of self-sufficiency, own inclinations in your youth.

You do not see yourself and your errors. You are not willing to be a learner, but have a great desire to teach. You form opinions of your own, and cling to your peculiar ideas with a persistency that is wearying. You are anxious to carry your points, and your ideas seem of greater importance in your eyes than the experienced judgment of men of moral worth who have been proved in this cause. You have been flattered with the idea that you had ability that would be prized and make you a valuable man; but these qualities have not been tested and proved. You have a [#25p151] one-sided education. You have no inclination or love for the homely, daily duties of life. Your indolence would be a sufficient cause, if there were no other reasons, to disqualify you for the work of the ministry. The cause does not need preachers so much as workers. Of all the avocations of life, there is none that requires such earnest, faithful, persevering, self-sacrificing workers, as the cause of God in these last days.

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The enterprise of obtaining eternal life is above every other consideration. God wants no laggards in his cause. The work of warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come requires earnest men who feel the burden of souls, and who will not be ready to avail themselves of every excuse to avoid burdens or to leave the work. Little discouragements, as unpleasant weather or imaginary infirmities, seem sufficient to Bro. ---- to excuse himself from making exertion. He will

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even appeal to his sympathies; and when duties arise that he does not feel inclined to perform, when his indolence wants to be indulged, he frequently makes the excuse that he is sick; when there is no reason why he should be sick, unless he has indulged his appetite, and through his indolent habits the entire system has become clogged by inaction. He may be in good health if he will observe strictly the laws of life and health, #152 [#25p152] and carry out the light upon health reform in all his habits.

Bro. ---- is not the man for the work in these last days unless he reforms entirely. God does not call for ministers who are too indolent to engage in physical labor, to bear the testing message of warning to the world. He wants workers in his cause. Real, earnest, self-denying workers will accomplish something.

Bro. ----, your teaching the truth to others has been an entire mistake. If God calls a man, he will not make so great a blunder as to take a man of so little experience in practical life, and of so little experience in spiritual things, as you have had. You have ability to talk, as far as this is concerned, but God's cause requires men of consecration and energy. This you may cultivate. These traits you may gain if you will, and you may learn by perseverance to overcome these deficiencies in your character which have increased from your youth, by cultivating the opposite where you now fail. For you merely to go out and speak to the people now and then, is not working for God. There is no real work in this.

Those who labor for God have but just begun the work when they have given a discourse in the desk. After this comes the real labor, in visit- #153 ing from house to [#25p153] house, conversing with members of families, praying with them, and coming close in sympathy to those we wish to benefit.

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It will not detract from the dignity of a minister of Christ to be awake to see the temporal burdens and realize the temporal cares of the families they visit, and to be useful, seeking to relieve where they can, by engaging in physical labor. In this way, they can have a power of influence to disarm opposition and break down prejudice, that they would fail to have if they were in every other respect fully efficient as ministers of Christ.

Our young ministers have not the burden of writing as the older and more experienced ones have. They have not a multiplicity of responsibilities which tax the mind and wear upon the man. But it is these very burdens of care that perfect Christian experience, give moral power, and make strong and efficient men of those engaged in the work of God.

To avoid burdens and disagreeable responsibilities will never make our ministers strong men that can be depended upon in a religious crisis. Many of our young ministers are as weak as babes in the work of God. And some who have been engaged in the work of teaching the truth for years are not yet able workmen who "needeth not to be ashamed." They have not grown^[#25p154] strong in experience by being called^{#154} out by opposing influences. They have excused themselves from that exercise which would strengthen the moral muscles, giving spiritual power. But it is the very experience they need in order to attain to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus. They gain no spiritual power by shirking duties and responsibilities, and giving up to indolence and selfish love of ease and pleasure.

Bro. ---- is not lacking in ability to clothe his ideas in words, but he is lacking in spirituality and true heart holiness. He has not drank deeply himself at the fountain of truth. Had he improved his golden moments in studying the word of God,

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he might now have been an able workman; but he is too indolent to make close application of the mind, and to learn for himself the reasons of our hope. He is content to take material which other minds and other pens have labored to produce, and use their thoughts, which are prepared to his hand, without effort or exertion of mind, careful thought, or prayerful meditation, himself.

Bro. ---- does not love close taxation in the study of the Scriptures, or in physical labor. He prefers an easier way, and as yet knows nothing experimentally of the burden of the work of God. It is easier for him to repeat the thoughts of others than to #25p155 diligently search for the truth himself. It is only by personal effort and close application of the mind, and thorough devotion to the work, that men become competent for the ministry.

Says Christ, Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? The savor of the salt is divine grace. All the efforts made to advance the truth are of but little value unless the Spirit of God accompanies them. You have made child's play of teaching the truth. You have had your mind on your own pleasure and ease, following your inclination. You and your wife have no real sense of the sacredness of the work of God. You both think more of pleasing your fancies, and studying to gratify your wishes for ease and enjoyment, than of engaging in the stern duties of life, especially the responsibilities connected with the work of warning the world of the coming judgment.

You have seen Bro. ---- weighed down with burdens, and wearied with physical labor, but you had so great a love for your ease and desire to maintain your own importance, that you held yourself aloof, excusing yourself from engaging in the duties which some one was obliged to per-

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form. You have passed days in easy indolence without benefiting any one; and then your [#25p156] #156 conscience could permit you without compunction to bring in time mostly spent in indolence, and receive pay from God's treasury.

You have shown in your course that you had not a high sense of sacred things. You have robbed God. And your work should now be to seek to make thorough work of repentance. Do not attempt to teach others. When you are converted, then you may be able to strengthen your brethren. But God has no use for men of your stamp of character in his vineyard. When you get this stamp off, and bear the impress of the Divine, then you may work for the cause of God. You have almost everything to learn, and but a short time to learn these lessons in. God help you to work earnestly and to the point. I have much more written upon general principles, but cannot find time to give this to you at present. E.G.W.

Christian Temperance.

I was shown, Jan. 3, 1875, that none of us realized the perils that attend us at every step. We have a vigilant foe, and yet we are not awake and in earnest in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan, and to overcome his devices. [#25p157] #157

The light of health reform God has permitted to shine upon us in these last days, that we might, by walking in the light, escape many dangers to which we would be exposed. Satan's temptations are powerful upon the human family to lead them to indulge appetite, gratify inclination, and live a life of heedless folly. He presents attractions in a life of personal enjoyment, and in seeking to gratify the animal instincts. Licentiousness prevails to an alarming extent, which is ruining constitutions for life; and not only this, but the

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moral powers are sacrificed. Intemperate indulgences are reducing the vital energies of both body and mind. They place the one that is overcome upon the enemy's ground, where Satan can tempt, annoy, and finally control the will at pleasure.

Those who are overcome on the point of appetite, and use tobacco freely, are debasing their mental and moral powers in servitude of the animal. And when the appetite for spirituous liquor is indulged, the man voluntarily places to his lips that draught which debases him, who was made in the image of God, below the level of the brute. Reason is paralyzed, the intellect is benumbed, the animal passions are excited, and then follow crimes of the most debasing character. If men would become temperate in all things, if they would touch #25p158 not, taste not, and handle not, spirituous liquors and narcotics, reason would hold the reins of government in her hands, and control the animal appetites and passions. In this fast age, the less exciting the food the better. Temperance in all things and firm denial of appetite, is the only path of safety.

Satan comes to man with his overpowering temptations to indulge appetite, as he came to Christ. He well knows his power to overcome man upon this point. He overcame Adam and Eve in Eden upon appetite, and they lost blissful Eden. What accumulated misery and crime have filled our world in consequence of the fall of Adam. Entire cities have been blotted from the face of the earth because of debasing crimes and revolting iniquity, that made them a blot upon the universe. Indulgence of appetite was the foundation of all their sins. Through appetite, Satan controlled the mind and being. Thousands who might have lived have prematurely passed into their graves, physical, mental, and moral wrecks. They

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had good powers, but sacrificed all to indulgence of appetite, which led them to lay the reins upon the neck of lust. Our world is a vast hospital. Vicious habits are increasing.

It is unpleasant, if not dangerous, to remain in a railroad car or in a crowded_[#25p159] room #159 that is not thoroughly ventilated, where the atmosphere is impregnated with the properties of liquor and tobacco. The occupants give evidence by the breath and emanations from the body that the circulating system is filled with the poison of liquor and tobacco. Tobacco-using is a habit which frequently effects the nervous system in a more powerful manner than the use of alcohol. It binds the victim in stronger bands of slavery, and is more difficult to overcome than the intoxicating cup. Body and mind are, in many cases, more thoroughly intoxicated with the use of tobacco than with spirituous liquors; for it is a more subtle poison.

Intemperance is increasing everywhere, notwithstanding the earnest efforts made during the past year to stay its progress. I was shown that the giant power of intemperance will not be controlled with any previous efforts that have been made.

The work of temperance must begin in our families, at our tables. Mothers have an important work to do that they may give to the world, through correct discipline and education, children who will be capable of filling almost any position, and who can also honor and enjoy the duties of domestic life.

The work of the mother is a very important and sacred one. She should teach_[#25p160] her children #160 from the cradle to practice self-denial and habits of self-control. If her time is mostly occupied with the follies existing in this degenerate age, if dress and parties engage her precious time,

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her children fail to receive the education it is essential they should have in order that they may form correct characters. The anxiety of Christian mothers should not be in regard to the external merely, but that her children may have healthy constitutions and good morals.

Many mothers, who are deploring the intemperance which is existing everywhere, do not look deep enough to see the cause. They are daily preparing a variety of tempting dishes and highly-seasoned food, which tempt the appetite and encourage overeating.

The table of our American people are generally prepared in a manner to make drunkards. Appetite is the ruling principle with a large class of persons. Whoever will indulge appetite in eating too often, and not of a healthful quality of food, is preparing himself to yield to the clamors of appetite and passion in proportion to the strength of this propensity. Mothers need to be impressed with their obligation to God and to the world to furnish society with children having well-developed characters. Men and women who come upon ^{#161} upon ^{#25p161} the stage of action with firm principles will be fitted to stand unsullied amid the moral pollutions of this corrupt age. It is the duty of mothers to improve their golden opportunities to correctly educate their children for usefulness and for duty. Their time belongs to their children in a special sense. Precious time should not be devoted to needless work upon garments for display, but in patiently instructing and carefully teaching their children the necessity of self-denial and self-control.

The tables of many professed Christian women are daily set with a variety of dishes which irritate the stomach and produce a feverish condition of the system. Flesh-meats constitute the principal article of food upon the tables of some

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families, until their blood is filled with cancerous and scrofulous humors. They are composed of what they eat. But when suffering and disease come upon them, it is considered an affliction of providence.

We repeat, intemperance commences at our tables. The appetite is indulged until it becomes second nature. By the use of tea and coffee an appetite is formed for tobacco, and this encourages the appetite for liquors.

Many parents, to avoid the task of patiently educating their children to habits of self-denial, and teaching them how to_[#25p162] make a right use of all the blessings of God, indulge them by letting them eat and drink whenever they please. Appetite and selfish indulgence, unless positively restrained, grow with the growth and strengthen with the strength. When these children commence life for themselves, and take their place in society, they are powerless to resist temptation. Moral impurity and gross iniquity are abounding everywhere. The temptation to indulge taste, and to gratify inclination, has not lessened with the increase of years, and youth are governed generally by impulse, and are slaves to appetite. In the glutton, the tobacco devotee, the wine-bibber, and the inebriate, we see the evil results of defective education. #162

When we hear the sad lamentations of Christian men and women over the terrible evils of intemperance, the questions at once arise in the mind: Who have educated the youth, and given them their stamp of character? Who have fostered in them the appetites they have acquired? Who have neglected the most solemn responsibility of molding their minds and forming their characters for usefulness in this life, and for the society of the heavenly angels in the next? A large class of the human beings we everywhere

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#163 meet are a living curse to the world. They live for no other purpose than to indulge appetite and passions, and corrupt soul and body by dissolute habits. This is a terrible rebuke to mothers who are the votaries of fashion, who have lived for dress and for show, and have neglected to beautify their own minds, and to form their own characters after the divine Pattern, and have also neglected the sacred trust committed to them, to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I saw that Satan, through his temptations, was instituting ever-changing fashions, attractive parties and amusements, that mothers may be led to devote their God-given, probationary time to frivolous matters, so that they can have but little opportunity to educate and properly train their children. Our youth want mothers who will teach them from their very cradles to control their passions, to deny their appetite, and to overcome selfishness. They need line upon line, and precept upon precept; here a little and there a little.

Direction was given to the Hebrews how to train their children to avoid the idolatry and wickedness of the heathen nations: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your souls, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes."
#164 And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

We have an earnest desire that woman shall fill the position God originally designed, as her husband's equal. We so much need mothers who are not thus merely in name, but mothers in every sense the word implies. The dignity and importance of woman's mission, and her distinctive

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duties, we may safely say are of a more sacred and holy character than the duties of man.

There are speculations as to woman's rights and duties in regard to voting. Many are in no way disciplined to understand the bearing of important questions. They have lived lives of present gratification because it was the fashion. Women who might develop good intellect, and have true moral worth, are now mere slaves to fashion. They have not breadth of thought, or cultivated intellect. They can talk understandingly of the latest fashion, the styles of dress, this or that party, or the delightful ball. Such women are not prepared to intelligently take a prominent position in political matters. They are mere creatures of fashion and circumstance. Let this order of things be changed. Let ^{#25p165} woman realize the sacredness of her work, and in the strength and fear of God, take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world, and for a fitness for the better world. #165

We address Christian mothers. We entreat that as mothers you feel your responsibility, and that you live not to please yourselves, but to glorify God. Christ pleased not himself, but took upon him the form of a servant. He left the royal courts, he condescended to clothe his divinity with humanity, and to teach by his condescension, and by his example of self-sacrifice, how we may become elevated to the position of sons and daughters of the royal family, children of the Heavenly King. But what are the conditions of these sacred, elevated blessings? "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Christ humbled himself from the highest authority, from the position of one equal with

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#166 God, to the lowest place as servant. His home was in Nazareth, which was proverbial for its wickedness. His parents were among the lowly poor. His trade was that of a carpenter, laboring with his hands to do his part in sustaining^[#25p166] the family. He was for thirty years subject to his parents. Here the life of Christ points us to our duty to be diligent in labor, to provide for and to train the weak and the ignorant. In his lessons of instruction to his disciples, Jesus taught them that his kingdom was not a worldly kingdom where all were striving for the highest position.

Woman is to fill a more sacred and elevated position in the family than the king upon his throne. Her great work is to have her life constitute a living example which she would wish her children to copy. By precept, as well as example, she is to store their minds with useful knowledge, and lead them to self-sacrificing labor for the good of others. The great stimulus to the toiling, burdened mother should be that every child trained aright, who has the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, will have a fitness for Heaven, and will shine in the courts of the Lord.

#167 How few see anything attractive in the true humility of Christ. His humility did not consist in a low estimate of his own character and qualifications, but in his humbling himself to fallen humanity in order to raise them up with him to a higher life. Worldlings are trying to exalt themselves to the position of those^[#25p167] above them, or to become superior to them. But Jesus, the Son of God, humbled himself to elevate man; and the true follower of Christ will seek to meet men where they are, in order to elevate them.

Will mothers of this generation feel the sacredness of their mission, and not try to vie with their wealthy neighbors in appearances, but

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seek to excel them in faithfully performing the work of instructing their children for the better life. If children and youth were trained and educated to habits of self-denial and self-control, if they were taught that they eat to live instead of live to eat, there would be less disease, and less moral corruption. There would be little necessity for temperance crusades, which amount to so little, if the youth who form and fashion society could be constrained to inculcate right principles in regard to temperance; and they would have moral worth and moral integrity to resist, in the strength of Jesus, the pollutions of these last days.

It is a most difficult matter to unlearn the habits of educated appetite which have been indulged through life. The demon of intemperance is not easily conquered. It is of giant strength, and hard to overcome. But let parents begin a crusade against intemperance at their own fire-sides, in their own families, in the principles [#25p168] they teach their children to follow from #168 their very infancy, and they may hope for success. It will pay you, mothers, to use the precious hours which are given you of God in forming, developing, and training the characters of your children, and in teaching them to strictly adhere to the principles of temperance in eating and drinking.

Parents may have transmitted to their children hereditary tendencies to appetite and passion, which will make the work more difficult of educating and training these children to pure and virtuous habits, and to be strictly temperate. If the appetite of children for unhealthy food, for stimulants and narcotics, has been transmitted to them as a legacy from their parents, what a fearfully solemn work rests upon the parents to counteract the evil tendencies which they have given to

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their children. How earnestly and diligently should the parents work in doing their duty, in faith and hope, to their unfortunate offspring.

Parents should make it their first business to understand the laws of life and health, that nothing shall be done by them in the preparation of food, or in any of their habits, which will develop wrong tendencies in their children. How carefully should mothers study that the table be prepared, #169 prepared, #25p169] with the most simple, healthful food, so that the digestive organs may not be weakened and the nervous forces unbalanced, and that the instruction they should give them might not be counteracted by the food placed before them. This food either weakens or strengthens the organs of the stomach, which has much to do in controlling the physical and moral health of the children who are God's blood-bought property. What a sacred trust is committed to parents, to guard the physical and moral constitutions of their children, so that the nervous system be well balanced, and the soul be not endangered. Those who indulge the appetite of their children, and do not control their passions, will see the terrible mistake they have made, in the tobacco-loving, liquor-dealing slave whose senses are benumbed, and whose lips utter falsehoods and profanity.

When parents and children meet at the final reckoning, what a scene will then be presented. The thousands of children who have been slaves to appetite and debasing vice, whose lives are moral wrecks, will stand face to face with the parents who made them what they are. Who but the parents must bear this fearful responsibility? Did the Lord make these youth corrupt? Oh! no. He made them in his image, a little lower than the angels. #170 Who, #25p170] then, has done the fearful work of forming the life character? Who changed their characters so that they do not bear the im-

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press of God, and must be forever separated from his presence as too impure to have any place with the pure angels in a holy Heaven. Were the sins of the parents transmitted to the children in perverted appetites and passions? And was the work completed by the pleasure-loving mother in a neglect to properly train her children according to the pattern given her? All these mothers, just as surely as they exist, will pass in review before God. Satan is ready to do his work, and to present temptations which they have no will or moral power to resist.

Our people are constantly retrograding upon health reform. Satan sees that he cannot have such power of control over them as he could if appetite were indulged. The conscience becomes stupefied under the influence of unhealthful food, the mind becomes darkened, and its susceptibility to impressions is blunted. Because violated conscience is benumbed and becomes insensible, it does not lessen the guilt of the transgressor.

Satan is corrupting minds and destroying souls through his subtle temptations. Will our people see and feel the sin of indulging perverted appetite? Will they^{#25p171} discard tea, coffee, flesh-meats, and all stimulating food, and devote the means expended for these hurtful indulgences to spread the truth? These stimulants do only harm; and yet we see that in the Christian world a large number of those who profess to be Christians are using tobacco. These very men will deplore the evil of intemperance, and while speaking against the use of liquors will eject the juice of tobacco. While a healthy state of mind depends upon the normal condition of the vital forces, what care should be exercised that neither stimulus nor narcotics be used.

Tobacco is a slow, insidious poison, and its effects are more difficult to cleanse from the

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system than liquor. What power can the tobacco devotee have to correct the progress of intemperance? There must be a revolution in our world upon the subject of tobacco before the ax is laid at the root of the tree. And still we press the subject closer. Tea and coffee are fostering the appetite which is developing for stronger stimulus, as tobacco and liquor. And we come still closer home to the daily meals, the tables spread in Christian households. Is temperance practiced in all things? Are the reforms carried out there which are essential to health and happiness? Every true #172 Christian will have control of his[#25p172] appetite and passions. Unless he is free from the bondage and slavery of appetite, he cannot be a true, obedient servant of Jesus Christ. It is the indulgence of appetite and passions which makes the truth of none effect upon the heart. It is impossible for the spirit and power of the truth to sanctify a man, soul, body, and spirit, when he is controlled by appetite and passions.

Cannot Come Down.

"I am doing a great work," says Nehemiah, "so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

I was shown, Jan. 3, 1875,* that God's people should not relax their watchfulness, or their vigilance, for one moment. Satan is upon our track. He is determined to overcome God's commandment-keeping people, with his temptations. If we give no place to the devil, but resist his devices steadfast in the faith, we shall have strength to depart from all iniquity. Those who keep the commandments of God will be a power in the land, if they live up to their light and their privileges. They may be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation. We shall not have

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ease, that we_[#25p173] may cease watchfulness and prayer. As the time draws near for Christ to be revealed in the clouds of Heaven, Satan's temptations will be brought to bear with greater power upon those who keep God's commandments, for he knows that his time is short. #173

*Note: It is a pleasure here to state relative to the gracious manifestation of the Holy Spirit to Mrs. White, on the evening of Jan. 3, 1875, that she had been sick with terrible influenza, and confined to her room and bed for one week, till the physicians at the Health Institute became anxious in her case. In this condition she followed the directions of the epistle of James, fifth chapter, and after a great stretch of faith, like the man in the gospel, stretching forth his withered hand, she reached the point of deliverance from pain and sickness, and was soon in vision, which lasted ten minutes. She then dressed for meeting, and walked to the church, and spoke to the crowded assembly twenty minutes, and walked home. Since that time she has written very much, and has spoken to the people with freedom, and is now preparing for the long journey to the Pacific Coast. J.W.

The work of Satan will be carried on through agents. Ministers who hate the law of God will employ any means to lead souls from their loyalty. Our bitterest foes will be among the first-day Adventists. Their hearts are fully determined to make war against those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. This class feel that it is a virtue to talk, to write, and act out, the most bitter hatred against us. We need not look for fair dealing, or for justice, at their hands. Many of them are inspired by Satan with insane madness against those who are keeping the commandments of God. We will be

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maligned and misrepresented, all our motives and actions will be misjudged, and our characters will be attacked. The wrath of the dragon will be manifested in this manner. But I saw that we should not be in the least discouraged. Our strength is in Jesus, our advocate. If we, in humility and humble trust, hold fast to God, he will #174 give us grace, and heavenly wisdom to [#25p174] withstand all the wiles of Satan, and to come off victors.

In my recent view I saw that it will not increase our influence, or bring us into favor with God, to retaliate or come down from our great work to their level in meeting their slanders. There are those who will resort to any species of deception and gross falsehood, to gain their object and deceive souls, and to cast stigma upon the law of God and those who love to obey his commandments. They will repeat the most inconsistent and vile falsehoods, over and over, until they make themselves believe that they are truth. These are the strongest arguments they have to use against the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. We should not allow our feelings to control us, and divert us from the work of warning the world.

The case of Nehemiah was presented before me. He was engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem, and the enemies of God were determined that the walls should not be built. "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and to fight #175 against Jerusalem, and to hinder it." [#25p175]

In this case, a spirit of hatred and opposition to the Hebrews formed the bond of union,

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and created the mutual sympathy among different bodies of men, who otherwise might war against each other. This will illustrate what we frequently witness in our day in the existing union of men of different denominations to oppose the present truth, whose only bond seems to be that which is dragonic in its nature, manifesting hatred and bitterness against the remnant who keep the commandments of God. This is especially seen in the first, no-day, and all-days-alike Adventists, who seem to be famous in hating and slandering each other, when they can spare time from their efforts to misrepresent, slander, and in every way abuse Seventh-day Adventists. "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them."

We are in constant danger of becoming self-sufficient, relying upon our own wisdom, and not making God our strength. Nothing disturbs Satan so much as our not being ignorant of his devices. If we feel our dangers, we shall feel the need of prayer as did Nehemiah, and, like him, we shall obtain the sure defense that will give us security in peril. If we are careless and indifferent, we shall surely be be_[#25p176] overcome by Satan's devices. We must be vigilant. While, like Nehemiah, we resort to prayer, taking all our perplexities and burdens to God, we should not feel that we have nothing to do. We are to watch as well as to pray. We should watch the work of our adversaries, lest they gain advantage in deceiving souls. We should, in the wisdom of Christ, make efforts to defeat their purposes, while, at the same time, we do not suffer them to call us from our great work. Truth is stronger than error. Righteousness will prevail over wrong. #176

The Lord's people are seeking to heal the breach which has been made in the law of God. "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old

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waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."[#25p177]

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This disturbs the enemies of our faith, and every means is employed to hinder us in our work. And yet the broken down wall is going steadily up. The world is being warned, and many are turning away from trampling under their feet the Sabbath of Jehovah. God is in this work, and man cannot stop it. The angels of God are working with the efforts of God's faithful servants, and steadily the work advances.

We shall meet with opposition of every description, as did the builders of the walls of Jerusalem; but if we watch and pray, and work as they did, God will fight our battles for us and give us precious victories. Nehemiah "clave unto the Lord and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which the Lord commanded Moses, and the Lord was with him."

Messengers were sent repeatedly, soliciting a conference with Nehemiah, but he refused to meet them. Bold threats were made of what they proposed to do, and messengers were sent to harangue the people engaged in their work of building. They presented flattering inducements, and promised them a freedom from restraint, and wonderful privileges, if they would unit their in-

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terest with them, and^[#25p178] cease their work of #178 building the walls of Jerusalem.

But the people were commanded not to engage in controversy with their enemies, and to answer them not a word, that no advantage of words might be given them. Threatenings and ridicule was resorted to. They said, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he will even break down their stone wall." Sanballat "was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews." Nehemiah prays, "Hear, O our God; for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head."

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand."

We shall receive the most fierce opposition from the Adventists who oppose the law of God. But, like the builders of the walls of Jerusalem, we should not be diverted and hindered from our work by reports, by messengers desiring discussion or controversy, or by intimidating threats, the publication of falsehoods, or any of the devices Satan may instigate. Our answer should be, ^{#179}^[#25p179] We are engaged in a great work, and we cannot come down. We shall sometimes be perplexed to know what course we should pursue, to preserve the honor of the cause of God, and to vindicate his truth.

The course of Nehemiah should have a strong bearing upon our minds, as to the manner of meeting this kind of opponents. We should take all these things to the Lord in prayer, as Nehemiah made his supplication to God while his own

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spirit was humbled. He clung to God with unwavering faith. This is the course we should pursue. Time is too precious for the servants of God to devote to vindicating their character blackened by those who hate the Sabbath of the Lord. We should move forward with unwavering confidence, believing that God will give to his truth great and precious victories. In humility, meekness, and purity of life, relying upon Jesus, we shall carry a convincing power with us that we have the truth.

We do not understand the faith and confidence we may have in God, the great blessings which faith will give us, as is our privilege. An important work is before us. We are to obtain a moral fitness for Heaven. Our words and our example are to tell upon the world. Angels of God #180 are actively engaged in ministering to the [#25p180] children of God. Precious promises are upon record on condition of our obedience to God's requirements. Heaven is full of the richest of blessings, all waiting to be communicated to us. If we feel our need, and come to God in sincerity and in earnest faith, we shall be brought into close connection with Heaven, and shall be channels of light to the world.

The warning needs to be often sounded, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking #181 whom he may devour." E.G.W. [#25p181]

Leadership.

Text.—"One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Matthew 23:8.

Jesus addressed these words to the twelve, in the hearing of the multitude. And while they were a rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees, they were also designed to impress the disciples with the great truth, that should be felt in all

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coming time, that Christ is the head and leader of the church.

The prophetic eye of the Son of God could look forward to the close of the Christian age, and take in at a glance the errors and dangers of the church. And we may look back over her sad history and see that strict adherence to the principle set forth in the text has been important to the purity of the church, while departure from it has marked the progress of different forms of corrupted Christianity. The most prominent among these is the Roman church, which has set one man over the church whose claims to infallibility are sustained by that corrupt body.

In the discussion of the subject of leadership, we propose to bring out evidence from the words of Christ, and from the teaching and practices of the early apostles, that Christ is the leader of his people, and that the work and office of leadership has not been laid upon any one person, at any one time, in the Christian age. And for the views presented in this discourse we wish to be alone held responsible. [#25p182]

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And at no time during his public ministry does Christ intimate that any one of his disciples should be designated as their leader. He does say, however, "that he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Matthew 23:11. And on the occasion of submitting the great commission to his first ministers, to be perpetuated in the Christian ministry to the close of the age, Christ gives the pledge that ever has been and ever will be the supporting staff of every true minister, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Matthew 28:20.

Christ's ministers have ever had a worldwide message. "Go ye therefore and teach all na-

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tions.” And wherever their footprints have been seen upon the mountains, or in the valleys, there Christ has been by the ministration of his holy angels, and the teachings of the Holy Ghost. “I am with you” is the soul-inspiring promise to every true minister. Christ proposes to lead his servants, and it is their privilege to approach the throne of grace, and receive from their sovereign Leader fresh rations, and orders direct from headquarters.

The transfiguration was designed, not only to illustrate the future kingdom of glory, after the resurrection and change to immortality, but to impress the church with the glory of Christ as her head and leader. No part of that grand scene could be more impressive than the bright cloud that overshadowed them, and the “voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” Matthew 17:5.

#183 And there is no intimation that the apostles^[#25p183] of Christ designated one of their number above another as their leader. Paul would have the Corinthians follow him only as he followed Christ. He says, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.” 1 Corinthians 11:1, 2. Paul, so far from claiming to be the head of the church at Corinth, and securing their obedience, sympathy, and benevolence, on this ground, would shake them off from seeking to be directed by him. He exalts Christ as their leader in the first sentence of the very next verse. “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ.”

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Paul enjoins obedience and submission in his epistle to the Hebrews. But he does not require this in particular for himself, or for any other one who may be regarded as the chosen leader of the church. He pleads in behalf of all faithful ministers in these words: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end [object or subject] of their conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Chap. 13:7, 8. Again he says in verse 17 of the same chapter: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."

The apostle exalts Christ as the great head of the church, and the only one to whom she should look for leadership, in Hebrews 12:1, 2. He would^[#25p184] have the church benefited by the experiences of the heroes of faith, mentioned in the eleventh chapter, called in the first verse of the twelfth a cloud of witnesses. But he faithfully guards the church against looking back to them with a spirit of idolatry, or accepting any man as their leader or pattern of the Christian life, in these three words: "Looking unto Jesus." Paul says: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." #184

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All true ministers are Christ's ambassadors * "Now then we are ambassadors [ambassadors] for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20. In their ministry they are to represent the doctrine of Christ, and the interests of his cause in this world. They surrender their own judgment and will to him who has sent them. No man can be Christ's ambassador until he has made a complete surrender of his right of private judgment to Christ. Neither can any man properly represent Christ who surrenders his judgment to his fellow-

#185 man. [#25p185]

*An ambassador is "A minister of the highest rank employed by one prince or state, at the court of another, to manage the public concerns of his own prince or state, and representing the power and dignity of his sovereign." Webster.

The apostle compares two faithful leaders in his epistle to the Hebrews. Are they Moses and Peter? or Moses and Paul? or Moses and Luther? or Moses and Wesley? or Moses and Miller? We need not say that they are Moses and Christ.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we,

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if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Hebrews 3:1-6.

The foregoing expresses our solemn convictions relative to the leadership of Christ, and the relation which his ministers sustain to their great Leader, to one another, and to the church. But too many have left the great question of leadership here, with the truth expressed only in part. They have passed over the teachings of Christ and his apostles, relative to discipline, and the proper means of securing unity in the ministry and in the church, and do not let them have their proper qualifying bearing upon the subject. This has opened a wide door for men to enter the ministry who had not submitted their judgment and will to Christ as their leader, while at the same time they take the broadest ground, and ^{#25p186} exercise the greatest freedom relative to the right of private judgment. Greed power has been called to the rescue in vain. It has been truly said that “the American people are a nation of lords.” In a land of boasted freedom of thought and of conscience, like ours, church force cannot produce unity; but has caused divisions, and has given rise to religious sects and parties almost innumerable. And there are not a few professing Christians who reject church organization on account of the use that has been made of creed and church power. Some of these, however, in their mistaken zeal, in the advocacy of religious freedom, are disposed to trample on the rights of others, and use their boasted “liberty for a cloak of maliciousness.” #186

The remedy, however, for these deplorable evils is found in the proper use of the simple organization, and church order set forth in the New Testament Scriptures, and in the means Christ has ordained for the unity and perfection of the church. That he has appointed officers, and also

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other means by which to lead his people, and for the good order, purity, and unity of the church is abundantly proved by such texts as 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11-13. And no man can show proof that these have been removed from the church by the authority that placed them there, or give any good reasons why they should be removed.

But here we wish it distinctly understood that officers were not ordained in the Christian church, to order, or to command the church, and "to lord it over God's heritage." In the case of difference of opinion that arose in some of the ^{#187} [25p187] primitive churches relative to circumcision and the keeping of the law of Moses, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, the apostles and elders at Jerusalem acted as counselors, in a manner to give room for the Holy Ghost to act as Judge. Christ will lead his people, if they will be led. He came into that assembly by his Spirit, and found apostles, elders, and all the brotherhood in a teachable frame of mind and at once led them out of their difficulties. In this case, at an early date in the Christian church the true doctrine of the leadership of Christ and the equality of the ministerial brotherhood stands the test, and the triumphant record is immortalized among the acts of inspired men.

The report of that meeting at Jerusalem to settle a festering difficulty, commences on this wise: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." And the brethren which were from among the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria and Celia, "rejoiced for the consolation." Differences settled in this way frequently seem more than settled, and generally remain settled; while those dis-

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posed of by the exercise of mere church authority are seldom really settled at all.

But when we say that the ambassador for Christ cannot yield his judgment to any but Christ, we do not mean that a young minister, or any one whose ministry has been marked with serious imperfections, and even grave mistakes, should exalt his opinion above his brethren, and turn away his ear from their entreaties and admonitions, under the plea that Christ is his leader. And, on the other hand, the minister who submits his ministry to a superior, the bishop, the president, ~~[#25p188]~~ or one in authority in the church, to be sent out and directed in his ministry, cannot in the fullest sense be Christ's ambassador. Again we repeat the golden text: "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." #188

Between the two extremes we find the grand secret of unity and efficiency in the ministry and in the church of God. Our attention is called to this in a most solemn appeal from the venerable apostle Peter to the elders of his time. "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. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." 1 Peter 5:1-6.

When Christ's ministers sustain the relation to each other as exhorted in the foregoing, Christ, their glorious head and leader, will be with them in power, and lead them on in unity and in love.

In painful contrast with the foregoing are those ecclesiastical conferences and assemblies of our time, where ministers distinguish themselves by a spirit of strife and debate, and in the use of

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language which would be regarded as ungentlemanly, not to say unchristian, in all other respectable associations.

We affirm that there is not a single apology in all the book of God for disharmony of sentiment or spirit in the church of Christ. The means are ample to secure the high standard of unity expressed in these words of Paul: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that
#189 [#25p189] there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Corinthians 1:10. Again he appeals to the church at Rome: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:5, 6.

We can find no better words to close our remarks upon this subject than the triumphant appeal of the great apostle. Hear him, as he sets forth the proper condition of mind of the true disciple, and the oneness and efficiency of the ample means to secure the unity and perfection of the church of Christ.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:1-6.

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The more definite means ordained in the church of God for her perfection and unity, should by no means be overlooked. Let the reader bear in mind that these were all given at the same time, for the same purpose, and all to cease at the same time. Have a part ceased? all have ceased. Do a portion continue? then [#25p190] all continue. #190 Paul speaks of Christ's endowment of the church thus: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Verses 11-13.

The foregoing is taken from a discourse upon the subject of leadership which appeared in several numbers of *The Signs of the Times*, and later in *The Advent Review*. It was written only a few weeks after the essay referred to by Mrs. W. was published, at a time when the writer knew not but that he was the only person who rejected the leading ideas of the essay, especially that part of it which applied the subject to himself. Let the following statements be carefully considered:—

- 1.** I have never professed to be a leader in any other sense than that which makes all of Christ's ministers leaders.
- 2.** At the very commencement of the work, when organization was impossible, it was necessary that some one should lead out until those appointed by an organized body could act officially. I doubt not but God called me to this work.
- 3.** In my labors with Mrs. W. in correcting errors, exposing wrongs, and establishing order in the church, it was my duty to

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stand firm with her; And because I could not be induced to yield to the demands of error, but stood firmly [#25p191] for the right, I was charged with being stubborn, and having a desire to rule.

4. I do affirm that I have ever been anxious to counsel with those associated with me in office, and in the ministry, and that the statements, charging me with a desire to lead, or to rule, have originated with those who have tried in vain to turn me from the course which I had the best evidence was right,

5. The world is indebted to these persons for the falsehoods in circulation which represent me as leader of our people in unfavorable light. And now, at this late date, I have no idea of virtually acknowledging the old falsehoods which have followed me, and which I have firmly denied for the last quarter of a century by indorsing the aforesaid essay.

6. I now see my mistake in not casting off all extra cares and burdens at the time we became an organized people. I should then have refused to act a more prominent part than those associated with me in office. And it would have been commendable liberality in my brethren associated with me if they had been most prominent, in view of the jealousies of those who had murmured against me for the prominent course I had necessarily taken before organization.

7. I am now very grateful that the matter is fully settled in my own mind. A great burden has fallen off from me, and in its place peace and hope have come to my mind such as I have not enjoyed for a long

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time. This brings me nearer to the cause in all its departments, with feelings of tenderest care and love for it, and for my dear [#25p192] brethren. And if at any time my #192 people in any place feel that they need to counsel with me, I shall be happy to assist them according to my ability; provided they will not make me responsible for their action on my advice. No man, filling any responsible position, should act upon the advice of another, unless he can make such advice a part of his own mind, so as to fully act upon his own judgment.

8. What there is left of me is most devoutly dedicated to the cause. But from this time forward, I must be allowed to follow the convictions of my own mind. The General Conference is the highest authority God has on the earth. The members of the Conference Committee may err in some things. But in view of the authority Christ has invested in the church, and of the tender care he has had for our cause, the only sane course for our ministers, and for our people, is to respect the decisions of our General Conference. And while it may be admitted that age, experience, successful managements, and the especial benefits of social relations, give me the privilege of unburdened freedom, it shall be my pleasure, while I claim the sympathy and co-operation of Seventh-day Adventists, to respect our organization, and accept the decisions of the General Conference.

James White.

Testimony For The Church No. 26

By Mrs. E. G. White

The Pacific Press Oakland, California Castro bet.
Eleventh and Twelfth

1876

Introduction

The Testimonies to the Church, now twenty-six in number, cover a period of twenty years. These have ranged, in point of size, from a sixteen-page tract to a pamphlet of two hundred and eight pages. In these, a voice has been appealing to the people of God, in one straightforward line for a score of years. This voice has in a uniform manner given warning of the deceitfulness of riches, and the dangers of the love and spirit of this world. It has also cried out against the prevailing sins of our evil time.

On the other hand, we recognize the voice of the dear Shepherd comforting the little flock, and encouraging them to faithfulness in their Christian lives and sacrifices in his cause, in view of immortal rewards to be given at the second coming of Christ.

The character of God, of his law, his Son, the Sacred Scriptures, and the way of holiness have been represented in a uniform manner for this period of twenty years. This also may be said of Satan, sin, and the path of death.

#4 Twenty years since, the idea of Testimonies from God to the church, through a frail, [#26p4] humble instrument, was regarded very questionable; a few believed fully by reason of attending evidences. Many, however, balancing the matter in their minds like Gamaliel, said, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." Here is a work that has been subjected to the most rigid criticisms, and the most violent persecutions for the long period of twenty years, and yet remains

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unchanged. Had this work originated in the mind of an unsophisticated woman, it would have been forced out of its course long since and brought to confusion and to naught.

Let the following pages be read in the fear of God. Those who cannot feel the force of the great truths stated, and the importance of the admonitions given, at the first reading, should re-read this book upon their knees. Many who will read these pages of reproof, have read others of a similar character without taking heed to them. Their minds are consequently blinded, and their hearts are well nigh as cold and unfeeling as a stone. Those who can read these pages unmoved, should read them again and again with fervent prayer until they do feel deeply these admonitions from the Lord to his waiting people. J.W. Oakland, Cal., 1876.

Testimony For The Church.^[#26p5]

#5

Bible Biographies.

The lives recorded in the Bible are authentic histories of actual individuals. From Adam down through successive generations, to the times of the apostles, we have the plain, unvarnished account of what actually occurred, and the genuine experience of real characters. It is a subject of wonder to many, that inspired history should narrate facts in the lives of good men that tarnish their moral characters. Infidels seize upon these sins with great satisfaction, and hold their perpetrators up to ridicule.

The inspired writers did not testify to falsehoods, fearing that the pages of Sacred History would be clouded by the record of human frailties and faults. The scribes of God wrote as they were dictated by the Holy Spirit, having no control of the work themselves. They penned the literal truth, and stern, forbidding facts are re-

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vealed for reasons that our finite minds cannot fully comprehend.

#6 It is one of the best evidences of the authenticity of the Scriptures, that the truth is not glossed over, nor the sins of its chief [#26p6] characters suppressed. Many will urge that it is an easy matter to give a relation of what has occurred in an ordinary life. But it is a proven fact that it is a human impossibility to give an impartial history of a contemporary; and it is almost as difficult to narrate, without deviating from the exact truth, the story of any person or people with whose career we have become acquainted. The human mind is so subject to prejudice that it is almost impossible for it to treat the subject impartially. Either the faults of the person under review stand out in glaring relief, or the virtues shine with undimmed luster, just as the writer is prejudiced for or against him. However impartial the historian may design to be, all critics will agree that it is a very difficult matter to be truly so.

But divine unction, lifted above the weaknesses of humanity, tells the simple, naked truth. How many biographies have been written of faultless Christians, who, in their ordinary home life and church relations, shone as examples of immaculate piety. No blemish marred the beauty of their holiness, no fault is recorded to remind us they were of the common clay, and subject to the ordinary temptations of humanity.

#7 Yet, had the pen of inspiration written their histories, how different would they have appeared. There would have been revealed human weaknesses, struggles with selfishness, bigotry and pride, hidden sins perhaps, and the continual warfare between the spirit and [#26p7] the flesh. Even private journals do not reveal on their pages the writer's sinful deeds. Sometimes the conflicts with evil are recorded, but usually only when the

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right has gained the victory. But they may contain a faithful account of praiseworthy acts and noble endeavors, this, too, when the writer honestly intends to keep a faithful journal of his life. It is next to a human impossibility to lay open our faults for the possible inspection of our friends.

Had our good Bible been written by uninspired persons it would have presented quite a different appearance and would have been a discouraging study to erring mortals contending with natural frailties and the temptations of a wily foe. But, as it is, we have a correct record of the religious experiences of marked characters in Bible history. Men whom God favored, and intrusted with great responsibilities, were sometimes overcome by temptation and committed sins, even as we of the present day strive, waver, and frequently fall into error. But is encouraging to our desponding hearts to know that through God's grace they could gain fresh vigor to rise again above their evil natures, and remembering this we are ready to renew the conflict ourselves.

The murmurings of ancient Israel and their rebellious discontent, are recorded for our benefit as well as the mighty miracles wrought in their favor, and the punishment of their idolatry and ingratitude. The example [#26p8] of ancient Israel is given as a warning to the people of God that they may avoid unbelief and escape his wrath. If the iniquities of the Hebrews had been omitted from the Sacred Record, and only their virtues recounted, their history would fail to teach us the lesson that it does. #8

Infidels, and the lovers of sin excuse their crimes by citing the wickedness of men of whom God gave authority in olden times. They argue that if these holy men yielded to temptation and committed sins, it is not to be wondered at that they too should be guilty of wrong-doing; and inti-

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mate that they are not so bad after all, since they have such illustrious examples of iniquity before them.

The principles of justice required a faithful narration of facts for the benefit of all who should ever read the Sacred Record. Here we discern the evidences of divine wisdom. We are required to obey the law of God, and we are not only instructed as to the penalty of disobedience, but we have, narrated for our benefit and warning, the history of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the sad results of their disobedience of God's commands. The account is full and explicit. The law given to man in Eden is recorded together with the penalty accruing in case of its disobedience. Then follows the story of the temptation and fall, and the punishment inflicted upon our erring parents.

They example is given us as a warning #9 against disobedience, that we may be sure [#26p9] the wages of sin is death, that God's retributive justice never fails, and that he exacts from his creatures a strict regard for his commandments. When the law of Sinai was proclaimed, how definite was the penalty annexed, how sure was punishment to follow the transgression of that law, and how plain are the cases recorded in evidence of that fact.

The pen of inspiration, true to its task, tells us of the sins that overcame Noah, Lot, Moses, Abraham, David and Solomon, while even Elijah's strong spirit sank under temptation during his fearful trial. Jonah's disobedience and Israel's idolatry are faithfully recorded. Peter's denial of Christ, the sharp contention of Paul and Barnabas, the failings and infirmities of the prophets and apostles, are all laid bare by the Holy Ghost, who lifts the veil from the human heart. There lay before us the lives of the believers, with all their faults and follies, and they are

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intended as a lesson to all the generations following them. If they had been without foible they would have been more than human, and our sinful natures would despair of ever reaching such a point of excellence. But, seeing where they struggled and fell, took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are led to be encouraged, and press on over the obstacles that degenerate nature places in our way.

God has been ever faithful to punish crime. He sent his prophets to warn the [#26p10] #10 guilty, denounce their sins, and pronounce judgment upon them. Those who question why the word of God brings out the sins of his people in so plain a manner for scoffers to deride and saints to deplore, should consider that it was all written for their instruction, that they might avoid the evils recorded, but imitate the righteousness of those who served the Lord.

We need just such lessons as the Bible gives us, for with the revelation of sin is recorded the retribution following. The sorrow and penitence of the guilty and the wailing of the sin-sick soul, come to us from the past telling us that man was then, as now, in need of the pardoning mercy of God. It teaches us that while he is a punisher of crime, he pities and forgives the repenting sinner. In his providence the Lord has seen fit to teach and warn his people in various ways. By direct command, by the Sacred Writings, by the spirit of prophecy has he made known unto them his will.

My work has been to speak plainly of the faults and errors of God's people. Because the sins of certain individuals have been brought to light, it is no evidence that they are worse in the sight of the Lord than many whose failings are unrecorded. But I have been shown that it was not mine to choose my work, but humbly to obey

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the will of God. The errors and wrong-doings in the lives of professed Christians are recorded for the instruction of those who are liable to fall #11 [#26p11] into the same temptations. The experience of one serves as a beacon light to warn others off the rocks of danger.

Thus the snares and devices of Satan are revealed, the importance of perfecting Christian character, and the means by which this result may be obtained. Thus God indicates what is necessary to secure his blessing. There is a disposition on the part of many to let rebellious feelings arise if their peculiar sins are reproved. The spirit of this generation is, Speak unto us smooth things. But the Spirit of Prophecy speaks only truth.

Iniquity abounds, and the love of many who profess to follow Christ waxes cold. They are blind to the wickedness of their own hearts, and do not feel their weak and helpless condition. God in his mercy lifts the veil and shows them there is an eye behind the scenes that discerns their hidden guilt and the motives of their actions.

The sins of the popular churches are whitewashed over. Many of the members indulge in the grossest vices and are steeped in iniquity. Babylon is fallen and has become the cage of every foul and hateful bird! The most revolting sins of the age find a shelter beneath the cloak of Christianity. Many proclaim the law of God abolished, and surely their lives are in keeping with their faith. If there is no law then there is no transgression, and therefore no sin, for sin is the transgression of the law.

The carnal mind is at enmity with God #12 [#26p12] and rebels against his will. Let it once throw off the yoke of obedience and it slips unconsciously into the lawlessness of crime. Iniquity abounds among those who talk grandly of a pure

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and perfect religious liberty. Their conduct is abhorrent to the Lord, and they are co-workers with the adversary of souls. The light of revealed truth is turned from their sight, and the beauties of holiness are but as shadows to them.

It is astounding what flimsy foundations very many build their hopes of Heaven upon. They rail at the law of the Infinite One as if they would defy him and make his word null. Satan even, with his knowledge of the divine law, would not dare to make the speeches which some law-hating ministers do from the pulpit, yet he exults in their blasphemy.

I have been shown what man is without a knowledge of the will of God. Crimes and iniquity fill up the measure of his life. But when the Spirit of God reveals to man the full meaning of the law, what a change takes place in his heart. Like Belshazzar he reads intelligently the hand-writing of the Almighty and conviction takes possession of his soul. The thunders of God's word startle him from his lethargy and he calls for mercy in the name of Jesus. And to that humble plea God always listens with a willing ear. He never turns the penitent away comfortless.

The Lord has seen fit to give me a view of the needs and errors of his people. Painful [#26p13] #13 though it has been to me, I have faithfully set before the offenders their faults and the means of remedying them, according to the dictates of the Spirit of God. This has, in many instances, excited the tongue of slander, and embittered against me those for whom I have labored and suffered. But I have not been turned from my course because of this. God gave me my work, and, upheld by his sustaining strength, I have performed the painful duties he has set before me. Thus has the Spirit of God pronounced warn-

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ings and judgments, withholding not however the sweet promise of mercy.

If God's people would recognize his dealings with them, and accept his teachings, they would find a straight path for their feet, and a light to guide them through darkness and discouragement. David learned wisdom from God's dealings with him, and bowed in humility beneath the chastisement of the Most High. The faithful portrayal of his true state by the prophet Nathan, made David acquainted with his own sins and aided him to put them away. He accepted counsel meekly, and humiliated himself before God. "The law of the Lord," he exclaims, "is perfect, converting the soul."

Repentant sinners have no cause to despair because they are reminded of their transgressions and warned of their danger. These very efforts in their behalf show how much God loves them and desires that they shall be saved. They #14 have only to follow his counsel [#26p14] and do his will to inherit eternal life. God sets before his erring people their sins that they may behold them in all their enormity, under the light of divine truth. It is then their duty to renounce them forever.

God is as powerful to save from sin today as he was in the times of the Patriarchs, of David, and the prophets and apostles of Bible times. The multitude of cases recorded in Sacred History, where God has delivered his people from their own iniquities, should make the Christian of this time eager to receive divine instruction, and zealous to perfect a character that will bear the close inspection of the Judgment.

Bible history stays the fainting heart with the hope of God's mercy. We need not despair when we see that others have struggled through discouragements like unto our own, fallen into

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temptations, even as we have done, yet recovered their ground and been blessed of God. The words of inspiration comfort and cheer the erring soul. Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice and be overcomers in the name of Jesus. Humanity is humanity the world over, from the time of Adam down to the present generation, and the love of God through all the ages is without a parallel. [#26p15] #15

Unity of the Church.

Dear Brethren:--As all the different members of the human system unite to form the entire body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole.

The advancement of our church is retarded by the wrong course of its members. Uniting with the church, although an important and necessary act, does not make one a Christian or ensure salvation. We can not secure a title to Heaven by having our names enrolled upon the church books, while our hearts are alienated from Christ. We should be his faithful representatives on earth, working in unison with him.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God." We should keep in mind this holy relationship and do nothing to bring dishonor upon our Father's cause.

Our profession is an exalted one. As Sabbath-keeping Adventists, we profess to obey all God's commandments, and are looking for the coming of our Redeemer. A most solemn message

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of warning has been intrusted to God's faithful few. We should show by our words and works that we recognize the great responsibility laid upon us. Our light should shine so clearly that others can see that we glorify the Father in our daily lives; that we are connected with [#26p16] Heaven and are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; that when he shall appear in power and great glory, we shall be like him.

We should every one feel our individual responsibility as members of the visible church and workers in the vineyard of the Lord. We should not wait for our brethren, who are frail as ourselves, to help us along, for our precious Saviour has invited us to join ourselves to him, and unite our weakness with his strength, our ignorance to his wisdom, our unworthiness to his merits.

None of us can occupy a neutral position, our influence will tell for or against. We are active agents for Christ or for the enemy. We either gather with Jesus or scatter abroad. True conversion is a radical change. The very drift of the mind and bent of the heart should be turned, and life become new again in Christ.

God is leading out a people to stand in perfect unity upon the platform of eternal truth. Christ gave himself to the world "that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." This refining process is designed to purge the church from all unrighteousness and the spirit of discord and contention; that they may build up instead of tear down, and concentrate their energies on the great work before them. God designs that his people should all come into the faith. The prayer of Christ to his Father, just prior to his crucifixion, was that his disciples might be one, even as [#26p17] he was one with the Father, that the world might believe that he had

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sent him. This most touching and wonderful prayer reaches down the ages, even to our day, for his words were, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

How earnestly should the professed followers of Christ seek to answer this prayer in their lives. Many do not realize the sacredness of their church relations, and are loth to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church; and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice.

Those who hold responsible positions in the church may have their faults in common with other people, and may err in their decisions; but notwithstanding this, the church of Christ on earth has given to them an authority that cannot be lightly esteemed. Christ, after his resurrection, delegated power unto his church, saying, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

A relation to the church is not to be easily canceled; yet some professed followers of Christ will threaten to leave the church when their path is crossed, or their voice has not the controlling influence which they think it deserves. True, in leaving the church, they would be the greatest sufferers themselves, ^[#26p18] for in withdrawing ^{#18} beyond the pale of its influence, they subject themselves to the full temptations of the world.

Every believer should be whole-hearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest, and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it, in preference to himself, it can do far better without him. It is in

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the power of all to do something for the cause of God. There are those who spend a large amount for needless luxuries, and to gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church. They are willing to receive all the benefits of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills. Those who really feel a deep interest in the advancement of the cause, will not hesitate to invest money in the enterprise whenever and wherever it is needed.

They should also feel it a solemn duty to illustrate in their characters the teachings of Christ, being at peace one with another and moving in perfect harmony as an undivided whole. They should defer their individual judgment to the judgment of the body of the church. Many are living for themselves alone. They look upon their lives with great complacency, flattering themselves that they are blameless, when in fact they are doing nothing for God, and are living in direct opposition to his expressed word. The observance
#19 of external forms will never meet the [#26p19] great want of the human soul. A profession of Christ is not enough to stand the test of the day of Judgment. There should be a perfect trust in God, a childlike dependence upon his promises, and an utter consecration of self to his will.

God has always tried his people in the furnace of affliction, in order to prove them firm and true, and purge them from all unrighteousness. After Abraham and his son had borne the severest test that could be imposed upon them, God spoke through his angel unto Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." This great act of faith causes the character of Abraham to shine forth with remarkable luster. It forcibly illustrates his perfect confidence in the Lord, from

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whom he withheld nothing, not even his son of promise.

There is nothing too precious for us to give to Jesus. If we return to him the talents of means he has intrusted to our keeping, he will give more into our hands. Every effort we make for Christ will be rewarded by him; and every duty we perform in his name will minister to our own happiness. God surrendered his dearly-beloved Son to the agonies of the crucifixion, that all who believe on him should become one through the name of Jesus. When Christ made so great a sacrifice to save men and bring them into unity one with another, even as he was united with the [#26p20] Father, what sacrifice is too great for his followers to make, in order to preserve that unity? #20

If the world sees a perfect harmony existing in the church of God, it will be a powerful evidence to them in favor of the Christian religion. Dissensions, unhappy differences, and petty church-trials dishonor our Redeemer. All these may be avoided if self is surrendered to God, and the followers of Jesus obey the voice of the church. Unbelief suggests that individual independence increases our importance, that it is weak to yield our own ideas of what is right and proper, to the verdict of the church. But to yield to such feelings and views is unsafe, and will bring us to anarchy and confusion. Christ saw that unity and Christian fellowship were necessary to the cause of God, therefore he enjoins it upon his disciples. And the history of Christianity from that time until now proves conclusively that in union only there is strength. Let individual judgment submit to the authority of the church.

The apostles felt the necessity of strict unity, and they labored earnestly to this end. Paul exhorted his brethren in these words:

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"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the
#21 same mind and in the same judgment. [#26p21]

He also writes to his Philippian brethren, "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 vainglory; 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."

To the Romans he writes, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Peter wrote to the churches scattered abroad, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

And Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians
#22 says: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be [#26p22] perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

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Go Forward.

The vast armies of Israel marched in glad triumph from Egypt, the scene of their long and cruel servitude. The Egyptians would not consent to release them until they had been signally warned by the judgments of God. The avenging angel had visited every house among the Egyptians, and stricken with death the first-born of every family. None had escaped, from the heir of King Pharaoh, to the eldest-born of the captive in his dungeon. And the first-born of the cattle were also slain according to the mandate of the Lord.

But the Angel of Death passed over the homes of the children of Israel and did not enter there. Pharaoh, horror-stricken at the plagues that had fallen upon his people, called Moses and Aaron before him in the night, and bade them depart from Egypt. He was anxious that they should go without delay, for he and his people feared that the land would become a vast burial-ground, unless the curse of God was removed from them.

Israel was joyful to receive the tidings of their freedom, and made haste to leave the scene of their bondage. But the way was toilsome, and at length their courage failed. [#26p23] Their journey #23 led them over barren hills and desolate plains. The third night they found themselves walled in on each side by the mountain ranges, and the Red Sea lay before them. They were perplexed and greatly deplored their condition. They blamed Moses for conducting them to this place, for they believed they had taken the wrong course. "This, surely," said they, "is not the way to the wilderness of Sinai, nor the land of Canaan promised to the fathers. We can go no farther, but must now advance into the waters of the Red Sea, or turn back toward Egypt."

Then, as if to complete their misery, behold, the Egyptian host is on their track! The im-

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posing army is led by King Pharaoh himself, who has repented that he freed the Hebrews, and fears that he has sent them out to become a great nation hostile to himself. What a night of perplexity and distress was this for Israel! What a contrast to that glorious morning when they left the bondage of Egypt, and with glad rejoicings took up the line of march into the wilderness! How powerless they felt before that mighty foe! The wailing of the terror-stricken women and children, mingled with the lowing of the frightened cattle, and the bleating of the sheep, added to the dismal confusion of the situation.

But had God lost all care for his people that he should leave them to destruction? Would he not warn them of their danger and deliver them from their enemies? God [#26p24] had not delight in the discomfiture of his people. It was he, himself, who had directed Moses to encamp by the Red Sea, and he had farther informed him that, "Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord."

Jesus stood at the head of that vast army. The cloudy column by day, and the pillar of fire by night represented their Divine Leader. But the Hebrews did not patiently bear the test of the Lord. Their voices were lifted up in reproaches and denunciations of Moses, who was their visible leader, for bringing them into this great peril. They did not trust in the protecting power of God, nor recognize his hand staying the evils that surrounded them. In their frantic terror they had forgotten the rod with which Moses had changed the water of the Nile to blood, and the calamities which God had visited upon the Egyptians for

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their persecution of his chosen people. They had forgotten all the miraculous interpositions of God in their behalf.

"Ah!" they cried, "How much better for us had we remained in bondage! It is better to live as slaves than to die of hunger and fatigue in the desert, or be slain in war with our enemies!" They turned upon Moses^[#26p25] with bitter censure that he had not left them where they were instead of leading them out to perish in the wilderness. #25

Moses was greatly troubled because his people were wanting in faith, especially as they had repeatedly witnessed the manifestations of the power of God in their favor. He felt grieved that they should charge upon him the dangers and difficulties of their position, when he had simply followed the express commands of God. He met and quieted the reproaches and fears of his people, even before he could himself discern the plan of their deliverance; but he was strong in his faith that the Lord would bring them into safety.

True, they were in a place from which there was no possibility of release unless God himself interposed to save them; but they were brought into this strait by obeying the divine commands, and Moses felt no fear of the consequences. He "said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace."

It was not an easy thing to hold the hosts of Israel in waiting before the Lord. They were excited and full of terror. They lacked discipline and self-control. Impressed by the horrors of their situation, they became violent and unreasonable. They expected^[#26p26] speedily to fall into the hands #26

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of their oppressors, and their wailings and re-
criminations were loud and deep.

The wonderful pillar of cloud had accom-
panied them in their wanderings and served to
protect them from the fervid rays of the sun. All
day it had moved grandly before them, subject
neither to sunshine nor storm. But at night it had
become a pillar of fire to light them on their way.
They had followed it as the signal of God to go for-
ward; but now they questioned among themselves
if it might not be the shadow of some terrible ca-
lamity that was about to befall them, for had it
not led them on the wrong side of the mountain
into an impassable way? Thus the angel of God
appeared to their deluded minds as the harbinger
of disaster.

But now, as the Egyptian host approaches
them, expecting to make them an easy prey, the
cloudy column rises majestically into the heav-
ens, passes over the Israelites, and descends be-
tween them and the armies of Egypt. A wall of
darkness interposes between the pursued and
their pursuers. The Egyptians can no longer dis-
cern the camp of the Hebrews, and are forced to
halt. But as the darkness of night deepens, the
wall of cloud becomes a great light to the He-
brews, illuminating the whole camp with the radi-
ance of day.

Then hope came to the hearts of Israel
that they might be delivered. And Moses lifted up
his voice unto the Lord. "And the_[#26p27] Lord said
unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me?
speak unto the children of Israel that they go for-
ward. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out
thine hand over the sea, and divide it; and the
children of Israel shall go on dry ground through
the midst of the sea."

Then Moses, obeying the divine command,
stretched out his rod, and the waters parted, roll-

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ing up in a wall on either side, and leaving a broad pathway across the bed of the sea for the children of Israel. The light from God's pillar of fire shone upon the foam-capped billows and lit the road that was cut like a mighty furrow through the waters of the Red Sea and was lost in the obscurity of the farther shore.

All night long sounded the tramping of the hosts of Israel, crossing the Red Sea. But the cloud hid them from the sight of their enemies. The Egyptians, weary with their hasty march, had encamped upon the shore for the night. They saw the Hebrews only a short distance before them, and there seemed no possibility of escape, so they decided to take a night's rest, and make an easy capture in the morning. The night was intensely dark, the clouds seemed to encompass them like some tangible substance. Deep sleep fell upon the camp, even the sentinels slumbered at their posts.

At last a ringing blast arouses the army! The cloud is passing on! The Hebrews are moving! Voices and the sound of marching^[#26p28] come #28 from toward the sea. It is still so dark they cannot discern the escaping people, but the command is given to make ready for the pursuit. The clattering of arms, and the roll of chariots is heard, the marshalling of the captains and the neighing of the steeds. At length the line of march is formed and they press on through the obscurity, in the direction of the escaping multitude.

In the darkness and confusion, they rush on in theirpursuit, not knowing that they have entered upon the bed of the sea, and are hemmed in on either hand by beetling walls of water. They long for the mist and darkness to pass away, and reveal to them the Hebrews and their own whereabouts. The wheels of the chariots sink deep into the soft sand, and the horses become entangled

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and unruly. Confusion prevails, yet they press on feeling sure of victory.

At last the mysterious cloud changes to a pillar of fire before their astonished eyes. The thunders roll and the lightnings flash, the waves roll about them, and fear takes possession of their hearts. Amid the terror and confusion the lurid light reveals to the amazed Egyptians the terrible waters massed up on the right hand and on the left. They see the broad path that the Lord has made for his people across the shining sands of the sea, and behold triumphant Israel safe on the farther shore.

Confusion and dismay seizes them. Amid #29 the wrath of the elements, in which they[#26p29] hear the voice of an angry God, they endeavor to retrace their steps and fly to the shore they have quitted. But Moses stretches out his rod, and the piled up waters, hissing, roaring, and eager for their prey, tumble down upon the armies of Egypt. Proud Pharaoh and his legions, gilded chariot and flashing armor, horses and riders are engulfed beneath a stormy sea.

The mighty God of Israel had delivered his people, and their songs of thanksgiving went up to Heaven, that God had wrought so wonderfully in their behalf. The history of the children of Israel should be for the instruction and admonition of all Christians. When the Israelites were overtaken by dangers and difficulties and their way seemed hedged up, their faith forsook them and they murmured against the leader God had appointed for them. They blamed him with bringing them into peril, when he had only obeyed the voice of God.

The divine command was, "Go Forward!" Not to wait until the way was made plain, and they could comprehend the entire plan of their deliverance. God's cause is onward, and he will

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open the path before his people. To hesitate and murmur is to manifest distrust in the Holy One of Israel. God in his providence brought the Hebrews into the mountain fastnesses, with the Red Sea before them, that he might work out their deliverance and forever rid them of their enemies. He might have saved them in any other way,^[#26p30] #30 but he chose this method in order to test their faith and strengthen their trust in him.

We cannot charge Moses with being at fault because his people murmured against his course. It was their own rebellious, unsubdued hearts that led them to censure the man whom God had delegated to lead his people. While Moses moved in the fear of the Lord, and according to his direction, having full faith in his promises, those who should have upheld him became discouraged and could see nothing before them but disaster, defeat, and death.

The Lord is now dealing with his people who believe in present truth. He designs to bring about momentous results, and while in his providence he is working towards this end, he says to his people, "Go Forward!" True, the path is not yet opened, but when they move on in the strength of faith and courage, God will make the way plain before their eyes. There are ever those who will complain, as did ancient Israel, and charge the difficulties of their position upon those whom God has raised up for the special purpose of advancing his cause. They fail to see that God is testing them by bringing them into straight places, from which there is no deliverance except by his hand.

There are times when the Christian life seems beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly^[#26p31] #31 above all discouragements, "Go Forward!" We should obey this

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command, let the result be what it may, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness and we feel the cold waves about our feet.

The Hebrews were weary and terrified, yet if they had held back when Moses bade them advance, if they had refused to move nearer to the Red Sea, God would never have opened the path for them. In marching down to the very water, they showed that they had faith in the word of God, as spoken by the man Moses. They did all that was in their power to do, and then the Mighty One of Israel performed his part and divided the waters to make a path for their feet.

The clouds that gather about our way will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Unbelief says, We can never surmount these obstructions, let us wait until they are removed, and we can see our way clearly. But faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things. Obedience towards God is sure to bring the victory. Through faith only can we reach Heaven.

There is a great similarity between our history and that of the children of Israel. God led his people from Egypt into the wilderness, where they could keep his law and obey his voice. The Egyptians, who had no regard for the Lord, were encamped close by them; yet, what was to them a great flood of light, illuminating the whole camp, and shedding ^{#32} ~~#26p32]~~ brightness upon the path before them, was to the hosts of Pharaoh a wall of clouds, making blacker the darkness of night.

So, at this time, there is a people whom God has made the repository of his law. To those who obey them, the commandments of God are as a pillar of fire, lighting and leading the way to eternal salvation. But unto those who disregard them, they are as the clouds of night. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Better than

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all other knowledge is an understanding of the word of God. In keeping his commandments there is great reward, and no earthly inducements should cause the Christian to waver for a moment in his allegiance. Riches, honor, and worldly pomp are but as dross that shall perish before the fire of God's wrath.

The voice of the Lord bidding his faithful ones "Go Forward," frequently tries their faith to the uttermost. But if they should defer obedience till every shadow of uncertainty was removed from their understanding, they would never move on at all. Those who think it impossible for them to yield to the will of God and have faith in his promises until all is made clear and plain before them, will never yield at all. Faith is not certainty of knowledge, it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. To obey the commandments of God is the only way to obtain his favor. "Go Forward," should be the Christian's watchword. [#26p33]

#33

Epistle Number One.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:--I have been shown some things in reference to the church in P---- G----. Individual cases were shown me, which in many respects represent the cases of many others. Among them was that of sister P. and her husband. The Lord convicted him of the truth. He was charmed with the harmony and spirit of the truth, and was blessed in confessing it. But Satan came to him with his temptations upon the point of appetite.

Bro. P. had long indulged his appetite for stimulants, which had an influence to becloud the mind, weaken the intellect, and lessen the moral powers. Reason and judgment were brought in bondage to depraved, unnatural appetite, and his birthright, his God-given manhood,

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was sacrificed to intemperate habits. If Bro. P. had made the word of God his study, and his guide, had he trusted in God, and prayed for grace to overcome, he would have had strength in the name of Jesus to baffle the tempter.

But Bro. P. had never felt the high claims that God had upon him. His moral faculties had been enfeebled by his habits of eating and drinking, and his dissipation. He had, when he embraced the truth, a character to form for Heaven. God would test and prove him. He had a work to do for himself that no one could do for him. He had, by his course of life, lost many years of precious, ^{#34}_[#26p34] probationary time, when he might have been gaining an experience in matters of religion, and a knowledge of the life of Christ, and the infinite sacrifice he made in man's behalf that he might free him from the fetters Satan had bound upon him, and enable him to glorify his name.

Christ paid a dear price for man's redemption. In the wilderness of temptation he suffered the keenest pangs of hunger; and while emaciated with fasting Satan was at hand with his manifold temptations to assail the Son of God, to take advantage of his weakness and overcome him, and thus thwart the plan of salvation. But Christ was steadfast. He overcame in behalf of the race, that he might rescue them from the degradation of the fall. Christ's experience is for our benefit. His example in overcoming appetite points out the way for those who would be his followers and finally sit with him on his throne.

Christ suffered hunger in the fullest sense. Mankind generally have all that is needful to sustain life. And yet, like our first parents, they will desire that which God would withhold because it is not best for them. Christ suffered hunger for necessary food, and resisted the temptation of

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Satan upon the point of appetite. Indulgence of intemperate appetite, creates in fallen man unnatural desires for the things which will eventually prove his ruin.

Man came from the hand of God perfect^[#26p35] in every faculty of mind and body, in perfect soundness, therefore in perfect health. It took more than two thousand years of indulgence of appetite and lustful passions to create such a state of things in the human organism as would lessen vital force. Through successive generations the tendency was more swiftly downward. Indulgence of appetite and passion combined, led to excess and violence; debauchery and abominations of every kind weakened the energies, and brought upon the race diseases of every type until the vigor and glory of the first generations passed away, and man began to show signs of decay in the third generation from Adam. Successive generations after the flood degenerated more rapidly.

All this weight of woe and accumulated suffering can be traced to the indulgence of appetite and passion. Luxurious living and the use of wine corrupt the blood, inflame the passions, and produce diseases of every kind. Parents leave maladies as a legacy to their children. As a rule, every intemperate man, who rears children, transmits his inclinations and evil tendencies to his offspring, and the evil does not end here; he gives to them disease from his own inflamed and corrupted blood. Licentiousness, disease and imbecility is transmitted as an inheritance of woe from father to son and from generation to generation, bringing anguish and suffering into the world, which is no less than a repetition of the fall of man.^[#26p36]

The continual transgression of nature's laws is a continual transgression of the law of God. The present weight of suffering and anguish

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which we see everywhere, the present deformity, decrepitude, disease and imbecility now flooding the world, make it, in comparison to what it might be, and what God designed it should be, a lazarus-house, and the present generation are feeble in mental, moral and physical power.

All this accumulated misery from generation to generation is because fallen man will break the law of God. Sins of the greatest magnitude are committed through the indulgence of perverted appetite.

The effort made to create a taste for the disgusting, filthy poison, tobacco, leads to the desire for stronger stimulants, as liquor, which is taken, on one plea or another, for some imaginary infirmity, or to prevent some possible disease. Thus an unnatural appetite is created for these hurtful and exciting stimulants, which strengthens until the increase of intemperance in this generation is alarming. Beverage-loving, liquor-drinking men may be seen everywhere. Their intellect is enfeebled, the moral powers are weakened, the sensibilities are benumbed, and the claims of God and heaven are not realized, and eternal things are not appreciated. The Bible declares that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.

#37 Tobacco and liquor stupefy and defile the user. But the evil does not stop here.[#26p37] He transmits irritable temper, polluted blood, enfeebled intellect, and weak morals to his children; and renders himself accountable for all the evil results that his wrong and dissipated course of life has brought upon his family and the community.

The race is groaning under a weight of accumulated woe, because of the sins of former generations. And yet with scarcely a thought or care, men and women of the present generation indulge

intemperance by surfeiting and drunkenness, and thereby leave as a legacy for the next generation disease, enfeebled intellects, and polluted morals.

Intemperance of any kind is the worst sort of selfishness. Those who truly fear God and keep his commandments look upon these things in the light of reason and religion. How can any man or any woman keep the law of God, which requires man to love his neighbor as himself, and indulge intemperate appetite, which benumbs the brain, and gives loose rein to lust. Reason and conscience are blinded by the lower passions.

We inquire, what will the husband of sister P. do? Will he, like Esau, sell his birthright for a mess of pottage? Will he sell his godlike manhood to indulge a perverted taste which only brings unhappiness and degradation? "The wages of sin is death." Has not this brother the moral courage to deny appetite? His habits have not been in_[#26p38] harmony with the truth, and with the testimonies of reproof which God has seen fit to give his people. His conscience was not altogether dead. He knew that he could not serve God and indulge his appetite, therefore yielded to the temptation of Satan which was too strong for him, in his own strength, to resist. He was overcome. He has assigned his want of interest in the truth to other causes than the true one, in order to cover his own weak purpose, and the real cause of his backsliding from God, which was uncontrolled appetite. This is where many stumble; they waver between denial of appetite and its indulgence, and finally are overcome by the enemy and yield the truth. Many who have backslidden from the truth assign as a reason for their course, that they do not have faith in the testimonies.

Investigation reveals the fact that they had some sinful habit that God through the testimonies condemned. The question with them is, will

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they yield their idol which God condemns, or will they continue in their wrong course of indulgence, and reject the light God has given them, reproving the very things in which they delight? The question to be settled with them is, shall I receive, as of God, the testimonies which reprove my sins, and deny myself, or shall I reject the testimonies because they reprove my sins?

#39 In many cases the testimonies are fully received, the sin and indulgence broken off, and reformation at once commences in^[#26p39] harmony with the light God has given. In other instances sinful indulgences are cherished, the testimonies are rejected, and many excuses which are untrue are offered to others as the reason for refusing to receive them. The *true* reason is not given. It is a lack of moral courage, a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits.

It is not an easy matter to overcome established habits of taste and appetite for narcotics and stimulants. In the name of Christ alone can this great victory be gained. He overcame in behalf of man in the wilderness of temptation, in the long fast of nearly six weeks. He sympathizes with the weakness of man. His love for fallen man was so great that he made infinite sacrifice that he might reach him in his degradation, and through his divine power elevate him finally to his throne. But it rests with man whether Christ shall accomplish for him that which he is fully able to do.

Will man take hold of divine power, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan as Christ has given him example in his conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation? God cannot save man, against his will, from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In

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short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory it is his privilege [#26p40]to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, #40 he may become an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ.

This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must do his part. Man must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Jesus gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labor of overcoming, and then he will be partaker with Christ of his glory. It is a sacred work in which we are engaged. The apostle exhorts his brethren, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

It is a sacred duty that we owe to God to keep the spirit pure, as a temple for the Holy Ghost. If the heart and mind are devoted to the service of God, obeying all his commandments, loving him with all the heart, might, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, we will be found loyal and true to the requirements of Heaven.

Again the apostle says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." He also urges his brethren to earnest diligence and steady perseverance in their efforts for purity and holiness of life in these words: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible."[#26p41] #41

He presents before us the spiritual warfare and its reward, in contrast with the various games instituted among the heathen in honor of their gods. For these games, young men were trained with the most severe discipline, practicing

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close self-denial. Every indulgence which would have a tendency to weaken the powers of body were forbidden. Those who submitted to the training process were not allowed luxurious food or wine, for this would debilitate instead of increase personal vigor, healthful activity, fortitude and firmness. It was considered the highest honor to gain a simple chaplet which would fade in a few short hours.

Many witnesses, kings and nobles, were present on these occasions. The competitors for this perishable crown, after they had exercised severe abstemiousness, and submitted to rigid discipline in order to obtain personal vigor and activity with the hope of becoming victors, were even then not sure of the prize. The prize could be awarded to but one. Some might labor fully as hard as others and put forth their utmost powers to gain the crowning honor, but, as they reached forth the hand to secure the prize, another, an instant before them, might secure the coveted treasure.

This is not the case in the Christian warfare. All may run this race and may be sure of victory and immortal honor if they submit to the conditions. Says Paul, "So run that ye may obtain." He then explains the ^{#26p42} conditions which are necessary for them to observe in order to be successful: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."

If heathen men, who are not controlled by enlightened conscience, who have not the fear of God before them, would submit to deprivation and a discipline of training, denying themselves of every weakening indulgence merely for a wreath of perishable substance and the applause of the multitude, how much more should they who are running the Christian race in the hope of immortality and the approval of High Heaven, be willing

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to deny themselves unhealthy stimulants and indulgences which degrade the morals, enfeeble the intellect, and bring the higher powers in subjection to the animal appetites and passions.

Multitudes in the world are witnessing this game of life, the Christian warfare. And this is not all. The Monarch of the universe, and the myriads of heavenly angels are spectators of this race, anxiously watching to see who will be successful overcomers, and win the crown of glory that fadeth not away. With intense interest God and heavenly angels mark the self-denial, self-sacrificing, and agonizing efforts of those who engage to run the Christian race. The reward given to every man will be in accordance with the persevering energy and faithful earnestness with which he has performed his part in the great contest.

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In the games referred to, but one was sure of the prize. In the Christian race, says the apostle, I run "not as uncertainly." We are not to be disappointed at the end of the race. To all those who fully comply with the conditions in God's word, with a sense of their responsibility to preserve physical vigor and activity of body, that they may have well balanced minds and healthy morals, the race is not uncertain. They all may gain the prize, and win and wear the crown of immortal glory that fadeth not away.

The apostle Paul tells us that, "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." A cloud of witnesses are observing our Christian course. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured

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

The world should be no criterion for us. It is fashionable to indulge the appetite with luxurious food and unnatural stimulus, strengthening by indulgence the animal propensities, and crippling the growth and development of the moral faculties.

There is not encouragement given to any son or daughter of Adam that they may become victorious overcomers in the Christian warfare unless they decide to practice temperance in all things. If they do this they will not fight as one that beateth the air.

If Christians will keep the body in subjection and bring all their appetites and passions under the control of enlightened conscience, feeling it a duty that they owe to God and to their neighbor to obey the laws which govern health and life, they will have the blessing of physical and mental vigor. They will have moral power to engage in the warfare against Satan; and in the name of him who conquered appetite in their behalf, they may be more than conquerors on their own account. The warfare is open to all who will engage in it.

I was shown the case of Bro. R., that a cloud of darkness surrounded him. The light of Heaven was not in his dwelling. Although he professed to believe the truth, he did not exemplify in his daily life its sanctifying influence upon his heart. He does not naturally possess a benevolent, kind, affectionate, and courteous disposition. His temperament is very unfavorable to himself, and his family and the church where his influence is felt. He has a work to do for himself that no one can do for him. He has need of the transforming influence of the Spirit of God.

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We are bound, by our profession, as Christ's followers, to test our ways and actions, by comparing them with the example of our Redeemer. Our spirit and deportment must^[#26p45] #45 correspond with the copy our Saviour has given us.

Bro. R. is not of that temperament to bring sunshine into his family. Here is a good place for him to begin to work. He is too much like a cloud rather than a beam of light. He is too selfish to speak words of approval to the members of his family, especially the one of all others who should have his love and tender respect. He is morose, overbearing and dictatorial. His words are frequently cutting, and leave a wound that he does not try to heal by softening his spirit, acknowledging his faults and confessing his wrong-doings.

He does not make efforts to come to the light. There is not with him a searching of heart and of motives, temper, speech and conduct, to see if his life is like the Example. He does not apply God's law to his life as his rule of action and character. The Lord would have a people honest and upright before him.

Sister R. has many trials, and the weakness of her own nature to contend with, and she should not be compelled to have her lot made any harder than is positively necessary.

Bro. R. should soften, and cultivate refinement and courteousness. He should be very tender and gentle towards his wife, who is his equal in every respect. He should not utter a word that would cast a shadow upon her heart. He should begin the work of reformation at home. He should cultivate^[#26p46] #46 affection, and overcome the coarse, harsh, unfeeling, and ungenerous traits of his disposition, for these are growing upon him. If we poor mortals reach Heaven, we must overcome as

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Christ overcame. We must be assimilated to his image, and our characters be spotless.

I was shown that Bro. R. has not a high sense of the perfection of character necessary to a Christian. He has not a proper sense of his duty to his fellow-men. He is in danger of advancing his own interests, if an opportunity presents, irrespective of his neighbor's advantage or loss. He regards his own prosperity as exceedingly important, but is not interested in the fortunes or misfortunes of his neighbors, as a follower of Christ should be. For a trifle of advantage to himself Satan can allure him from his integrity. This darkens his own soul, and brings darkness upon the church. "All this," says Satan, "shall be yours, if you will depart from strict integrity. All this will I give you if you will only please me in this, or do and say that." And too often has Bro. R. been deceived by the adversary, to his own hurt and the darkening of other minds.

There are some others in the church who need to view things from a higher standpoint before they can be spiritually minded, and in a position to shed light, instead of casting a shadow, and where they can discern the mind and will of God.

Bro. R. needs to have his eyes anointed, #47 [#26p47] that he may clearly discern spiritual things, and also the devices of Satan. The Christian standard is high and exalted. But alas, the professed followers of Christ lower it to the very dust.

You have need, Bro. R., of constant vigilance lest you are overcome by Satan's temptations to live for yourself, to be jealous and envious, suspicious and faultfinding. If you go murmuringly along you make not one step of progress in the heavenly road. If you stop for a moment in your earnest efforts and prayerful endeavors to subdue and control yourself, you are in danger of

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being overcome by some strong temptation; you may take imprudent steps; you may manifest an unchristian spirit, which will not only bring bitterness to your own soul, but sadness to the minds of others. You may bring upon them a weight of perplexity and sadness that will endanger their souls and you will be accountable for this baneful influence. Bro. R., if you would escaped the pollution that is in the world through lust, you must adorn the Christian profession in all things.

You will say, This is hard work, the way is too narrow, I cannot walk in it. Is the way made more straight in this letter than you find it plainly marked out in the word of God? Heaven is worth a life-long, persevering, untiring effort. If you now draw back and become discouraged, you will certainly lose Heaven, lose the immortal life and crown of glory that fadeth not away. [#26p48]

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Those who have a seat at the Saviour's side on his throne are only that class who have overcome as he overcame. Love for pure, sanctifying truth, love for the dear Redeemer, will lighten the labor of overcoming. His strength will be cheerfully granted to all those who are really desirous of it. He will crown every persevering effort made in his name, with grace and peace.

If your daily study is to glorify God and subdue self, he will make his strength perfect in your weakness, and you may live so that your conscience will not condemn you. You may have a good report from those who are without. A circumspect life will not only bring great profit to your own soul, but will be a bright light to shine upon the pathway of others, and will show them the way to Heaven.

Bro. R., how have you governed your own temper? Have you sought to overcome your hasty spirit? With the disposition and feelings you now

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possess you will as surely fail of Heaven as there is a Heaven. For your own soul's sake, and for the sake of Christ, who has given you unmistakable evidence of his infinite love, bring yourself nearer to him that you may be imbued with his spirit.

Cultivate a spirit of watchfulness and prayer that you may rightly represent the holy faith you profess as a follower of our dear Redeemer who has left an example in his own life. Imitate our Saviour. Learn of Christ. Endure
#49 hardness as a good soldier^[#26p49] of Jesus Christ, and overcome the temptations of Satan as he overcame, and come off conqueror over all your defects of character.

Christ was a perfect overcomer. We must be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, without spot or blemish. The redemption Christ achieved for man was at infinite cost to himself. The victory we gain over our own evil hearts and over the temptations of Satan will cost us strong effort, constant watchfulness and persevering prayer, and we shall then not only reap the reward which is the gift of eternal life, but will increase our happiness on earth by a consciousness of duty performed, and the greater respect and love of those about us.

I was shown that there is a general lack of devotion, and sincere and earnest effort in the church. There are many who need to be converted. Bro. C. is not a stay and strength to the church. He does not advance in the divine life as he advances in years. He has professed the truth many years, yet has been slow to learn and live its principles; therefore he has not been sanctified through the truth. He holds himself in a position to be tempted of Satan. He is still as a child in experience. He is watching others and marking their failings, when he should be searching diligently his own heart.

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That readiness to question, and to see faults in his brethren and talk of them to others, is reproved by the words of Christ to one whom he saw was more interested in^[#26p50] the course of his brethren, than careful to watch and pray lest Satan should overcome himself. Said Christ to his disciples, "What is that to thee? follow thou me." #50

It is all that Bro. C. can do in the weakness of his nature, to guard his own soul and close every avenue whereby Satan could gain access to insinuate doubts in regard to others. He is in great danger of losing his soul, by failing to perfect Christian character during probationary time. He is slow to follow Christ. His senses seem to be clouded, and almost paralyzed so that he does not place a proper estimate upon sacred things. He may even now correct his errors, and overcome his defects if he will work in the strength of God.

There are several in the church at P. G. whose names I cannot call, who have victories to gain over their appetite and passions. some talk too much and stand in this position, "Report, and I will report it." Miserable indeed is such a position! If all these gossipers would ever bear in mind that an angel is following them, recording their words, there would be less talking and much more praying.

There are children of Sabbath-keepers who have been taught from their youth to observe the Sabbath. Some of these are very good children, faithful to duty as far as temporal matters are concerned; but they feel no deep conviction of sin, and no need of repentance from sin. Such are in a dangerous condition.^[#26p51] They are watching #51 the deportment and efforts of professed Christians. They see some who make high professions but are not conscientious Christians, and they compare their own views and actions with these

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stumbling blocks and flatter themselves that, as there are no outbreking sins in their lives, they are about right.

To these youth I am authorized to say, Repent ye and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. There is no time for you to waste. Heaven and immortal life are valuable treasures that will cost an effort on your part to obtain. No matter how faultless may have been your lives, as sinners you have steps to take. You are required to repent, believe, and be baptized. Christ was wholly righteous, yet he, the Saviour of the world, gave man an example, by taking the steps himself which he requires the sinner to take to become a child of God, an heir of Heaven.

If Christ, the spotless and pure Redeemer of man, condescended to take the steps necessary for the sinner to take in conversion, why should any, with the light of truth shining upon their pathway, hesitate to submit their hearts to God, and in humility confess that they are sinners, and show their faith in the atonement of Christ by words and actions, identifying themselves with those who profess to be his followers? There will ever be those who do not live their profession, whose daily lives show them to be anything but
#52 Christians;[#26p52] but should this be a sufficient reason for any to refuse to put on Christ by baptism into the faith of his death and resurrection?

Even when Jesus was upon the earth himself, and walked with, and taught his disciples, there was one among the twelve who was a devil. Judas betrayed his Lord. Christ had a perfect knowledge of the life of Judas. He knew of his covetousness which he did not overcome. He gave him many lessons upon this subject in his sermons to others. Through indulgence Judas permitted this trait in his character to grow and take so deep root that it crowded out the good seed of

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truth sown in his heart, until evil predominated, and he, for love of money, could sell his Lord for a few pieces of silver.

Because Judas was not right at heart, because he was so corrupted with selfishness and love of money that it led him to commit a great crime, is no evidence that there were not true Christians, genuine disciples of Christ who loved their Saviour and tried to imitate his life and example, and to obey his teachings.

I was shown that the case of Judas, being numbered among the twelve, with all his faults and defects of character, is a lesson of instruction which Christians may be profited in studying. When Judas was chosen by our Lord, his case was not hopeless. He had some good qualities. In association with Christ in the work, he had a favorable opportunity, by listening to his discourses, to see^[#26p53] his evils, and to become acquainted with his defects of character if he really desired to be a true disciple. He was even placed in a position by our Lord where he could have his choice either to develop his covetous disposition, or see and correct it. He carried the little means collected for the poor, and for the necessary expenses of Christ and the disciples in their work of preaching. #53

This little money was to Judas a continual temptation, and he, from time to time, when he did a little service for Christ, or devoted a little time to religious purposes, paid himself out of the meager fund collected to advance the light of the gospel. He finally became so penurious that he made bitter complaint of the ointment poured upon the head of Jesus because it was expensive. He turned it over and over in his mind, and counted the money that might have been placed in his hands to expend, if that ointment had been sold. His selfishness grew stronger, until he felt

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that the treasury had really met with great loss in not receiving the value of the ointment in money. He finally made open complaint of the extravagance of this expensive offering to Christ. Our Saviour rebuked him for this covetousness. This rankled in the heart of Judas, until he, for a small sum of money, consented to betray his Lord.

There will be those among Sabbath-keepers who are no truer at heart than was Judas. But the cases of such should be no excuse to #54 keep others from following Christ. [#26p54]

God loves the children of Bro. N., but they are in fearful danger of feeling whole, and in no need of a physician. Trusting in their own righteousness will never save them. They must feel the need of a Saviour. Christ came to save sinners. Said Jesus, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The Pharisees who felt that they were righteous, and who trusted in their good works, felt no need of a Saviour. They felt that they were well enough off without Christ.

These dear children of Bro. N. should plead with Jesus to reveal to them their sinfulness, and then ask him to reveal himself as their sin-pardoning Saviour. These precious children must not be deceived and miss eternal life. Except they are converted they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. They must wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus invites them to take the steps that sinners must take in order to become his children. He has given them an example in his life in submitting to the ordinance of baptism. He is our example in all things.

God requires these children to give him their heart's best and holiest affection. He has bought them with his own blood. He claims their service. They are not their own. Jesus has made infinite sacrifice for them. A pitying, loving Saviour will receive them if they will come to him just

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as they are and depend on his righteousness and not on their own merits.[#26p55] #55

God pities and loves the youth of P. G., and he wants them to find happiness in him. He died to redeem them. He will bless them if they come to him in meekness and sincerity. He will be found of them, if they seek him with all their hearts.

Epistle Number Two.

Bro. ----, I have been shown the condition of God's people. They are stupefied by the spirit of the world. They are denying their faith by their works. I was pointed back to ancient Israel. They had great light and exalted privileges; yet they did not live up to the light, nor appreciate their advantages, and their light became darkness. They walked in the light of their own eyes, instead of following the leadings of God. The history of the children of Israel was written for the benefit of those who live in the last days, that they may avoid following their example of unbelief.

Bro. ----, you were shown me enshrouded in darkness. The love of the world had taken entire control of your being. The very best of your days are past. Your vitality and power of endurance, as far as physical labor is concerned, are enfeebled, and now when you should be able to look back on a life of noble effort in blessing others, and glorifying God, you can only have regret, and realize a want of happiness and peace.[#26p56] #56
You are not living that life which will meet the approval of God. Your spiritual and eternal interests are made secondary. Brain, bone, and muscle have been taxed to the utmost. Why all this expenditure of strength! Why this accumulation of cares and burdens for your family to bear? What is your reward? The satisfaction of laying up for yourself a treasure upon the earth, which Christ

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has forbidden and which will prove a snare to your soul.

In Christ's sermon on the mount he says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." If you lay up treasures in Heaven, you do it for yourself, you are working for your own interest.

Your treasure, my dear brother, is laid up on the earth, and your interest and affections are on your treasure. You have cultivated a love for money, for houses and lands, until it has absorbed the powers of your mind and being, and your love for worldly possessions has been greater than your love for your Creator, and souls for whom Christ died. The god of this world has blinded your eyes so that eternal things are not valued.

The great leading temptations that would assail man, Christ met in the wilderness of temptation. There he encountered, single-handed, the wily, subtile foe, and overcame him. The first great temptation was appetite;[#26p57] second, presumption; third, the love of the world. Satan has overcome his millions by tempting them to the indulgence of appetite. Through the gratification of the taste the nervous system becomes excited, the brain power enfeebled, making it impossible to think calmly or rationally. The mind is unbalanced. Its higher, nobler properties are perverted to serve animal lust, and the sacred and eternal interests are not regarded. When this object is gained then Satan can come with his two other leading temptations and find ready access. His manifold besetments of sin grow out of these three great leading points.

Presumption is a common temptation, and as Satan assails men with this, he obtains the

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victory nine times out of ten. Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and claim by their faith to be enlisted in the warfare against all evil in their nature, frequently plunge without thought, into temptations that would require a miracle to bring them forth unsullied. Meditation and prayer would have preserved them and led them to have shunned the critical, dangerous position in which they have placed themselves where they have given Satan the advantage over them. The promises of God are not for us rashly to claim while we rush on recklessly into danger, violating the laws of nature, and disregarding prudence, and the judgment with which God has endowed us. This is the most flagrant presumption.

The thrones and kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, were offered to Christ, ^{#58} [#26p58] if he would only bow down to Satan. Never will man be tried with temptations as powerful as those which assailed Christ. Satan came with worldly honor, wealth, and the pleasures of life, and presented them in the most attractive light to allure and deceive. "All this," said he to Christ, "will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me." Christ repelled the wily foe, and came off victor.

Satan has better success in approaching man. All this money, all this gain, this land, this power, honor and riches will I give thee. For what? His conditions generally are, that integrity shall be yielded, conscientiousness blunted, and selfishness indulged. Through devotion to worldly interests Satan receives all the homage he asks. The door is left open for him to enter as he pleases, with his evil train of impatience, love of self, pride, avarice, over-reaching, and his whole catalogue of evil spirits. Man is charmed, and treacherously allured on to ruin. If we yield ourselves to worldliness of heart and life, Satan is satisfied.

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Christ's example is before us. He overcame Satan, showing us how we may also overcome. Christ resisted Satan with scripture. He might have had recourse to his own divine power, and used his own words; but he said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." With the second temptation he says, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Christ's example is before us. If the Sacred Scriptures were studied and followed, the Christian would be fortified to meet the wily foe; but the word of God is neglected, and disaster and defeat follow.

Dear Bro., you have neglected to heed the testimonies of warning given you years ago, showing you that the enemy was upon your track, to open before you the charms of this world, urging you to choose earthly treasure, and sacrifice the heavenly reward. Bro. L., you cannot afford to do this, there is too much at stake. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" You are selling your soul at a cheap market. You cannot afford to make this great sacrifice. God has intrusted talents to your stewardship. They are your means and influence. He wishes to test and prove you. You should have lost no time but commenced immediately to increase your Master's store. Had you done this, your success would have been equal to your industry, perseverance and zeal in applying the capital placed in your hands. Had you done this, your talents of influence (setting aside the means which you could have called to your aid) would have turned many souls from error to truth and righteousness. These souls would have labored for other souls, and thus influence and means would be constantly increasing and multiplying in

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the Master's cause, and you, for the faithful improvement of your talent, would have heard from the Master the most gracious words that shall ever fall upon the ear; "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Bro. L, had you directed the powers of your intellect into the right channel, serving your Heavenly Father, you would have been growing stronger in the truth, stronger in spirit, and power, and would now be a pillar of the church in M., and a successful teacher of the truth, through your example as well as by giving the reasons of our faith from the Scriptures.

Had you used your powers of mind which you have employed in getting property, to bring souls from darkness to the light, you would have met the approval of God and been highly successful.

Those with but small capacities, sanctified by the love of God, can do good for the Master, but they who have quick, discerning minds may employ them for him in his high, exalted work, with grand results. To wrap them in a napkin, and hide them in the earth, and deprive God of the increase of the talents he has intrusted to them, is a great wrong.

We are probationers. The Master is coming to investigate our course, and he will inquire what use has been made of the talents lent us.

Bro. L., what use are you making of the talents God has placed in your care? Have you done what you could to enlighten the minds of men in regard to truth, or have you found no time from your business cares and perplexities, to devote to this work? It is a crime to use the bounties of God as you have done to diminish your physical strength, and separate your affections from

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God. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." You cannot love this world and love the truths of God. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." You are not a happy man. Your family is not a happy family. Angels of God do not come in and abide with you. When the religion of Christ rules in the heart, conscience approves, peace and happiness reign; perplexity and trouble may surround, yet there is light in the soul.

Submission, love, and gratitude to God, keep sunshine in the heart, though the day may ever be so cloudy. Self-denial, and the cross of Christ are before you. Will you lift the cross? Your children have been blessed by a mother's prayers. They loved religion. They tried to resist temptation, and live lives of prayer. Sometimes they tried very hard, but your example before them, your love and devotion to the world, and your close application_[#26p62] to business, withdrew their minds from spiritual things and turned them to earth again. They had Satan upon their track to lead them to love the world, and the things of the world. They gradually lost their confidence in God, and neglected secret prayer and religious duties, and have withdrawn their interest from holy things. Dear Bro. L., you have made a great mistake in giving this world your ambition. You have been exacting and sometimes impatient, and at times require too much of your son. He has become discouraged. At your house, from early morning until night, it has been work, work, work. Your large farm has brought extra cares and burdens into your house. You have talked business, for business was primary in your mind.

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"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Has your example in your family exalted Christ and his salvation above your farming interest and your desire for gain? If your children fail of everlasting life the blood of their souls will surely be found on the garments of their father.

The mother did her duty faithfully. She will hear the "well done," as she rises in the resurrection morning. Her first inquiry will be for her children who were the burden of her prayers the latter portion of her life. Can you present them with beautiful characters giving them a moral fitness for the society of angels? or will they be tarnished and sullied by the pollution of the world? Will_[#26p63] they be found partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in #63 the world through lust? Will they be as pillars polished after the similitude of a palace? or will they be found lovers of the world, cursed with the spirit of avarice, and their bright and noble qualities buried in oblivion? Your course will do much to determine the future destiny of your children. If you drown your powers of mind in worldly care and scheming you are a stumbling block to them. They see that, while professing Christianity, you have made no spiritual advancement, but are morally dwarfed. This is true. Your mind has been concentrated on earthly things; as a result you have developed great power in this direction. You are decidedly a worldly, business man, but God designed that you should use your ability and influence in a higher calling.

You are dazzled and blinded by the god of this world. Oh, what a terrible insanity is upon you. You may gather together earthly treasure, but it will be destroyed in the great conflagration. If you now return unto the Lord, and use your talents of means and influence, for the glory of

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God, and send your treasure before you into Heaven, you will not meet with a total loss.

The great conflagrations and disasters by sea and land that have visited our country, were the especial providence of God, a warning of what is about to come upon the world. God would show #64 man that he can kindle a_[#26p64] fire upon his idols that water cannot quench. The great general conflagration is but just ahead, when all this wasted labor of life will be swept away in a night and day. The treasure laid up in Heaven will be safe. No thief can approach nor moth corrupt it.

A young man came to Christ and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus bade him keep the commandments. He returned answer, Lord, "all these have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?" Jesus looked with love upon the young man, and faithfully pointed out to him his deficiency in keeping the commandments. He did not love his neighbor as himself. Christ showed him his true character. His selfish love of riches was his defect which if not removed would debar him from Heaven. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, and follow me." Christ would have him understand that he required nothing of him more than he himself had experienced. All he asked was that he should follow his example.

Christ left his riches and glory, and became poor, that man through his poverty might be made rich. He now requires him for the sake of these riches to yield earthly things, and secure Heaven. Christ knew that while the affections were upon worldly treasure, they would be withdrawn from God; therefore he said to the lawyer #65 "Go and sell that_[#26p65] thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven;

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and come and follow me." How did he receive the words of Christ? Was he rejoiced that he could secure the heavenly treasure? He was very sorrowful for he had great possessions. Riches to him were honor and power. The great amount of his treasure made such a disposal of it seem like an impossibility.

Here is the danger of riches to the avaricious man. The more he gains the harder it is for him to be generous. To diminish his wealth is like parting with life. Rather than do this he turns from the attraction of the immortal reward in order to retain and increase his earthly possessions. He accumulates and hoards. Had he kept the commandments his worldly possessions would not have been so great. How could he, plotting and striving for self, love God with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbor as himself? Had he distributed to the necessities of the poor, and blessed his fellow-men with a portion of his means, as their wants demanded, he would have been far happier, and would have had greater heavenly treasure, and less of earth to place his affections upon.

Christ assured the young man who came to him, that if he would obey his requirements he should have treasure in Heaven. This world-loving man was very sorrowful. He wanted Heaven but he desired to retain his wealth. He renounced immortal life for the love of ^{#66} money and power. Oh, what a miserable exchange! Yet many are doing this who profess to keep all the commandments of God. You, dear brother, are in danger of doing the same, but you do not realize it. Be not offended because I lay this matter so plainly before you. God loves you. How poorly have you returned his love!

I was shown that in your first experience your heart was all aglow with the truth; your

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mind was absorbed in the study of the Scriptures; you saw new beauty in every line. Then the good seed sown in your heart was springing up, and bearing fruit to the glory of God. But after a time, the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches choked the good seed of the word of God sown in your heart; and you failed to bring forth fruit. The truth struggled for supremacy in your mind; but the cares of this life, and the love of other things gained the victory. Satan sought through the attractions of this world to enchain you, and paralyze your moral powers, that you should have no sense of God's claims upon you, Satan has nearly succeeded.

Now, dear brother, you must make a most earnest, persevering effort to dislodge the enemy and assert your liberty, for he has made you a slave to this world, until your love of gain has become a ruling passion. Your example to others has been bad: selfish interests have been prominent. You have, by profession, said to the world, #67 my citizenship[#26p67] is not here, but above, while your works decidedly say you are a dweller on the earth. As a snare shall the day of Judgment come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. Your profession is only a hindrance to souls. You have not corresponding works. "I know thy works" (not thy profession), says the True Witness. God is now sifting his people, testing their purpose, and their motives. Many will be but as chaff. No wheat, no value in them.

Christ has committed to your trust talents of means, and of influence; and he has said to you, improve these till I come. When the Master cometh and reckoneth with his servants, and all are called to the strictest account as to how they have used the talents intrusted to them, how will you, my dear brother, bear the investigation? Will you be prepared to return to the Master his tal-

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ents doubled, laying before him both principal and interest, showing that you have been a judicious as well as faithful and persevering worker in his service? Bro. L., if you follow the course that you have pursued for years, your case is correctly represented by the servant who wrapped his talent in a napkin and buried it in the earth, that is, hid it in the world. Those to whom the talents were intrusted received reward for the labor expended in exact proportion to the fidelity, perseverance, and earnest effort made in trading with their Lord's goods.

God holds you as his debtor, and also as [#26p68] debtor to your fellow-men who have not the light and truth. God has given you light, not to hide under a bushel, but to set on a candlestick, that all in the house may be benefited. Your light should shine to others to enlighten souls for whom Christ died. The grace of God ruling in your heart, and bringing into subjection your mind and thoughts to Jesus, would make you a powerful man on the side of Christ and the truth. #68

Said Paul, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." God had revealed to Paul his truth, and in doing so made him a debtor to those who were in darkness, to enlighten them. You have not had a proper sense of your accountability before God. You are handling your Lord's talents. You have powers of mind that if employed in the right direction would make you a co-worker with Christ and his angels. Had your mind been turned in the direction of doing good, of placing the truth before others, you would now be qualified to become a successful laborer for God, and as your reward you would see many souls saved, that would be as stars in the crown of your rejoicing.

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How can the value of your houses and lands bear comparison with precious souls for whom Christ died? Through your instrumentality, these souls may be saved with you in the kingdom of glory; but you cannot take with you there the smallest portion of your earthly treasure. Acquire what you^[#26p69] may, preserve it with all the jealous care you are capable of exercising, and yet the mandate may go forth from the Lord, and in a few hours a fire which no skill can quench, has destroyed the accumulation of your entire life; they lay a mass of smouldering ruins. This was the case with Chicago. God's word had gone forth to lay the city of Chicago in ruins.

This is not the only city that will realize the visible marks of God's displeasure. He has made a beginning; but not an end. The sword of his wrath is stretched out over the people who have by their pride and wickedness provoked the displeasure of a just God. Storms, earthquakes, whirlwinds, fire and the sword will spread desolation everywhere, until men's hearts shall fail them for fear, looking for those things which shall come upon the earth. You know not how small a space is between you and eternity. You know not how soon your probation may close.

Make ready, my brother, for the Master to demand your talents, both principal and interest! To save souls should be the life work of every one who professes Christ. We are debtors to the world for the grace given us of God, for the light which has shone upon us, and the discovered beauty and power of the truth. You may devote your entire existence to laying up treasures upon earth, but what will they advantage you when your life here closes, or when Christ makes his^[#26p70] appearance? Not a farthing can you take with you. And just as high as your worldly honors and riches have exalted you here, to the neglect of

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your spiritual life, just so much lower will you sink in moral worth before the great tribunal of God's Judgment.

How will this wealth for which you have bartered your soul, be appropriated, should you be suddenly called to close your probation, and your voice no longer control it. What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Your means are of no more value than sand, only as used to provide for the daily necessities of life, and to bless others, and advance the cause of God. God has given you testimonies of warning and encouragement, but you have turned from them. You have doubted the testimonies. When you come back and gather up the rays of light, and take your position upon the testimonies, that they are from God, then you will be settled in your belief and not thus waver in darkness and weakness.

You can be a blessing to the church at M. You can be a pillar there even now, if you will come to the light, and walk in the light. God calls after you again. He seeks to reach you, girded about with selfishness as you are, and covered with the cares of this life. He invites you to withdraw your affections from the world, and place them upon heavenly things. In order to know the will of God, you must study it, rather than follow your⁷¹ inclinations, and the natural bent of your own mind. "What wilt thou have me to do," should be the earnest, anxious inquiry of your heart.

The weight of the wrath of God will fall upon those who have misspent their time, and served mammon instead of their Creator. If you live for God and for heaven, pointing the way of life to others, you will go onward and upward to higher and holier joys. You will be rewarded with

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the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The joy of Christ was that of seeing souls redeemed and saved in his glorious kingdom. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." To gain the treasures of this world, to use them as you have done, to separate your affections from God, will be to you in the end a terrible curse. You do not take time to read, to meditate or to pray, and you have not taken time to instruct your children, keeping before them their highest interest. God loves your children, but they have had little encouragement to live a religious life. If you destroy their faith in the testimonies you cannot reach them. The minds of poor, failing mortals should be disciplined and educated in religious and spiritual things. When the training is all in reference to the world, and to making a success of acquiring worldly property, how can the mind attain #72 [#26p72] spiritual growth. It is an impossibility. You, my brother, and your family, might have risen to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, had you felt one-half the interest to perfect Christian character and to serve the Lord, that you have had to serve the world.

God is not well pleased that his servants should be ignorant of his divine will, novices in spiritual understanding, but wise in worldly wisdom and knowledge. Your earthly interests can bear no comparison with your eternal welfare. God has a work for you to do higher than that of acquiring property. You need a deep and thorough work accomplished for you. Your entire family need it, and may God help you all to attain perfection of Christian character. Your children can and should be a blessing to the youth of your community. They can, by their example, by their

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conversation and actions, glorify their Heavenly Father and grace the cause of religion.

Epistle Number Three.

Dear Brother and Sister C----: I will now try to write what has been presented before me in regard to you, for I feel that it is time for this church to get their hearts in order and make diligent work for eternity. You both have the truth and want to obey it, but you are inexperienced. I was shown_[#26p73] that you would be placed in circumstances where you would be tried and tested, and traits of character would be revealed which you were not aware that you possessed. #73

Many who have never been placed in positions of trial, appear to be excellent Christians, their lives faultless, but God sees that they have traits of character that must be revealed to them before they can perceive and correct them.

Simeon under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost prophesied. He said unto Mary in reference to Jesus, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against; yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." In the providence of God, we are placed in different positions to call into exercise qualities of mind calculated to develop character under a variety of circumstances. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Professed Christians may live unexceptionable lives as far as outward appearance is concerned, but when a change of circumstances throws them into entirely different positions, strong points of character are discovered, which would have remained hidden had their surroundings remained the same.

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I was shown that you have selfish traits which you have need to strictly guard against.
#74 You will be in danger of regarding your^[#26p74] prosperity and your convenience irrespective of the prosperity of others. You do not possess that spirit of self-denial that resembles the great Example. You should cultivate benevolence which will bring you more in harmony with the spirit of Christ in his disinterested benevolence.

You need more human sympathy. This is a quality of our natures which God has given us to render us charitable and kind to those with whom we are brought in contact. We find it in men and women whose hearts are not in unison with Christ, and it is a sad sight indeed when his professed followers lack this great essential of Christianity. They do not copy the Pattern, and it is impossible for them to reflect the image of Jesus in their lives and deportment.

When human sympathy is blended with love and benevolence, and sanctified by the spirit of Jesus, it is an element which can be productive of great good. Those who cultivate benevolence are not only doing a good work for others, and blessing those who receive the good action, but they are benefiting themselves by opening their hearts to the benign influence of true benevolence. Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessity of our fellow-beings, given or done with an eye to God's glory, will result in
#75 blessings to the giver. Those^[#26p75] who are thus working are obeying a law of Heaven and will receive the approval of God.

The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood,

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and induces mental and physical health. Jesus knew the influence of benevolence upon the heart and life of the benefactor. He sought to impress upon the minds of his disciples the benefits to be derived from the exercise of this virtue.

He say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He illustrates the spirit of cheerful benevolence, which should be exercised towards friends, neighbors, and strangers, by the parable of the man who journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, "which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." The Priest and Levite, notwithstanding their exalted professions of piety, had not their hearts stirred with pitying tenderness for the sufferer. A Samaritan who made no such lofty pretensions to righteousness, passed that way, and when he saw the stranger's need, he did not regard him with mere idle curiosity, but he saw a human being in distress, and his compassion was excited. He immediately "went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." And on the morrow he left him in the charge of the host with an assurance that he would ^{#76} pay ~~all~~ ^{for} all charges on his return. Christ asks, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him who fell among the thieves? And he said, he that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, go, and do thou likewise."

Here Jesus wished to give his disciples a lesson in the moral obligations binding upon man to his fellow-man. And whoever neglects to carry out these principles, illustrated by this lesson, are not commandment keepers, but, like the Levite, they break the law of God that they pretend to revere, while there are those who, like the Samaritan, make no pretensions to exalted piety, yet

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have a high sense of the moral obligation due their fellow-men, and whose charity and kindness is far greater than some who profess great love to God but fail in good works toward his creatures.

Those are truly loving their neighbor as themselves, who realize their responsibilities and claims that suffering Humanity has upon them, and carry out the principles of God's law in their daily lives. "And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast^{#77} _[#26p77] answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Christ here shows the lawyer that the true fruits of piety are to love God with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves. "This do," said he, not merely believe but do, "and thou shalt live." It is not alone the professed belief in the binding claims of God's law, that makes the Christian, but also the carrying out of that law.

In the parable Christ exalts the Samaritan above the Priest and Levite who were great sticklers for the letter of the law in the ten commandments. The one obeyed the spirit of these commandments, while the other was content to profess an exalted faith in them; but what is faith without works?

When the advocates of the law of God plant their feet firmly upon its principles, showing that they are not merely loyal in name but loyal at heart, carrying out in their daily lives the spirit of God's commandments, and exercising true benevolence to man, then will they have moral power to move the world. It is impossible for those who profess allegiance to the law of God, to cor-

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rectly represent the principles of that sacred decalogue while slighting its holy injunctions to love our neighbor as ourselves.

The most eloquent sermon that can be preached upon the law of the ten commandments, is to do them. Obedience should be made a personal duty. Negligence of this duty is flagrant sin. God lays us under obligations not only to secure Heaven ourselves,^[#26p78] but to feel it a binding #78 duty to show others the way, and, through our care and disinterested love, to lead towards Christ those who come within the sphere of our influence.

The singular absence of principle that characterizes the lives of many professed Christians, is alarming. Their disregard of God's law disheartens those who recognize its sacred claims, and operates to turn those from the truth who would otherwise accept it.

It is necessary for a proper knowledge of ourselves, to look into the mirror and there discover our own defects, and avail ourselves of the blood of Christ, the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, where we may wash our robes of character and remove the stains of sin. Many refuse to see their errors and correct them, they do not want a true knowledge of themselves.

If we would reach a high attainment in moral and spiritual excellence, we must live for it. We are under personal obligation to society to do this, in order to exert an influence continually in favor of God's law. We should let our light shine so that all may see that the influence of the sacred gospel is upon our hearts and lives, that we walk in obedience to its commands and violate none of its principles. We are accountable to the world, in a great degree, for the souls of those around us. Our words and deeds are constantly telling for or against Christ and the law of God,

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#79 which he came upon the earth to^[#26p79] vindicate. Let the world see that we are not selfishly narrowed up to our own exclusive interests and our religious joys, but that we are liberal, and desire them to share our blessings and privileges, through the sanctification of the truth.

Let them see that the religion which we profess does not close up nor freeze over the avenues to the soul, making us unsympathizing and exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as he did to the benefit of man, cherishing a spirit of wise benevolence. We should then see many souls following the light that shines from our precept and example.

We should all cultivate an amiable disposition and subject ourselves to the control of conscience. The spirit of the truth makes better men and women of those who receive it in their hearts. It works like leaven till the entire being is brought into conformity to its principles. It opens the heart that has been frozen by avarice; it opens the hand that has ever been closed to human suffering; and charity and kindness are seen as its fruits.

God requires that all of us should be self-sacrificing workers. Every part of the truth has a practical application to our daily lives. Blessed are they that hear the word of the Lord and keep it. Hearing is not enough, we must act, we must do. It is in the doing of the commandments that there is great reward. Those who give practical^[#26p80] demonstrations of their benevolence by their sympathy and compassionate acts towards the poor, the suffering, and the unfortunate, not only relieve the sufferers, but contribute largely to their own happiness, and are in the way of securing health of soul and body. Isaiah has plainly described the work that God will accept and bless his people in doing.

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"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him? and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity, and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day; 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."

The sympathy which exists between the mind_[#26p81] and the body is very great. When one #81 is affected the other responds to that affection. The condition of the mind has much to do with the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, under a consciousness of right-doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it will create a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healer, and those who are abundant in benefiting others, will realize that wondrous blessing in their hearts and lives.

If your thoughts dear Bro. and Sr., were more directed in the channel of caring for others,

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your own souls would be more blessed. You both have too little human sympathy. You do not bring your feelings to the necessity of others. You hold yourselves too rigid and unsympathizing. You have become stern, exacting, and overbearing. You are in danger of making yourselves a conscience for others. You have your own ideas of Christian duties and propriety and you would gauge others by those ideas; this is overreaching the bounds of right.

Other people have opinions and marked traits of character which cannot be assimilated to your peculiar views. You also have defects and faults as well as your brethren and sisters, and it is well to remember this when a difference arises. Your wrong-doing is just as grievous to them as theirs is^[#26p82] to you, and you should be as lenient to them as you desire that they should be to you. You both need greater love and sympathy for others, like unto the tenderness of Jesus.

In your own house you should exercise kindness, speaking gently to your child, treating him affectionately, refraining to reprove him for every little error, lest he become hardened by continual fault-finding.

You should cultivate the charity and long-suffering of Christ. You frequently counteract the good you have done by a watchful suspicious spirit in regard to the motives and conduct of others. You are cherishing a feeling that is chilling in its influence, that repulses but does not attract and win. You must be willing to become as yielding and forbearing in your disposition as you desire others to be. Selfish love of your own opinions and your own ways will, in a great measure, destroy your power to do the good you are desirous of doing.

Sister C---, you have too much of the spirit of ruling. You are very sensitive; if your will

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is crossed you feel very much injured; self rises in arms for you have not a meek and teachable spirit. You will need to watch closely upon this point; in short, you need a thorough conversion before your influence can be what it should be. The spirit you manifest will make you miserable if you continue to cherish it. You will see the mistakes of others and be so eager to correct them that you will overlook your own faults^[#26p83] and ^{#83} you will have hard work to remove the mote from your brother's eye while there is a beam obstructing your own vision.

God does not wish you to make your conscience a criterion for others. You have a duty to perform which is to make yourself cheerful and to cultivate unselfishness in your feelings until it will be your greatest pleasure to make all around you happy.

Both of you need to soften your hearts and be imbued with the spirit of Christ, that you may, while living in an atmosphere of cheerfulness and benevolence, help those about you to be healthy and happy also. You have imagined that cheerfulness was not in accordance with the religion of Christ. This is a mistake. We may have true Christian dignity and at the same time be cheerful and pleasant in our deportment. Cheerfulness without levity is one of the Christian graces. You should guard against taking narrow views of religion or you will limit your influence and become an unfaithful steward of God.

Forbear reprimanding and censuring. You are not adapted to reprove. Your words would only wound and sadden, not cure and reform. You should overcome the habit of picking at little things you think amiss. Be broad, be generous and charitable in your judgment of people and things. Open your hearts to the light. Remember that Duty has a twin-sister with is Love; these

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#84 united can accomplish almost everything, but separated, neither is capable of good. [#26p84]

It is right that you should both cherish integrity and be true to your sense of right. The straight path of duty should be yours from choice. The love of property, the love of pleasure and friendship, should never influence you to sacrifice one principle of right. You should be firm in the dictates of an enlightened conscience and your convictions of duty, but you should guard against bigotry and prejudice. Do not run into a Pharisaical spirit.

You are now sowing seed in the great field of life. That which you now sow you will one day reap. Every thought of your mind, every emotion of your soul, every word of your tongue, every act you perform, is seed that will bear fruit for good or evil. The reaping time is not far distant. All our works are passing in review before God. All our actions and the motives which prompted them, are to be open for the inspection of angels and of God.

#85 You should come into harmony, as much as possible, with your brethren and sisters. You should surrender yourselves to God and leave off your sternness and your disposition to find fault. You should yield your own spirit and take in its place the spirit of the dear Saviour. Reach up and grasp his hand that the touch may electrify you and charge you with the sweet properties of his own matchless character. You may open your hearts to his love and let his power transform you and his grace be your strength. Then [#26p85] will you have a powerful influence for good. Your moral strength will be equal to the closest test of character. Your integrity will be pure and sanctified. Then will your light break forth as the morning.

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You both need to come more in sympathy with other minds. Christ is our example; he identified himself with suffering humanity; he made the necessities of others a consideration of his own. When his brethren suffered, he suffered with them. Any slight or neglect of his disciples is as done to Christ himself. Thus he says, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink."

Dear brother and sister, you should seek for more harmonious characters. The absence of one essential qualification may render the actions of the rest almost inefficient. The principles you profess should be carried into every thought, word, and act. Self should be crucified and the entire being made subordinate to the Lord.

The church is greatly deficient in love and humanity. Some preserve a cold and chilling reserve and iron dignity that repels those who are brought within its influence. This spirit is contagious; it creates an atmosphere that is withering to good impulses and good resolves; it chokes the natural current of human sympathy, cordiality and love; under its influence people become constrained, and their social and generous attributes are destroyed for want of exercise. Not only is [#26p86] the spiritual health affected, but the physical health suffers by this unnatural depression. #86 The gloom and chill of this unsocial atmosphere is reflected upon the countenance. The faces of those who are benevolent and sympathetic, will shine with the luster of true goodness, while those who do not cherish kindly thoughts and unselfish motives, express in their faces the sentiments cherished in their hearts.

Sister C---, your feelings toward your sister are not exactly as God would have them. She needed sisterly affection from you and less dictating and fault-finding. Your course with her has

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caused a depression of spirit and anxiety of mind injurious to her health. Be careful lest you oppress and discourage your own sister. You cannot bear anything from her, and you resent anything she says that has the appearance of crossing your track.

Your sister has a positive temperament. She has a work to do for herself in this respect. She should be more yielding, but you must not expect to exert a beneficial influence over her while you are so exacting, and lacking in love and sympathy towards one who bears to you the close relations of a sister, and is also united with you in the faith. You have both erred. You have both given room to the enemy, and self has had much to do with your feelings and actions in regard to each other.

#87 Sister C, you have an inclination to dictate to your husband, your sister, and all those around you. Your sister has suffered in her mind very much, but this she could have borne had she surrendered herself to God and trusted in him. But God, is displeased with your course towards her. It is unnatural and all wrong. She is no more unyielding in her disposition than you are in yours. When two such positive temperaments come in contact with each other, it is very bad for both. You should both of you be converted anew and transformed into the divine likeness. You would better err, if you err at all, on the side of mercy and forbearance than that of intolerance. Mild measures, soft answers, and pleasant words, are much better fitted to reform and save, than severity and harshness. A little too much unkindness may place persons beyond your reach, while a conciliatory spirit would be the means of binding them to you, and you might then establish them in the right way. You should be actuated by a forgiving spirit also, and give due credit to every

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good purpose and action of those around you. Speak words of commendation to your husband, your child, your sister, and all with whom you are associated. Continual censure blights and darkens the life of any one.

Do not reproach the Christian religion by jealousy and intolerance towards others. This will but poorly recommend your belief to them. No one has ever been reclaimed^[#26,88] from a wrong position by censure and reproach, but many have thus been driven from the truth, and steeled their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle and winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. God requires us to have that charity that suffereth long and is kind. #88

The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others; for many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith, whose opinions, habits and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony, but, with the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, looking forward to the same Heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful.

There are scarcely two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one may not be the trials of another, and our hearts should be ever open to kindly sympathy and all aglow with the love Jesus had for all his brethren.

Conquer your disposition to be exacting with your son, lest too frequent reproof make your presence disagreeable to him, and your counsels hateful. Bind him to your heart, not by foolish indulgence, but by the silken cords of love. You can be firm yet kind. Christ must be your helper. Love will be the means of drawing other hearts to

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#89 yours,^[#26p89] and your influence may establish them in the good and right way.

I have warned you against a spirit of censure, and I would again caution you in regard to that fault. Christ sometimes reprov'd with severity, and in some cases it may be necessary for us to do so; but we should consider that while Christ knew the exact condition of the ones he rebuked, and just the amount of reproof they could bear, and what was necessary to correct their course of wrong, he also knew just how to pity the erring, comfort the unfortunate, and encourage the weak. He knew just how to keep souls from despondency, and to inspire them with hope, because he was acquainted with the exact motives and peculiar trials of every mind. He could not make a mistake.

But we may misjudge motives, we may be deceived by appearances, we may think we are doing right to reprove wrong, and go too far, censure too severely, wound where we wished to heal; or we may exercise sympathy unwisely, and counteract, in our ignorance, reproof that is merited and timely. Our judgment may be wrong, but Jesus was too wise to err. He reprov'd with pity, and loved those he rebuked with a divine love.

The Lord requires us to be submissive to his will, subdued by his spirit, and sanctified to his service. Selfishness must be put away, and we must overcome every defect in our characters as Christ overcame. In order to accomplish this work
#90 we must die daily to self.^[#26p90] Said Paul, "I die daily." he had a new conversion every day, an advance step toward Heaven. To gain daily victories in the divine life is the only course that God approves.

The Lord is gracious, of tender pity, and plenteous in mercy, He knows our needs and weaknesses, and he will help our infirmities if we

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only trust in him and believe that he will bless us and do great things for us.

Epistle Number Four.

During the tent-meeting in 1874, and after its close was an important time for S--- F---. Had there been a pleasant and commodious house of worship there, more than double the number that was really gained, would have taken their stand for the truth.

God works with our efforts. We may close the way for sinners by our negligence and selfishness. There should have been great diligence in seeking to save those who were still in error, yet interested in the truth. There is as wise generalship needed in the service of Christ, as over the battalions of an army that protects the life and liberty of the people. It is not every one who can labor judiciously for the salvation of souls. We must not enter into the Lord's work hap-hazard and expect success. The Lord needs men of mind, men of thought. Jesus calls for^[#26p91] co-workers, #91 not blunderers. God wants right-thinking and intelligent men to do the great work necessary to the salvation of souls.

Mechanics, lawyers, merchants, men of all trades and professions, educate themselves for their business that they may become masters of it. Should the followers of Christ be less intelligent, and while professedly engaged in his service, be ignorant of the ways and means to be employed? The enterprise of gaining everlasting life is above every earthly consideration. In leading souls to Jesus there must be a knowledge of human nature and a study of the human mind. It requires much careful thought and fervent prayer in order to know how to approach men and women upon the great subject of truth.

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Some rash, impulsive, yet honest souls, after a pointed discourse has been given, will accost those who are not with us in a very abrupt manner, and make the truth, which we desire them to receive, repulsive to them. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

Business men and politicians study courtesy. It is their policy to make themselves as attractive as possible. They study to render their address and manners such that they may have the greatest influence over the minds of those about them. They use their knowledge and abilities as skillfully as possible in order to gain this object.

There is a vast amount of rubbish brought #92 forward by the professed believers in Christ, [#26p92] which blocks up the way to the cross. Notwithstanding all this, there are some who are so deeply convicted that they will come through every discouragement and will surmount every obstacle in order to gain the truth. But had the believers in the truth purified their minds by obeying the truth, had they felt the importance of knowledge and refinement of manners in Christ's work, where one soul has been save there might have been twenty.

Again, after souls have been converted to the truth, they need to be looked after. The zeal of many seems to fail as soon as a measure of success attends their efforts. They do not seem to realize that these newly converted ones need nursing, watchful attention, help and encouragement. They should not be left alone, a prey to Satan's most powerful temptations; they need to be educated in regard to their duties, to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, visited and prayed with. These souls need the meat apportioned to every man in due season.

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No wonder that some become discouraged and linger by the way and are left for wolves to devour. Satan is upon the track of all. He sends his agents forth to gather back to his ranks the souls he has lost. There should be more fathers and mothers to take these babes in the truth to their hearts and encourage them and pray for them, that their faith be not confused.

Preaching is a small part of the work to ^{#93} be done for the salvation of souls. God's Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and he places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires his church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver.'

We all need to study character and manner that we may know how to deal judiciously with different minds, that we may use our best endeavors to help them to a correct understanding of the word of God, and to a true Christian life. We should read the Bible with them and draw their minds away from temporal things to their eternal interests.

It is the duty of God's children to be missionaries for him, to become acquainted with those who need help. If one is staggering under temptation, his case should be taken up carefully and managed wisely, for his eternal interest is at stake, and the words and acts of those laboring for him may be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death.

Sometimes a case presents itself that should be made a prayerful study. The person must be shown his true character, understand his own peculiarities of disposition and tempera-

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#94 ment, and see his infirmities. He should be^[#26p94] judiciously handled. If he can be reached, if his heart can be touched by this wise and patient labor, he can be bound with strong cords to Christ and led to trust in God.

Oh, when a work like this is done, all the heavenly court look and rejoice, for a precious soul has been rescued from Satan's snare and saved from death! Oh, will it not pay to work intelligently for the salvation of souls? Christ paid the price of his own life for them, and shall his followers ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Shall we not work in unison with the Master? Shall we not appreciate the worth of souls for whom our Saviour died?

Some efforts have been made to interest children in the cause, but not enough. Our Sabbath-schools should be made more interesting. The public schools have of late years greatly improved their methods of teaching. Object lessons, pictures and blackboards are used to make difficult lessons clear to the youthful mind. Just so may present truth be simplified and made intensely interesting to the active minds of the children.

Parents who could be approached in no other way, are frequently reached through their children. Sabbath-school teachers can instruct the children in the truth, and they will, in turn, take it into the home circle. But few teachers seem to understand the importance of this branch of the work. The modes of teaching which^[#26p95] have been adopted^[#26p95] with such success in the public schools could be employed with similar results in the Sabbath-schools, and be the means of bringing children to Jesus and educating them in Bible truth. This will do far more good than religious excitement of an emotional character that passes off as rapidly as it comes.

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The love of Christ should be cherished. More faith is needed in the work we believe is to be done before the coming of Christ. There should be more self-denying, self-sacrificing labor in the right direction. There should be thoughtful, prayerful study how to work to the best advantage. Careful plans should be matured. We have minds among us that can invent and carry out if they will only be put to use. Great results would follow well-directed and intelligent efforts.

The prayer-meetings should be the most interesting gatherings that are held; but these are frequently ill-managed. Many attend the preaching, but neglect the prayer-meeting. Here again thought is required. Plans should be laid, and wisdom sought of God, how to conduct the meetings so they will be interesting and attractive. The people hunger for the bread of life. If they find it at the prayer-meeting they will go there to receive it.

Long, prosy talks and prayers are out of place anywhere and especial in the social meeting. Those who are forward and ever ready to speak, are allowed to crowd out the testimony of the timid and retiring. Those^[#26p96] who are most ^{#96} superficial generally have the most to say. Their prayers are long-spun and mechanical. They weary the angels and the people who listen to them. Our prayers should be short and right to the point. Let the long, tiresome petitions be left for the closet if any have such to offer. Let the spirit of God into your hearts and it will sweep away all dry formality.

Music can be a great power for good, yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and then it is left to blunder along losing its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have

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beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering.

But it is sometimes more difficult to discipline the singers and keep them in working order, than to improve the habits of praying and exhorting. Many want to do things after their own style, object to consultation, are impatient under leadership. Well-matured plans are needed in the service of God. Common sense is an excellent thing in the worship of the Lord. The thinking powers should be consecrated to Christ, and ways and means should be devised to serve him best. The church of God who are trying to do good by living out the truth and seeking to save souls, can be a power in the world if they will be disciplined by the Spirit of the Lord. They must not feel that they can go hap-hazard at work for eternity.

As a people, we lose much by lack of sympathy one with the other, a want of sociability. He who talks of independence and shuts himself up to himself, is not filling the position that God designed he should. We are all children of God, mutually dependent upon each other for happiness. The claims of God and of Humanity are upon us. We must all act our part in this life. It is the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us in sympathy with our brethren, and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others. The happiness of Heaven is in the pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels, and with the redeemed who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We cannot be happy while we are wrapped up in our interest for ourselves. We should live in this world to win souls to the Saviour. If we injure others, we

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injure ourselves also. If we bless others, we also bless ourselves, for the influence of every good deed is reflected back upon our own hearts.

We are in duty bound to help one another. It is not always that we are brought in contact with social Christians, those who are amiable and mild. Many have not received a proper education, their characters are warped, they are hard and gnarled and #26p98 seem to be crooked in every way; while we help these to see and correct their defects, we must be careful not to become impatient and irritable over our neighbor's faults. There are disagreeable ones who profess Christ, but the beauty of Christian grace will transform them if they will set diligently about the work of obtaining the meekness and gentleness of Him they follow, remembering that "None of us liveth to himself." #98

Co-workers with Christ, what an exalted position! Where is to be found the self-sacrificing missionaries in these large cities? The Lord needs workers in his vineyard. We should fear to rob God of the time he claims from us; we should fear to spend it in idleness or in the adornment of the body, appropriating to foolish purposes the precious hours God has given us to become conversant with our Bibles, to devote to prayer, to labor for the good of our fellow-beings, and fit ourselves and them for the great work devolving upon us.

Mothers spend unnecessary labor upon garments with which to beautify the persons of themselves and their children. It is our duty to dress ourselves plainly and to clothe our children neatly, without useless ornament, embroidery or display, taking care not to foster in them a love of dress that will prove their ruin, but seeking rather to cultivate the Christian graces. We can none of us be excused from our responsibilities, and in no case can we stand clear before the throne of God

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#99 [#26p99] unless we do the work that the Master has left for us to do.

Missionaries for God are wanted, faithful men and women who will not shirk responsibility. Judicious labor will accomplish good results. There is real work to do. The truth should be brought before people in a careful manner by those who unite meekness with wisdom. We should not hold ourselves aloof from our fellow-men, but come close to them, for their souls are as precious as our own. We can carry the light into their homes, with a softened and subdued spirit plead with them to come up to the exalted privilege offered them, pray with them when it seems proper, and show them there are higher attainments they may reach, and then guardedly speak to them of the sacred truths of these last days.

There are more gatherings for singing than prayer among our people, but even these meetings can be conducted in so reverential, yet cheerful a manner that they may exert a good influence. There is, however, too much jesting, idle conversation and gossiping to make these seasons beneficial by elevating the thoughts and refining the manners.

There has been too much of a divided interest at S---- F-- --. When a new excitement is raised, there are those who cast their influence on the wrong side. Every man and woman should be on guard when there are deceptions abroad calculated to lead away from the truth. There are those who are ever ready to see and hear some new and

#100 [#26p100] strange thing, and the enemy of souls has, in these large cities, plenty to inflame the curiosity and keep the mind diverted from the great and sanctifying truths of these last days.

If every fluctuating religious excitement leads some to neglect to sustain fully, by their

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presence and influence, the minority who believe unpopular truth, there will be much weakness in the church where there should be strength. Satan takes various means by which to accomplish his purposes, and if, under the guise of popular religion, he can lead off vacillating and unwary ones from the path of truth, he has accomplished much in dividing the strength of the people of God.

This fluctuating revival enthusiasm, that comes and goes like the tides, carries a delusive exterior that deceives many honest persons into believing it the true Spirit of the Lord. It multiplies converts; those of excitable temperament, the weak and yielding flock to its standard, but when the wave recedes, they are found stranded on the beach. Be not deceived by false teachers, nor led by vain words. The enemy of souls is sure to have enough dishes of pleasing fables to suit the appetites of all.

There will ever be flashing meteors that arise, but the trail of light they leave goes out immediately in darkness that seems denser than it was before. These sensational religious excitements, that are created by the^[#26p101] relation of #101 anecdotes and the exhibition of eccentricities and oddities, are all surface work, and those of our faith who are charmed and infatuated by these flashes of light, will never build up the cause of God. They are ready to withdraw their influence upon the slightest occasion, and induce others to attend those gatherings where they hear that which weakens the soul, and brings confusion to the mind. It is this withdrawal of the interest from the work that makes the cause of God languish.

We must be steadfast in the faith, we must not be movable. We have our work before us which is to cause the light of truth, as revealed in the law of God, to shine in upon other minds and

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lead them out of darkness. This work requires determined, persevering energy, and a fixed purpose to succeed.

There are those in the church who need to cling to the pillars of our faith, to settle down and find rock bottom, instead of drifting on the surface of excitement and moving from impulse. There are spiritual dyspeptics in the church. They are self-made invalids; their spiritual debility is the result of their own wavering course; they are tossed about here and there by the changing winds of doctrine, often confused and thrown into uncertainty because they move entirely by feeling; sensational Christians; they are hungry for something new and diverse; strange doctrines confuse their faith; they are worthless to the cause of

#102 truth.[#26p102]

God calls for men and women of stability, of firm purpose, who can be relied upon in seasons of danger and trial, who are as firmly rooted and grounded in the truth as the eternal hills, who cannot be swerved to the right or to the left, but move straight onward and are always found on the right side. There are those who, in time of religious peril, may be almost always looked for among the ranks of the enemy, if they have any influence it is on the wrong side. They do not feel under moral obligation to give all their strength to the truth they profess. Such will receive a reward according to their works.

Those who do little for the Saviour in the salvation of souls, and in keeping themselves right before God, will gain but little spiritual muscle. We need to continually use the strength we have that it may increase and develop. As disease is the result of the violation of natural laws, so is spiritual declension the result of a continued transgression of the law of God. And yet the very

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transgressors may profess to keep all God's commandments.

We must come nearer to God and place ourselves in a closer connection with Heaven, and carry out the principles of the law in the minutest actions of our every-day lives, in order to be spiritually whole. God has given his servants ability, talents to be used for his glory, not to lay idle or be wasted. God has given his servants light and knowledge_[#26p103] of his will, to be communicated #103 to others and, in imparting to others, we become living channels of light. If we do not exercise our spiritual strength we become feeble, as the limbs of the body become powerless when the invalid is compelled to long inaction. It is use that gives power.

Nothing will give greater spiritual strength and increase earnestness and depth of feeling, than visiting and ministering to the sick and the desponding, helping them to see the light and to fasten their faith upon Jesus. There are disagreeable duties that somebody must do or souls will be left to perish. Christians will find a blessing in doing these duties, however unpleasant they may be. Christ took the disagreeable task upon himself of coming from the abode of purity and unsurpassed glory to dwell, a man among men, in a world seared and blackened by crime, violence, and iniquity. He did this to save souls, and shall the objects of such amazing love and unparalleled condescension excuse their lives of selfish ease? shall they choose their own pleasure, and follow their own inclinations, and leave souls to perish in darkness because they will meet with disappointment and rebuffs if they labor to save them? Christ paid an infinite price for man's redemption, and shall he say, My Lord, I will not labor in the vineyard, I pray thee have me excused!

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#104 God calls for those who are at ease in Zion to be up and doing. Will they not listen to the Master's voice? God wants prayerful, faithful workers who will sow beside all waters. Those who labor thus will be surprised to find how trials, resolutely borne in the name and strength of Jesus, will give firmness to the faith, and renew the courage. In the path of humble obedience is safety and power, comfort and hope. The reward will finally be lost by those who do nothing for Jesus. Weak hands will be unable to cling to the Mighty One, feeble knees will fail to support in the day of adversity. Bible readers and Christians workers will receive the glorious prize, and hear the Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

The blessing of God will rest upon those in S---- F---- who have the cause of Christ at heart. The free-will offerings of our brethren and sisters, made in faith and love to the crucified Redeemer, will bring back blessings to them, for God marks and remembers every act of liberality in his saints. In preparing a house of worship there must be great exercise of faith and trust in God. In business transactions, those who venture nothing make but little advancement; why not have faith also in the enterprise of God and invest in His cause.

#105 Some, when in poverty, are generous of their little, but become penurious as they acquire property. Why they have so little faith, is because they do not keep moving forward, as they prosper, and give even at a sacrifice to the cause of God.

In the Jewish system it was required that beneficence should first be shown to the Lord. At the harvest and the vintage, the first-fruits of the fields, corn, wine and oil, were to be consecrated as an offering to the Lord. The gleanings and the

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corners of the fields were reserved for the poor. Our gracious Heavenly Father has not neglected the wants of the poor. The first-fruits of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, were to be offered to the Lord; and at the feast it was commanded that the poor, the widows, the orphans and the strangers, should be invited. At the close of every year all were required to make solemn oath whether or not they had done according to the command of God.

This arrangement was made by the Lord to impress upon the people that in every matter he must be first. They were, by this system of benevolence, to bear in mind that their gracious Master was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds. That the God of Heaven sent them sunshine and rain for their seed-time and harvest, and that every thing they possessed was of his creation. All was the Lord's and he had made them stewards of his goods.

The liberality of the Jews in the construction of the tabernacle and the erection of the temple, illustrate a spirit of benevolence_[#26p106] which #106 has not been equalled by Christians of any later date. They were just freed from their long bondage in Egypt, they were wanderers in the wilderness, yet scarcely were they delivered from the armies of the Egyptians who pursued them in their hasty journey, when the word of the Lord came to Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering."

His people had small possessions and no flattering prospect of adding to them; but an object was before them, to build a tabernacle for God. The Lord had spoken and they must obey his voice. They withheld nothing. All gave with a

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willing hand, not a certain amount of their increase, but a large portion of their actual possessions. They devoted it gladly and heartily to the Lord. They pleased him by so doing. Was it not all his? Had he not given them all they possessed? If he called for it was it not their duty to give back to the lender his own?

#107 No urging was needed. The people brought even more than was required, and they were told to desist, for there was already more than could be appropriated. Again in building the temple, the call for means met with a hearty response. The people did not give reluctantly; they rejoiced in the prospect of a building being erected for the worship of God. They donated^[#26p107] more than enough for the purpose. David blessed the Lord before all the congregation, and said, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort, for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Again, in his prayer, David gives thanks in these words, "O Lord, our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand and is all thine own."

David well understood from whom came all his bounties; would that those of this day who rejoice in a Saviour's love could realize that their silver and gold is the Lord's and should be used to promote his glory, not grudgingly retained to enrich and gratify themselves. He has an indisputable right to all that he has lent his creatures. All that they possess is his.

There are high and holy objects that require means; they will, thus invested, yield to the giver more elevated and permanent enjoyment than if they were expended in personal gratification or selfishly hoarded for the greed of gain. When God calls for our treasure, whatever the

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amount may be, the willing response makes the gift a consecrated offering to him, and lays up for the giver a treasure in Heaven that moth cannot corrupt, nor thieves break in and steal, nor fire consume. The investment is safe. The money is placed in bags that have no holes. It is secure.

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Can Christians, who boast of a broader light than had the Hebrews, give less than they? Can Christians, living near the close of time, be satisfied with their offerings when not half so large as were the Jews? Their liberality was to benefit their own nation, the work in these last days extends to the entire world. The message of truth is to go to all nations, tongues and people; its publications, printed in many different languages, are to be scattered abroad like the leaves in Autumn.

It is written, "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind;" and again, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked." Let us inquire what would our Saviour have done in our circumstances, what would have been his efforts for the salvation of souls? This question is answered by the example of Christ. He left his royalty, and lay aside his glory, and sacrificed his riches, and clothed his divinity with humanity that he might reach men where they were. His example shows that he laid down his life for sinners.

Satan told Eve that a high state of felicity could be gained through the gratification of unlicensed appetite. But the promise of God to man is through denial of self. When Christ was suffering in agony upon the shameful cross, for man's redemption, human nature was exalted. Only by the cross can the human family be elevated

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to connect with Heaven. Self-denial and crosses meet us at every step of our Heavenward journey.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of Heaven. The spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan. Christ's self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. He gave all he had and then gave himself that man might be saved. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle illustrated there is to give, give. This carried out in actual benevolence and good works is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness, but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death.

To carry the truth to the population of the earth, to rescue them from their guilt and indifference, is the mission of the followers of Christ. Men must have the truth in order to be sanctified through it, and we are the channels of God's light. Our talents, our means, our knowledge, are not merely for our benefit, they are to use for the salvation of souls, to elevate man from his life of sin and bring him, through Christ, to the Infinite God.

We should be zealous workers in this cause, seeking to lead sinners, repenting and believing, to a divine Redeemer, to impress them with a high and exalted sense of God's love to man. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that #26p110whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life. What an incomparable love is this! A theme for the most profound meditation! The amazing love of God for a world that did not love him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul, and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. Men who are crazy for gain and are disappointed and unhappy in their pursuit of the world, need

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the knowledge of this truth to quiet the restless hungering and thirsting of their souls.

Missionaries for God are wanted in your large city, to carry light to those who sit in the shadow of death. Experienced hands are needed, in the meekness of wisdom and the strength of faith, to lift weary souls to the bosom of a compassionate Redeemer. Oh, selfishness! What a curse! It prevents us from engaging in the service of God. It prevents us from perceiving the claims of duty, which should set our hearts aglow with fervent zeal. All our energies should be turned to the obedience of Christ.

To divide our interest with the leaders of error, is aiding the wrong side and giving advantage to our foes. The truth of God knows no compromise with sin, no connection with artifice, no union with transgression. Soldiers are wanted who will always answer to the roll-call and be ready for immediate action. Not those who, when needed, are found aiding the power of the enemy.

Ours is a great work. Yet there are [#26p111] #111 many who profess to believe these sacred truths but are paralyzed by the sophistry of Satan and are doing nothing for God but rather hinder his cause. When will they act like those who wait for the Lord? When will they show a zeal in accordance with their means, and soothe their conscience with a plan for doing some great thing for the cause of God after their death. They make a will, donating a large sum to the church and its various interests, and then settle down with a feeling that they have done all that is required of them. Wherein have they denied self by this act? They have, on the contrary, exhibited the true essence of selfishness. When they have no longer any use for their money they propose to give it to God. But they will retain it as long as they can,

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till they are compelled to relinquish it by a messenger that cannot be turned aside.

Such a will is often an evidence of real covetousness. God has made us all his stewards, and in no case authorized us to neglect our duty or leave it for others to do. The call for means to advance the cause of truth will never be more urgent than now. Our money will never do a greater amount of good than at the present time. Every day of delay in rightly appropriating it, is limiting the period in which it will do good in the saving of souls. If we leave others to accomplish that which God has left for us to do, we wrong ourselves and
#112 him who gave us all we [#26p112] have. How can others do our work of benevolence any better than we can do it ourselves? God would have every man an executor of his own will in this matter, during his lifetime.

Adversity, accident or intrigue, may cut off forever meditated acts of benevolence, when he who has accumulated a fortune is no longer by to guard it. It is sad that so many neglect the golden opportunity to do good in the present, but wait to be cast out of their stewardship before giving back to the Lord the means which he has lent them to be used for his glory.

One marked feature in the teachings of Christ, is the frequency and earnestness with which he rebuked the sin of covetousness and pointed out the danger of worldly acquisitions and the inordinate love of gain. In the mansions of the rich, in the temple and in the streets, he warned those who inquired after salvation, "Take heed and beware of covetousness." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

It is this increasing devotion to money getting, the selfishness which the desire of gain begets, that deadens the spirituality of the church and removes the favor of God from her. When the

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head and hands are constantly occupied with planning and toiling for the accumulation of riches, the claims of God and Humanity are forgotten.

If God has blessed us with prosperity it is not that our time and attentions should be [#26p113] #113 diverted from him and given to that which he has lent us. The giver is greater than the gift. We have been bought with a price, we are not our own. Have we forgotten that infinite price paid for our redemption? Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish ease and indulgence?

What if Christ had left his work, becoming weary in consequence of the ingratitude and abuse that met him on every side! What if he had never reached that period when he said "It is finished!" What if he had returned to Heaven, discouraged by his reception! What if he had never passed through that soul agony in the garden of Gethsemane that forced from his pores great drops of blood!

Christ was joined to his plan of labor to work out redemption for the race, by a love that is without parallel and a devotion to the Father's will. He toiled for the good of man up to the very hour of his humiliation. He spent his life in poverty and self-denial, for the degraded sinner. In a world that was his own he had no place to lay his weary head. We are reaping the fruits of this infinite self-sacrifice, and yet, when labor is to be done, when our money is wanted to aid the work of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls, we shrink from duty and pray to be excused. Ignoble sloth, careless indifference, and wicked selfishness seal our sense to the claims of God.

Oh, must Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, [#26p114] the King of Glory, bear the heavy cross, #114 and wear the thorny crown, and drink the bitter

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cup, while we recline at ease, glorify ourselves and forget the souls he died to redeem by his precious blood? No, let us give while we have the power. Let us do while we have the strength. Let us work while it is day. Let us devote our time and our means to the service of God, that we may have his approbation and receive his reward.

Epistle Number Five.

Dear Bro. H---- L----: I feel very anxious for you that you may accept light and come out of darkness. You have been greatly tempted of Satan; he has used you as his instrument to hinder the work of God. He has thus far succeeded with you, but it need not follow that you should continue in the path of error. I look upon your case with great trembling. I know that God has given you great light. In your sickness last fall the providence of God was dealing with you that you might bear fruit to his glory.

Unbelief was taking possession of your soul, but the Lord afflicted you that you might gain a needed experience. He blessed us in praying for you, and he blessed you in answer to our prayers. The Lord designed to unite our hearts in love and confidence. The Holy Spirit witnessed with your spirit. The power of God in answer to prayer came upon you, but Satan came with temptations^{#115}_[#26p115] and you did not close the door upon him. He entered and has been very busy.

It is the plan of the evil one to work first upon the mind of one, then, through him upon others. He has thus sought to hedge up our way and hinder our labors in the very place where our influence should be most felt, for the prosperity of the cause.

The Lord brought you into connection with his work at ---- -, for a wise purpose; he designed that you should discover the defects in your char-

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acter and overcome them. You know how quickly your spirit chafes when things do not move according to your mind. Would you could understand that all this impatience and irritability must be overcome, or your life will prove an utter failure, you will lose Heaven, and it would have been better had you never been born.

Our cases are pending at the court of Heaven. We are rendering our accounts there day by day. Every one will receive reward according to his works. Burnt-offerings and sacrifices were not acceptable to God in ancient times, unless the spirit was right with which the gift was offered. Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." All the money on earth cannot buy the blessing of God or ensure you a single victory.

Many would make any and every sacrifice [#26p116] but the very one they should make, which #116 is to yield themselves, to submit their wills to the will of God. Said Christ to his disciples, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." Here is a lesson in humility. We must all become humble as little children in order to inherit the kingdom.

Our Heavenly Father sees the hearts of men, and he knows their characters better than they do themselves. He sees that some have susceptibilities and powers which, directed in the right channel, might be used to his glory, to aid in the advancement of his work. He puts these persons on trial, and in his wise providence brings them into different positions and under a variety of circumstances, testing them that they may reveal what is in their hearts and the weak points in their characters which have been concealed from their own knowledge.'

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He gives them opportunities to correct these weaknesses, and polish off the rough corners of their natures, and fit themselves for his service, that when he calls them to action they will be ready, and that angels of Heaven may unite their labor with human effort in the work that must be done upon the earth.

#117 God in mercy reveals their hidden defects to men whom he designs shall fill responsible positions, that they may look within and examine critically the complicated emotions and exercises of their own hearts, and detect that ^{#26p117} which is wrong; thus they may modify their dispositions and refine their manners. The Lord in his providence brings men where he can test their moral powers and reveal their motives of actions, that they may improve what is right in themselves and put away that which is wrong. God would have his servants become acquainted with the moral machinery of their own hearts. In order to bring this about, he often permits the fire of affliction to assail them that they may become purified. "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

The purification of the people of God cannot be accomplished without their suffering. God permits the fires of affliction to consume the dross, to separate the worthless from the valuable and let the pure metal shine forth. He passes us from one fire to another, testing our true worth. If we cannot bear these trials, what will we do in the time of trouble! If prosperity or adversity discover falseness, pride or selfishness in our hearts, what

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shall we do when God tries every man's work as by fire, and lays bare the secrets of all hearts!

True grace is willing to be tried; if we are loth to be searched by the Lord, our condition is serious indeed. God is the refiner^[#26p118] and purifier of souls; in the heat of the furnace the dross is separated forever from the true silver and gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test. He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal that it may reflect the radiance of his precious love. #118

God brings his people near him by close, testing trials, by showing them their own weakness and inability, by teaching them to lean upon him, that he is their only help and safeguard. Then his object is accomplished. They are prepared to be used in every emergency, to fill important positions of trust, and to accomplish the grand purposes for which their powers were given them. God takes men upon trial, he proves them on the right hand and on the left, they are thus educated, trained and disciplined.

Jesus, our Redeemer, man's representative and head, endured this testing process. He suffered more than we can be called upon to suffer. He bore our infirmities and was in all points tempted as we are. He did not suffer thus on his own account, but because of our sins; and now relying on the merits of our Overcomer, we may become victors in the name of Jesus.

God's work of refining and purifying must go on until his servants are so humbled, so dead to self, that, when called into active service, their eyes are single to His glory. Then he will accept their efforts, they will not move rashly and from impulse, they will not rush on and imperil the Lord's cause, being^[#26p119] slaves to temptations and passions, followers of their own carnal minds set on fire by Satan. Oh! how fearfully is the #119

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cause of God marred by man's perverse will and unsubdued temper. How much suffering he brings upon himself by following his own headstrong passions! God brings men over the ground again and again, increasing the pressure until a transformation of character and a perfect humility bring them into harmony with Christ, with the spirit of Heaven, and they are victors over themselves.

God has called men from different States, and has been testing and proving them, to see what characters they would develop, and if they could be trusted to keep the fort at - --- ----, whether or not they would supply the deficiencies of the men already there and, seeing the failures they have made, shun the example of those who are not fit to engage in the most sacred work of God.

He has followed men at ---- ---- with continual warnings, reproof and counsel. He has poured great light about those who officiate in his cause there, that the way may be plain before them. But if they prefer to follow after their own wisdom, scorning the light, as did Saul, they will surely go astray and involve the cause in perplexity. Light and darkness have been set before them and they have too often chosen the darkness.

The Laodicean message applies to the people of God who profess to believe present truth. #120 The greater part are lukewarm professors, [#26p120] having a name but no zeal. God signified that he wanted men at the great heart of the work to correct the state of things existing there and to stand like faithful sentinels at their post of duty. He has given them light at every point, to instruct, encourage and confirm them as the case required. But notwithstanding all this, those who should be faithful and true, fervent in Christian zeal, of gracious temper, knowing and loving Jesus ear-

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nestly, are found aiding the enemy to weaken and discourage those whom God is using to build up the work.

The term lukewarm is applicable to this class. They profess to love the truth, yet are deficient in Christian fervor and devotion. They dare not give up wholly and run the risk of the unbeliever, yet they are unwilling to die to self and follow out closely the principles of their faith.

The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease. They are neither cold nor hot, they occupy a neutral position and at same time flatter themselves that they are in need of nothing. The True Witness hates this lukewarmness. He loathes the indifference of this class of persons. Said he, "I would thou wert either cold or hot." They are, as lukewarm water, nauseous to his taste.

They are either unconcerned or selfishly stubborn. They do not engage thoroughly and heartily in the work of God, identifying themselves with its interests, but hold aloof and are ready to leave their posts when their worldly personal interests demand it. The internal work of grace is wanting in their hearts; of such it is said, "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Faith and love are the true riches, the pure gold which the True Witness counsels the lukewarm to buy. However rich we may be in earthly treasure, all our wealth will not enable us to buy the precious remedies that cure the disease of the soul called lukewarmness. Intellect and earthly riches were powerless to remove the defects of the Laodicean church or remedy their deplorable condition. They were blind yet felt that

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they were well off. The Spirit of God did not illumine their minds and they did not perceive their sinfulness, therefore did not feel the necessity of help.

To be without the graces of the Spirit of God is sad indeed, but it is a more terrible condition to be thus destitute of spirituality and of Christ, and yet try to justify ourselves, by telling those who are alarmed for us, that we need not their fears and pity. Fearful is the power of self-deception on the human mind. What blindness! setting light for darkness and darkness for light.

The True Witness counsels us to buy of him gold tried in the fire, white raiment and eye-salve. The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire, is faith and love which maketh the heart rich, for if it has been purged until it is pure and the more it is tested the more brilliant is its luster. The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture that can be bought only of Jesus Christ for a life of willing obedience. The eye-salve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern the evil from the good and detect sin under any guise. God has given eyes to his church, and he requires them to be anointed with wisdom that they may see clearly, but many would put out the eyes of the church if they could, for they would not have their deeds come to the light lest they should be reprov'd. The divine eye-salve will impart clearness to the understanding. Christ is the repository of all graces. He says "Buy of me."

Some may say it is exalting our own merits to expect favor from God through our good works. True we cannot buy one victory with our good works, yet neither can we be victors without them. The purchase which Christ recommends to us is only complying with the conditions he has

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given us. True grace, which, of inestimable value, which will endure the test of trial and adversity, is only obtained through faith and humble, prayerful obedience. Graces that will endure the proofs of affliction and persecution and evidence^[#26p123] #123 their soundness and sincerity, is the gold tried in the fire and found genuine. Christ offers to sell this precious treasure to man, "Buy of me gold tried in the fire."

The dead and heartless performance of duty does not make us Christians, we must get out of a lukewarm condition and experience a true conversion or we shall fail of Heaven.

I was pointed to the providence of God among his people. I was shown that every trial made by the refining, purifying process upon professed Christians proves some to be dross. The fine gold does not always appear. In every religious crisis some fall under temptation. The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church. They are a class whose spirits are not steadfast with God. They go out from us because they are not of us. For when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, many are offended.

Let these look back a few months to the time when they were sitting on the cases of others who were in a similar condition to that which they now occupy. Let them carefully call to mind the exercise of their minds in regard to those tempted ones. Had any one told them then that notwithstanding their zeal and labor to set others right, they would at length be found in a similar position of darkness, they would have said, as did Hazeal^[#26p124] to the prophet, "Is thy servant a dog, #124 that he should do this thing?"

Self-deception is upon them. During the calm what firmness they manifest! what coura-

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geous sailors they make! But when the furious tempests of trial and temptation come, lo! their souls are shipwrecked. Men may have excellent gifts, good ability, splendid qualifications; but one defect, one secret sin indulged, will prove to the character what the worm-eaten plank does to the ship, utter disaster and ruin!

Dear Bro.: God in his providence brought you from your farm to ---- ----, to bear the tests and trials which you could not have where you were. God has given you some testimonies of reproof which you professedly accepted, but your spirit was continually chafed under rebuke. You are like those who walked no more with Jesus after he brought to bear upon them some close, practical truths.

Bro., you did not take hold in faith to correct the defects marked out in your character. You have not humbled your proud spirit before God. You have stood at warfare against the Spirit of God in reproof. Your carnal, unsubdued heart is not subject to control. You have not disciplined yourself. Time and again your uncontrolled temper and spirit of insubordination has gained complete mastery over you. How can such an impulsive, unsubdued soul live among the pure angels?

#125 If it cannot be admitted into Heaven, as you^[#26p125] yourself know, you cannot begin too soon to correct the evil in your nature, be converted, and become as a little child.

Brother, you are proud spirited, lofty in your thoughts and ideas of yourself. All this must be put away. Your relatives have learned to fear these outbreaks of temper. Your tender, God-fearing mother has done her best to soothe and indulge you, and has tried to remove every cause that would produce this self-rising and uncontrollable disposition in her son. But coaxing, and pleading, and seeking to pacify, has led you to

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consider this impulsive temper as incurable, and that it is the duty of your friends to bear with it. All this petting, and excusing, has not remedied the evil, but rather given it license.

You have not fought with this wicked spirit and conquered it. When your way has been crossed you have felt the provocation sufficiently to forget your manhood and that you were created in the image of God and after his likeness. You have sadly defaced and marred that image. You have not had self-control nor power over your will. You have been headstrong and yielded to the power of Satan. Every time that you have given up to passion, and self-rule, and let your feelings run away with your judgment, it has strengthened that set, uncontrolled will. The Lord saw that you knew not yourself, and that unless you saw yourself in your true light and the sinfulness of your course, and how aggravating in the sight of God were_[#26p126] these outbreaks of temper #126 which strengthened at every exhibition, you would surely fail of gaining a seat by the side of the suffering Man of Calvary.

God calls upon you Bro. ----, to repent and be converted, and become as a little child. Unless the truth has a sanctifying influence upon your life to mould your character, you will fail of an inheritance in the kingdom of God.

The Lord in his providence selected you to come more directly into connection with his cause and his work. He took you like an undisciplined soldier, new to the army, and brought you under rules and regulations, through responsibilities and the drilling process. At first you did nobly, and tried to be faithful to your post. You bore trial better than ever before in your life. But Satan came with his specious temptations, and you fell prey to them. The Lord pitied you and laid his hand upon you to save you. He gave you a rich

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experience which you have not benefited by as you should have done, but, like the children of Israel you soon forgot the dealings of God and his great mercies.

Bro. ----, you were raised up in answer to prayer, and God gave you a new lease of life; but you have let jealousy and envy into your soul, and have greatly displeased him. He designed to bring you where you would develop character, see your defects and correct them. [#26p127]

There was a decided failure in your education and discipline during your childhood and youth. Now you have the great lessons of self-control to learn which ought to have been mastered in earlier days. God brought you where your surroundings would be changed, and you could be disciplined by his Holy Spirit, that you might acquire moral power and self-control to make you a conqueror. It will require the strongest effort, the most persevering and unfaltering determination, and the strongest energy to control self. Your spirit has long chafed under restraint, and your temper has raged like a caged lion when your will has been crossed. The education, which should have been the work of the parents, must now be wholly done by yourself. The twig might have been easily bent when young and small; but now how difficult the task after it has grown gnarled and crooked and strong. The parents permitted it thus to be deformed; and now only by the grace of God united with your own persistent efforts, can you become conqueror over your will. You may, through the merits of Christ, part with that which scars and deforms the soul, and develops a misshapen character. You must put away the old man with his errors, and take the new man, Christ Jesus. Adopt his life as your guide, then your talents and intellect will be devoted to God's service.

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Oh! if mothers would only work with wisdom, with calmness and determination, to train and subdue the carnal tempers of their^[#26p128] children, what an amount of sin would be nipped in the bud, and what a host of church trials would be saved! How many families would be happy that are now miserable! Many souls will be eternally lost because of the neglect of parents to properly discipline their children, and teach them submission to authority in their youth. Petting faults and soothing outbreaks, is not laying the axe at the root of the evil, but proves the ruin of thousands of souls. Oh! how will parents answer to God for this fearful neglect of their duty. #128

Bro. ----, you are willing to stand at the head and dictate to others; but will not be dictated to yourself. Your pride fires in a moment at the attempt. Self-love and a haughty spirit are unruly elements in your character, hindering spiritual advancement. Those who have this temperament must take hold of the work zealously and die to self or they will lose Heaven. God makes no compromise with this element as do fond, mistaken parents.

In my last vision I was shown that if you, Bro. ----, refused reproof and correction, and chose your own way, and will not be disciplined, God has no further use for you in connection with his holy work. If you had commenced the work of setting your own soul right with the Lord, you would have seen so great a work to be done for yourself that you would not have spent so much time over the supposed wrongs of Bro. W., dwelling^[#26p129] upon them behind his back. The work #129 of the last thirty years should inspire confidence in the integrity of Bro. W. "Honor to whom honor is due."

Men in responsible positions should improve continually. They must not anchor upon an

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old experience, and feel that it is not necessary to become scientific workers. Man, although the most helpless of God's creatures when he comes into the world, and the most perverse in his nature, is nevertheless capable of constant advancement. He may be enlightened by science, ennobled by virtue, and may progress in mental and moral dignity, until he reaches a perfection of intelligence and purity of character but little lower than the angels. With the light of truth shining in the minds of men, and the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, we cannot conceive what they may be, and what great work they may do.

I know that the human heart is blind to its own true condition. But I cannot leave you, without making an effort to help you. We love you, and we want to see you pressing on to victory. Jesus loves you. He died for you; and he wants you to be saved. We have no disposition to hold you in ---- ---- but we do want you should make thorough work with your own soul, and right every wrong there, and make every effort to master self lest you miss Heaven. This you cannot afford to do. For Christ's sake resist the devil and he will flee from you. [#26p130]

#130

Epistle Number Six.

Dear Bro. and Sister L----: I have been shown that you have erred in the management of your children. You received ideas at ---- from Dr. --- which you have spoken of before the patients, and before your children. They will not bear to be carried out. From Dr. ----'s stand-point they may not appear so objectionable, but viewed from a Christian stand-point they are positively dangerous.

The instructions Dr. ---- has given in regard to shunning physical labor, has proved a great injury to many. The do-nothing system is a

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dangerous one. The necessity for amusements, as he teaches it and enjoins it upon his patients, is a fallacy. In order to occupy the time and engage the mind they are made a substitute for useful, healthful exercise and physical labor. Amusements, such as Dr. ---- recommends, excite the brain more than useful employment.

Physical exercise and labor combined has a happy influence upon the mind, strengthens the muscles, improves the circulation, and gives the invalid the satisfaction of knowing his own power of endurance, whereas, if he is restricted from healthful exercise and physical labor, his attention is turned to himself. He is in constant danger of thinking himself worse than he really is, and of having established within him a diseased imagination which causes him to continually ^{#26p131}fear #131 that he is overtaxing his powers of endurance. As a general thing if he should engage in some well directed labor, using his strength and not abusing it, he would find that physical exercise would prove a more powerful and effective agent in his recovery than even the water treatment he is receiving.

The inactivity of the mental and physical powers, as far as useful labor is concerned, is that which keeps many invalids in a condition of feebleness, which they feel powerless to rise above. It also gives them a greater opportunity to indulge in impure imagination, which indulgence has brought many of them where they are in point of feebleness. They are told they have expended too much vitality in hard labor, when, in nine cases out of ten, the labor they performed was the only redeeming thing in their lives, and has been the means of saving them from utter ruin. While their minds were thus engaged they could not have as favorable an opportunity to debase their bodies and complete the work of de-

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stroying themselves. To have all such persons cease to labor with brain and muscle, is to give them an ample opportunity to be taken captive by the temptations of Satan.

Dr. ---- has recommended that the sexes should mingle together; he has taught that their physical and mental health demand a closer association with each other. Such teaching has done, and is doing, great injury to inexperienced youth and children,^[#26,132] and is a great satisfaction to men and women of questionable character, whose passions have never been controlled, and who, for this reason, are suffering from various debilitating disorders. These persons are instructed from a health stand-point to be much in the company of the opposite sex. Thus a door of temptation is opened before them, passion rouses like a lion within their hearts, and every consideration is overborne; everything elevated and noble is sacrificed to lust. This is an age when the world is teeming with corruption. Were the minds and bodies of men and women in a healthful condition, were the animal passions subject to the higher intellectual powers of the mind, it might be comparatively safe to teach that boys and girls, and the youth of still more mature age, would be benefited by mingling much in each others society. If the minds of the youth of this age were pure and uncorrupted, the girls might have a softening influence upon the minds and manners of the boys, and the boys, with their stronger, firmer natures, might have a tendency to ennoble and strengthen the characters of the girls.

#132

But it is a painful fact that there is not one girl in ahundred who is pure minded, and there is not one boy in ahundred whose morals are untainted. Many that are older have gone to such lengths in dissipation that they are polluted soul and body, and corruption has taken hold of a

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large class who^[#26p133] pass among men and women as polite gentlemen and beautiful ladies. #133
It is not the time to recommend, as beneficial to health, the mingling of the sexes by being as much as possible in each others society. The curse of this corrupt age is the absence of true virtue and modesty.

Dr. L---, you have advanced these ideas in the parlor. The young have heard you, and your remarks have had as great an influence upon your own children as upon others. It would have been better to have left those ideas at ----.

Close application to severe labor is injurious to the growing frames of the young, but where hundreds have broken down their constitutions by over-work alone, inactivity, over-eating, and delicate idleness has sown the seeds of disease in the systems of thousands that are hurrying to swift and sure decay.

Why the youth have so little strength of brain and muscle is because they do so little in the line of useful labor. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy; and they were haughty and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good." Ezek. 16:49, 50.

There are but few of the youth of this degenerate age who can even endure the study necessary to obtain a common education.^[#26p134] Why #134
is this? Why do the children complain of dizziness, headache, bleeding at nose, palpitation, and a sense of lassitude and general weakness? Should this be attributed mainly to their close study? Fond and indulgent parents will sympathize with their children because they fancy their lessons are too great a task, and that their close application to study is ruining their health. True,

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it is not advisable to crowd the minds of the young with too many and too difficult studies. But, parents, have you looked no deeper into this matter than merely to adopt the idea suggested by your children? Have you not given too ready credence to the apparent reason for their indisposition? It becomes parents and guardians to look beneath the surface for the cause of this evil.

In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred the cause searched out and revealed to you would open your understanding to see that it was not the taxation of study alone that was doing the work of injury to your children, but their own wrong habits were sapping the brain and the entire body of its vital energy. The nervous system has become shattered by being often excited, and thus has been laid the foundation for premature and certain decay. Solitary vice is killing thousands and tens of thousands.

#135 Children should have occupation for their time. Proper mental labor and physical out-door exercise will not break the constitutions of your boys. Useful labor and an [#26p135]acquaintance with the mysteries of house-work will be beneficial to your girls, and some out-door employment is positively necessary to their constitution and health. Children should be taught to labor. Industry is the greatest blessing that men, women, and children can have.

You have erred in the education of your children. You have been too indulgent. You have favored them and excused them from labor until, with some of them, it is positively distasteful. Inactivity, lack of well-regulated employment, has injured them greatly. Temptations are on every side ready to ruin the youth for this world and the next. The path of obedience is the only path of safety.

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You have been blind to the power the enemy was having over your children. Household labor, even to weariness, would not have hurt them one-fiftieth part as much as indolent habits have done. They would have escaped many dangers, had they been instructed, at an earlier period, to occupy their time in useful labor. They would not have contracted such a restless disposition for change, and to go into society. They would have escaped many temptations to vanity and to engage in unprofitable amusements, light reading, idle talking, and nonsense. Their time would have passed more to their satisfaction, and without so great temptation to seek the society of the opposite sex, and to excuse themselves in an [#26p136] evil way. Vanity and affection, uselessness and positive sin, have been the result of this indolence. The parents, and especially you, the father, have flattered and indulged them to their great injury. #136

Dear Bro., you have made a sad mistake in standing before the patients in the parlor, as you have frequently done, and exalting yourself and wife. Your own children have learned lessons from those remarks that have given shape to their characters. You will now find it not an easy matter to correct the impressions that have been made. They have thought that as your children they were superior to children in general. They have been proud and self-conceited. You have felt anxious lest the people should not give you the respect due your position as a physician of the Health Institute. This has shown a vein of weakness in you which has hindered your spiritual advancement. It has also led to a jealousy of others, fearing that they would supplant you, or not place the right estimate upon your position and value.

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#137 You also exalted your wife, placing her before the patients as a superior creature. You were like a blind man. You gave her credit for qualifications she did not possess. You should have remembered that your moral worth is estimated by your words, your acts, your deeds. These can never be hidden, but will place you upon the right elevation before your patients. If your interest is manifested for them, if your labor is devoted to them,^[#26p137] they will know it, you will have their confidence and love.

But talk will never make your patients believe that your arduous labor for them has taxed you and exhausted your vitality when they know that they have not had your special attention and care.

The patients will have confidence and love for those who manifest a special interest in them and labor for their recovery.

If you are the one to do this work, which must be done, which cannot be left undone, which the patients pay their money to have done, then you need not by talking, seek to gain esteem and respect, you will as surely have it as you do the work.

You have not been free from selfishness, and therefore you have not had the blessing which God gives his unselfish workmen. Your interest has been divided. You have had such a special care for yourself and yours, that the Lord has had not reason to especially work and care for you. Your course in this respect has disqualified you for your position.

I saw one year ago that you felt competent to manage the Institute yourself alone. Were it yours and you the one to be especially benefited or injured by its losses and gains, you would see it your duty to have an especial care that losses should not occur, and that patients who were

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there upon charity should not drain the Institute of means. You would investigate, you would not have them remain a week longer than it was positively[#26p138] necessary. You would see many plans #138 and ways by which you could reduce expenses and keep up the property of the Institute. But you were merely employed, and the zeal, interest, and ability which you think you possess, to carry on such an institution, does not appear. The patients do not receive the attention for which they have paid and which they have a right to expect. You was shown to me frequently turning away from invalids who were in need of your counsel and advice. You were presented before me as apparently indifferent, seeming rather impatient while scarcely listening to what they were saying which was to them of great importance. You seemed to be in a great hurry, putting them off till some future time, when a very few appropriate words, spoken in sympathy and encouragement, would quiet a thousand fears, and give, in the place of disquietude and distress, peace and assurance. You appeared to dread to speak to the patients. You did not enter into their feelings, but held yourself aloof when you should have manifested more familiarity. You were too distant and unapproachable. They look to you as children to a parent, and have a right to expect and receive attentions from you which they do not obtain. "Me and mine" comes between you and the labor your position requires you to do. The patients and helpers need your advice frequently, but they feel an unwillingness to go to you, and do not feel free to speak with you. [#26p139] #139

You have sought to maintain an undue dignity. In the effort you have not attained the object, but lost the confidence and love which you might have gained had you been unassuming, possessing meekness and humility of mind. True

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devotion and consecration to God will find for you a place in the hearts of all, and clothe you with a dignity not assumed but genuine. You have been exalted by the words of approval you have received. The life of Christ must be your pattern, to do good in every place you occupy. In caring for others, God will care for you. The Majesty of Heaven did not avoid weariness. He traveled on foot from place to place to benefit the suffering and needy. Although you possess some knowledge and may have some understanding of the human system, and can trace disease to its cause, and even if you had the tongue of men and angels, there are yet qualifications necessary or all your gifts will be of no special value. You must have a power from God, which can only be realized by those who make him their trust and consecrate themselves with devotion to the work he has given them to do. Christ must be a portion of your knowledge. His wisdom instead of yours should be considered. Then will you understand how to be a light in the rooms of the sick. You lack freedom of spirit, power and faith. Your faith is feeble for want of exercise; it cannot be vigorous and healthful. Your efforts will not be as successful for those who^{#140} are sick in heart and body, and they will not be gaining in physical and spiritual strength if you do not carry Jesus with you in your visits. His words and works you want to accompany you. Then you will feel that those whom your words of sympathy and prayers have blessed will bless you in return.

You have not felt your whole dependence upon God, and your inefficiency and weakness without his especial wisdom and grace. You worry, fear, and doubt, because you have worked too much in your own strength. In God you can prosper. In humility and holiness of mind you will find great peace and strength. They shine bright-

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est who feel most their own weakness and darkness, for such make Christ their righteousness. Your strength should come from your union with Christ. Be not weary in well doing.

The Majesty of Heaven has invited the weary ones, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Why the burden sometimes seems so heavy, and the yoke so galling, is because you have got above the meekness and the lowliness possessed by our divine Lord. Cease trying to gratify and exalt self; but rather let self be hidden in Jesus, and learn of him who has invited you and promised you rest.

I saw that the Health Institute could never prosper while those who held responsible positions^[#26p141] connected with it, had more interest #141 for themselves than for the institution. God wants unselfish men and women as workers in his cause, and those who take charge of the Health Institute should have an oversight of every department there, practising economy, caring for the trifles, guarding against losses, in short they should be as careful and judicious in their management as if they themselves were the actual proprietors.

You have been troubled with a feeling that this and that was not your business. Everything connected with the Institute is your business. If certain things come under your observation that you cannot attend to properly, being called in another direction, call for help of some one who will give these matters immediate attention. If this work is too arduous for you, some one should take your place who can perform thoroughly all the duties devolving upon one holding your responsible position.

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You have frequently charged the patients and helpers, in your parlor talks, with bringing unnecessary burdens and cares upon you, while, at the same time, I saw you were not performing half the duties resting upon you as a physician. You were not properly attending to the cases of the sick under your care. The patients are not blind; they perceive your neglect of them. They are away from their homes and upon expense to obtain the care and treatment they could not receive there. All this scolding in the parlor is injurious^[#26p142] to the institution and displeasing to God.

It is true you have had heavy burdens to bear, but in many cases you have blamed the patients and helpers when the trouble was in your own family. They require your constant help, but do not help you in return; there is no one in your home to stay up your hands or give you encouragement. Had you no burden outside the Institute, you could bear up much better, and not lose strength and fortitude. It is your duty to care for your family, but it is not at all necessary for them to be as helpless as they are, and so great a weight upon you. They could assist you if they would.

It is your duty also to preserve your health; and if your family cares are so great, and the work in which you are engaged is over-taxing you, and you are unable to devote the time and attention to the patients and the Institute which is actually their due, then you should resign your position and seek to place yourself where you can do justice to your family, yourself, and to the responsibilities you assume.

The position you now occupy is an important one. It requires clear intellect, strength of brain, nerve and muscle. Earnest devotion to the work is necessary for its success, and nothing

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short of this will make the Institution prosperous. To be a living thing it must have live, disinterested workers to conduct it.

Sister L---, you have not been the help #143 [#26p143] to your husband that you should have been. Your attention has been devoted more to yourself. You have not realized the necessity of arousing your dormant energies to encourage and strengthen your husband in his labors, or bless your children with the right influence. If you had set yourself diligently about the duties God enjoined upon you, had helped to bear the burdens of your companion and united with him to properly discipline your children, the order of things in your family would have been changed.

But you have yielded to feelings of gloom and sadness which has brought a cloud upon your dwelling instead of sunshine. You have not encouraged hope and cheerfulness and your influence has been depressing upon those whom you should have aided by kindly words and deeds. All this is the result of selfishness. You have required the attention and sympathy of your husband and children, and yet have not felt that it was your duty to take your mind off yourself and labor for their happiness and well-being. You have given way to impatience, and have harshly reproved your children; this has only confirmed them in their evil ways, and severed the cords of affection that should bind the hearts of parents and children together.

You have lacked self-control, and have censured your husband in the presence of your children, and this has lessened your authority over them as well as his. You have been very weak; when your children #144 [#26p144] have come to you with complaints of others, you have immediately decided in favor of your children and have unwisely censured and blamed those of whom they complained. This has

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cherished in the minds of your children a disposition to murmur against those who do not pay them the deference they imagine they deserve. You have indirectly encouraged this spirit instead of silencing it. You have not dealt with your children as firmly and justly as you should have done.

You have had trials. You have been oppressed in mind. You have been discouraged but have charged this unhappiness unjustly upon others. The main cause is to be found in yourself. You have failed to make your home what it should be and what it might have been. It is yet in your power to correct the faults there. Come out of that cold and stiff reserve. Give more love, rather than exact it, cultivate cheerfulness, let the sunshine into your heart and it will shine upon those about you, be more social in your manners, seek to gain the confidence of your children that they may come to you for advice and counsel, encourage in them humility and unselfishness, and set before them the right sort of example.

Awake my dear brother and sister, to the needs of your family. Do not be blinded, but take hold of the work unitedly, calmly, prayerfully, and in faith. Set your house in order and God will

#145 bless your efforts.[#26p145]

Epistle Number Seven.

I was shown on Dec. 10, 1872, the state of Bro. N.'s family. He has been a true believer and lover of the truth but has been drinking in the spirit of the world.

Said Christ, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Bro. N----, your earthly treasure claims your interest and attention to such an extent that you do not afford time to serve God, yet your wife is dissatisfied that you give him the meager pittance that you do. A

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worldly insanity has taken possession of her heart. Neither of you give yourselves sufficient time for meditation and prayer. God is robbed of your daily service, and you yourselves are meeting with a great loss than that of every earthly treasure.

Sr. N., you are still further from God than your husband is. Your conformity to the world has banished your Saviour from your heart, there is no room for him in your affections. You have but little inclination for prayer and searching your heart. You are yielding yourself to obey the prince of the powers of darkness. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto^[#26p146] death, #146 or of obedience unto righteousness."

Sister N---, you know not what you are doing, you do not realize that you are warring against your Creator, in drawing your husband away from the truth. Your attention is on the advantages that the world gives. You have not cultivated a love for devotion, but are better pleased with the stir and bustle of laboring to acquire wealth. You are absorbed in your desire to be like the world that you may receive the happiness that the world gives. Your earthly ambitions and interests are greater than your desire for righteousness and a part in the kingdom of God.

Your precious probationary time is spent in laboring for your temporal welfare, in dressing, and eating, and drinking after the manner of the world. Oh! how unsatisfying, how meager is the recompense obtained. In your worldly desires and pursuits you are carrying a heavier burden than your Saviour has ever proposed to lay upon you. Your Redeemer invites you, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find

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rest unto your souls. For my yoke_[#26p147] is easy ^{#147} and my burden is light." My sister, Christ would have you lay down your heavy weight at his feet and submit your stubborn neck to his easy yoke.

What if your probation should close at this time? How would you bear the investigation of the Master? How have you employed your talents of means and influence, lent you of God for wise improvement to his glory? God has not given you life and its blessings merely to devote to your own pleasure, or selfish gratification, but to benefit others and do good. The Master has intrusted to you talents, that you should put them out to the exchangers, that when he requires them again he may receive his own with usury. Your influence and means have been given you to test you, to reveal what is in your heart; you should use them to win souls to Christ, and thus advance the cause of your Redeemer.

If you fail to do this you are making a terrible mistake. Every day that you devote to serving yourself, and pleasing your friends by yielding to their influence in loving the world and neglecting your best friend, who died to give you life, you are losing much.

Sister N----, you have thought it was not well for you to be different from_[#26p148] those ^{#148} around you. You are in a community that has been tested on the truth and has rejected it; and you have linked your interests and affections with this company, until you are to all intents one of them. You love their society, yet you are not happy though you flatter yourself that you are so. You have said in your heart, "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?"

It is no small matter for a family, in an unbelieving community to stand as representa-

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tives for Jesus, keeping God's law. We are required to be living epistles known and read of all men. This position involves fearful responsibilities. In order to live in the light you must come where the light shines. Bro. N---, at any sacrifice, should feel under solemn obligation to attend, with his family, at least the yearly gatherings of those who love the truth. It would strengthen him and them, and fit them for trial and duty.

It is not well for them to lose the privilege of associating together with those of like faith with themselves, for the truth loses its importance in their minds, their hearts cease to be enlightened and vivified by its sanctifying influence,^[#26p149] and they lose spirituality. They are not strengthened by the words of the living preacher. Worldly thoughts and worldly enterprises are continually exercising their minds to the exclusion of spiritual subjects.

The faith of most Christians will waver if they constantly neglect to meet together for conference and prayer. If it were impossible for them to enjoy such religious privileges, then God would send light direct from Heaven by his angels, to animate, to cheer and bless his scattered people. But he does not propose to work a miracle to sustain the faith of his saints. They are required to love the truth enough to take some little pains to secure the privileges and blessings vouchsafed them of God. The least they can do is to devote a few days in the year to a united effort to advance the cause of Christ and to exchange friendly counsel and sympathy.

Many devote nearly all their time to their own temporal interests and pleasures, and begrudge the few days spent and the expense involved in going a distance from their homes to meet with a company gathered together in the name of the Lord. The word of the Lord defines

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covetousness as idolatry; then how many idolaters are there even among those who profess to be followers of Christ? #150

It is required that we meet together and bear testimony to the truth. The angel of God said:—

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

It will pay, then, to improve the privileges within our reach, and, even at some sacrifice, to assemble with those who fear God and speak for him. For he is represented as hearkening to those testimonies, while angels write them in a book. God will remember those who have met together and thought upon his name, and he will spare them from the great conflagration. They will be as precious jewels in his sight, but his wrath will fall on the shelterless head of the sinner. It is not a vain thing to serve God. There is a priceless reward for those who devote their life to his service. Dear Bro. and Sr. you have been gradually entering the darkness, until, almost imperceptibly, it has grown to appear like the light to you. Occasionally a feeble glimmer penetrates that gloom and arouses the mind, but surrounding influences shut out the ray of light, and the darkness seems denser than before. #151

It would have been better for your spiritual welfare had you changed your place of residence some years ago. The light of truth tested the community in which you live. A few received the message of mercy and warning, while it was rejected by many. Still another class did not accept it be-

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cause there was a cross to lift. They took a neutral position and thought if they did not war against the truth they would be doing quite well; but the light they neglected to receive and cherish went out in darkness.

They endeavored to quiet conscience by saying to the Spirit of God, Go they way for this time, and when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. That convenient season has never come. They neglected the golden opportunity that has never again returned to them, for the world has shut out the light that they refused. The interests of this life and the charm of exciting pleasures absorb their minds and hearts, while their best friend, the blessed Saviour, is rejected and

#152 forgotten. [#26p152]

Sister N----, although possessing excellent natural qualities, is being drawn away from God by her unbelieving friends and relatives who love not the truth and have no sympathy with the sacrifice and self-denial that must be made for the truth's sake. Sister N---- has not felt the importance of separation from the world as the command of God enjoins. The sight of her eyes and the hearing of her ears have perverted her heart.

John the Baptist was a man filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth, and if there was any one who could remain unaffected by the corrupting influences of the age in which he lived, it was surely he. Yet he did not venture to trust his strength; he separated himself from his friends and relatives, that his natural affections might not prove a snare to him He would not place himself unnecessarily in the way of temptation, nor where the luxuries or even the conveniences of life would lead him to indulge in ease or gratify his appetite, and thus lessen his physical and mental strength. By such a course the important mission

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he came to fill would have failed in its accomplishment.

He subjected himself to privation and solitude in the wilderness where he^[#26p153] could preserve by sacred sense of the majesty of God, by studying his great book of nature and there becoming acquainted with the character of God, in his wonderful works. It was an atmosphere calculated to perfect moral culture and keep the fear of the Lord continually before him. John, the forerunner of Christ, did not expose himself to evil conversation and the corrupting influences of the world. He feared its effects upon his conscience, that sin might not appear to him so exceedingly sinful. He chose rather to have his home in the wilderness, where his senses would not be perverted by his surroundings. Should we not learn something from this example of one whom Christ honored and of whom he said, Among those born of women there are none greater than John the Baptist. #153

The first thirty years of Christ's life was passed in retirement. Ministering angels waited upon the Lord of life, as he walked side by side with the peasants and laborers among the hills of Nazareth, unrecognized and unhonored. These high examples should teach us to avoid evil influences and shun the society of those who do not live aright. We should not flatter ourselves that we are too strong for any such influences to affect^[#26p154] us, but we should, in humility guard ourselves from danger. #154

Ancient Israel was especially directed by God to be and remain a people separate from all nations. They were not to be subjected to witnessing the idolatry of those about them, lest their own hearts should be corrupted, lest familiarity with ungodly practices should make them appear less wicked in their eyes. Few realize their own

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weakness, and that the natural sinfulness of the human heart too often paralyzes our noblest endeavors.

The baleful influence of sin poisons the life of the soul. Our only safety is in separation from those who live in its darkness. The Lord has enjoined upon us to come out from among them and be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing and he will receive us and will be a Father unto us, and we shall be his sons and daughters. If we wish to be adopted into the family of God, children of the Heavenly King, we must comply with his conditions; we should come out from the world and stand as a peculiar people before the Lord, obeying his precepts and serving him.

Lot chose Sodom for his home because he saw there were advantages to be gained there from a worldly point of view. But after he had established himself and grown rich in earthly treasure, he was convinced that he made a mistake in not taking into consideration the moral standing of the #26p155] community in which he was to make #155 his home.

The dwellers in Sodom were corrupt; vile conversation greeted his ears daily, and his righteous soul was vexed by the violence and crime he was powerless to prevent. His children were becoming like these wicked people, for association with them had perverted their morals. Taking all these things into consideration, the worldly riches he had gained seemed small and not worth the price he had paid for them. His family connections were extensive, his children having married among the Sodomites.

The Lord's anger was finally kindled against the wicked inhabitants of the city. The angels of God visited Sodom to bring forth Lot, that he should not perish in the overthrow of the city. They bade Lot bring his family, his wife, and

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the sons and daughters who had married in wicked Sodom, and they told him to flee from the place, "For," said the angels, "we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it."

And Lot went out and entreated his children. He repeated the words of the angel. Up, get thee out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city! But he seemed unto his sons-in-law as one who mocked, for they had lived so long in Sodom they had become partakers of the sins of the people. And the daughters were influenced by their husbands^[#26p156] to believe their father was mad. They were well enough off where they were. They were rich and had great possessions, they could not believe it possible that beautiful Sodom, a rich and fertile country, would be destroyed by the wrath of a sin-avenging God.

Lot returned sorrowfully to the angels, and repeated the story of his failure. Then the angels commanded him to arise, and take his wife, and the two daughters who were yet in his house, and leave the city. But Lot was sad, for the thought of leaving his children and his wife, for she refused to go without them, almost broke his heart. They would all have perished in the terrible ruin of Sodom, had not the Lord, in his great mercy, sent his angels to the rescue.

Lot was paralyzed by the great calamity about to occur, he was stupefied with grief at the thought of leaving all he held dear on earth. But as he lingered, the angels of God laid hold upon his hand, and the hands of his wife and two daughters, and brought them out of the city and charged them to flee for their lives, neither to look behind them, nor to stay upon all the plain, but to escape to the mountains. How reluctant was Lot to obey the angel and go as far as possible

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from corrupt Sodom, appointed to utter destruction.

Lot plead to remain; he distrusted God. Living in the wicked city, had weakened his faith and confidence in the justice of the [#26p157] Lord. Lot plead that he could not do as he was required, lest some evil should overtake him and he should die. Angels were sent on a special mission to save the life of Lot and his family, but Lot has so long been surrounded by corrupting influences, that his sensibilities were blunted and he could not discern the works of God and his purposes; he could not trust himself in his hands to do his bidding. He was continually pleading for himself, and this unbelief caused him the life of his wife. #157

She looked back to Sodom and murmured against the dealings of God. She was changed to a pillar of salt, that she might stand as a warning to all those who disregarded the special mercies and providences of Heaven. After this terrible retribution, Lot no longer dared to linger by the way, but fled into the mountains, according to the directions of the angels. The sinful conduct of his daughters after leaving Sodom, was the result of wicked associations while there. The sense of right and wrong was confused in their minds, and sin did not appear as sin to them.

The case of Lot should be a warning to all those who wish to live godly lives, to separate themselves from all influences calculated to lead them away from God. Lot remained so long among the wicked that he was only able to save himself and two daughters, and even they were corrupted in morals by their sojourn in Sodom.

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God means what he says and he will not be trifled with. Oh! how many short-sighted, sinful mortals plead with God, to induce him to come to their terms, while if they would only yield #158

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themselves unreservedly into his hands he would compass their salvation and give them precious victories.

Sister N----, you are in danger of making decisions that will be very injurious to you. God has a work for you to do, which none can do for you, and without this your soul cannot be saved. God loves you and is unwilling you should perish in the general ruin. He invites you to leave those things which hinder your spiritual advancement, and to find in him that strength and consolation you need. You have cares and burdens to bear in your family that often worry you, but if you do only those things necessary to your temporal comfort and happiness, you will find time to read your Bible with prayerful interest and perfect a Christian character.

Bro. N----, you have had many discouragements, but you must be earnest, firm, and decided to do your duty in your family, and take them with you if possible. You should spare no effort to prevail upon them to accompany you on your heavenward journey. But if the mother and children do not choose to accompany you but rather seek to draw you away from your duties and religious privileges, you must go forward even if you go alone. You must live in the fear of God. #159 You must improve your opportunities of [#26p159] attending the meetings, and gain all the spiritual strength you can for you will need it in the days to come. Lot's property was all consumed, if you should meet with loss you should not be discouraged, and if you can save only a part of your family it is much better than to lose all.

Dear Bro. and Sr. you are parents, you are in a great measure, accountable for the souls of your children. You have brought them into existence and you should, by precept and example, lead them to the Lord and the courts of Heaven.

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You should impress them with the thought that their temporal interests are of little consequence when compared with their eternal welfare.

These dear children are living among worldly people, and they are imbibing a love for the vanities of life. You son L---, is a kind-hearted, fine-spirited boy, but he needs the watchful care of a mother, whose daily experience in the Christian life will fit her to counsel and instruct him. He is just that age when a tender, judicious mother can mould him by her influence; but I fear, sister N---, that you seek rather to mould your children after the fashion of this world, and neglect to teach them that the important work of life is to form characters that will insure immortality.

If L--- neglects to become acquainted with religious subjects and practical Christianity, his life will be a mistake. He should see that he needs an education in spiritual^[#26p160] and divine things, that he may use his abilities wholly for God. The Lord calls for young men to work in his vineyard. Young men should not neglect the essential branches of education. But if they turn their entire attention to secular study, and neglect to become intelligent on the great subject of religion, and do not acquire a Christian experience, they are becoming disqualified for the work of God. #160

However favorable the educational advantage may be, something besides the knowledge of books is necessary to save the soul and lead others to repentance. Devoting a period of years to the acquisition of scientific knowledge alone, is not preparing to be an efficient laborer in the service of God.

Young men should devote much time to study, but they should also unite physical labor with their mental efforts, and put in practice the knowledge they have gained. That all the faculties

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of the mind, and powers of the body may be equally developed by useful exercise. But they should not neglect the things necessary to salvation, nor consider them secondary to anything in this life.

Dear Bro. and Sr., God loves your family and desires to shower his special blessings upon you, that you may become instruments of righteousness in leading others toward Heaven. But Bro. N---- can do a great amount of good, if entirely consecrated to God, in a community where his advice and influence would be better received and^{#161}and_[#26p161] appreciated. We have strong hopes that both of you will correct that which is wrong in your lives, and renew your faith and obedience to God, receiving new strength from him who has promised to help those who call upon his name.

Young Bro. L----, you have made a mistake in your life. In closely pursuing your studies you have neglected the development of all your faculties. The moral growth should never be dwarfed in the effort to acquire education, but should be cultivated in a far higher degree than is usually deemed necessary.

My dear young brother, you have been ambitious to secure knowledge. This ambition is praise-worthy, but in order to gratify it, you have neglected your eternal interests and made them secondary to your studies. God and Heaven have occupied a subordinate position in your affections. The claims of God's holy law have not been sacredly observed in your daily life. You have desecrated the Sabbath by bringing your studies into that holy time which was not yours to occupy for your own purposes. God has said, in it thou shalt not do any work.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the

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Lord, honorable; and^[#26p162] shalt honor him, not #162
doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own
pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then
shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will
cause thee to ride upon the high places of the
earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob
thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken
it."

You have yielded to inclination rather than
duty, and made your studies paramount to the
expressed command of the Most High.

Our camp-meetings are arranged and held
at great expense. God's ministers who advocate
unpopular truth, labor excessively at these large
gatherings to bear the message of mercy from a
crucified Redeemer to poor fallen sinners. To ne-
glect or treat these messages with indifference, is
to slight the mercy of God, and his voice of warn-
ing and entreaty.

Your absence from these meetings has
been very detrimental to your spiritual welfare.
You have missed the strength that you might
have gained there in listening to the preached
word of God, and mingling with the believers of
the truth. Your mind has been lulled into a fatal
apathy in regard to the well-being of your soul.
You have exalted your secular education above
the knowledge to be gained in the school of
Christ.^[#26p163] Experience in a true religious life is #163
necessary in order to form a character acceptable
to God and the pure virtues that will bear the
light of Heaven.

What anxiety you have manifested to dis-
cipline your mind by study, to become properly
conversant with your text-books, that you might
creditably pass the examination before your in-
structors, friends and interested spectators! How
ambitious you have been to prove that you have
been a diligent student and faithfully employed

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your time in storing your mind with useful knowledge. You have been as sincerely anxious to progress in your studies, as to secure the commendation of your friends and teachers. You have justly earned the honors you have received for scholarship.

But how has your mind been disciplined in religion? Have you not unthinkingly placed the kingdom of God and his righteousness below your advancement in the sciences? True, some of the human faculties were given more especially for the purpose of engaging in temporal matters, but the higher powers of the mind should be wholly consecrated to God. These control the man, these form his life and character. And while you should not neglect your secular studies, you have no
#164 right to give them all your attention,^[#26p164] but should devote yourself especially to the moral and spiritual requirements of your Heavenly Father.

How little anxiety you have manifested to improve the religious advantages within your reach, to gain a more thorough knowledge of the laws of God, and a determination to abide by them! You have made little effort to become a loyal and intelligent Christian. How then will you be prepared to pass the grand review, where all your deeds and words, and the inmost thoughts of your heart will be laid open before the great Judge and the assembled saints and angels. You have had little ambition to obtain a spiritual fitness to bear this close examination in the presence of that exalted throng. What then will be the final decision as to your moral and religious attainments, that decision from which there is no appeal?

What will be the honors accredited to you because of your faithfulness in preserving the required harmony between religion and the pursuit of the sciences? Will you stand as one possessing

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unfaltering moral courage, in whom is shown excellence of human knowledge united with a holy zeal for God and the obedience of his law?

My brother, you should consider the^[#26p165] #165 wisdom of God as all in all, Religion must go hand in hand with science in order to make your education a sanctified means of doing good and turning others to the truth. The more we learn in the school of Christ, the more eager we are to advance in that knowledge. All our acquirements are of little value unless the character is ennobled by religion. God has special duties for every individual to perform, and a decision will be passed upon every case as to the faithfulness with which these duties have been accomplished.

The Lord frequently places us in difficult positions to stimulate us to greater exertion. In his providence special annoyances sometimes occur to test our patience and faith. God gives us lessons of trust. He would teach us where to look for help and strength in the time of need. Thus we obtain practical knowledge of his divine will, which we so much need in our life experience. Faith grows strong in earnest conflict with doubt and fear.

Brother, you may be a conqueror if you take careful heed to your ways. You should devote your young life to the cause of God and pray for success. You should not close your eyes to your danger, but resolutely prepare for every^[#26p166] #166 difficulty in your Christian advancement. Take time for reflection and humble, earnest prayer. Your talents are marked and you are hopeful in regard to your future success, but unless you comprehend the weakness of your natural heart you will be disappointed.

You are just starting out in life, have arrived at an age to bear responsibilities for yourself. This is a critical period in your life. Now, in

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your youth, you are sowing in the field of life. That which you sow you shall also reap; as was the seed, so shall be the harvest. If you are neglectful and indifferent concerning eternal things, you will sustain a great loss yourself, and, through your influence, prevent others from fulfilling their obligations to God.

Both worlds are before you, which will you choose? Be wise and lay hold of eternal life. Swerve not from your integrity, however unpleasant your duties may appear in the present emergency. It may seem that you are about to make great sacrifices to preserve your purity of soul, but do not hesitate, press forward in the fear of God and he will bless your efforts and recompense you a thousand fold. Do not yield your religious claims and privileges in order to gratify the wishes of your unconsecrated friends and relatives.^[#26p167] You are called to take your position for the truth, even if it should be in direct opposition to those who are closely connected with you. God forbid that this last trial should ever come to you, to test and prove your integrity for the right.

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Lay the foundation of your Christian character upon the eternal Rock of Salvation, and let the structure be firm and sound.

We hope that your mother will aid your efforts, and those of your brothers and sisters, to perfect a true character after the pattern of Christ, that you may have a moral fitness for the society of holy angels in the kingdom of glory.

Epistle Number Eight.

Dear Brn. G----: In the vision given me last January, I was shown some things in reference to you both. I was shown that you are not growing in spirituality as it is your duty and privilege to do. The greatness of the work and the opening providences of God should stir your hearts. Christ de-

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signed that his believing children should be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. The holy life and Christian example of one good man in a community, sheds a light_[#26p168] that is reflected ^{#168} upon others. How great then should be the influence of a company of believers all walking in the commandments of God.

The preaching of the word is ordained of God, to arouse and convict sinners. And when the living preacher exemplifies in his own life the self-denial and sacrifices of Christ, when his conversation and acts are in harmony with the Divine Pattern, then his influence will be a powerful one upon those who listen to his voice. But all cannot be teachers of the word in the pulpit. The individual duties of different persons vary, and there is work for all to do. All can aid the cause by giving unselfishly of their means to help the various branches of the work, to furnish means for the publications of tracts and periodicals to scatter among the people, and disseminate the truth. Those who give money to promote the cause, are bearing a part of the burden of the work; they are co-laborers with Jesus Christ, for God has furnished men with means, on trust, that they may use them for holy and wise purposes. They are the instrumentalities Heaven has ordained for doing good, and these talents men are to put out to the exchangers.

Dear brethren, ever bear in mind that you are the stewards of God, and that he_[#26p169] holds ^{#169} you accountable for the temporal talents he has lent to use wisely for his glory. Will you not closely search your hearts and investigate the motives which prompt you to action? I was shown that your danger was in loving your possessions. Your ears are not quick to hear the Master's call in the person of his saints and the wants of his cause. You do not invest your treasure gladly in

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the enterprise of Christianity. If you desire a treasure in Heaven you should be securing it while you have the opportunity. If you feel safer to apply your means toward the greater accumulation of earthly riches, and invest sparingly in the cause of God, then you should feel satisfied to receive heavenly treasure according to your investment in heavenly stock.

You desire to see the cause of God progress, but you make little personal effort towards that end. If you, and others who profess our holy faith, could see your true position, and realized your accountability to God, you would become more earnest co-laborers with Jesus. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." There can be no divided interest in this, for the whole heart and mind and [#26p170] strength is all that composes the man.

Says the apostle, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." When the poor, condemned sinner was lying under the curse of the Father's law, Jesus so loved him that he gave himself for the transgressor. He redeemed him by the virtue of his blood. We cannot estimate the precious ransom paid to redeem fallen man. The heart's best and holiest affections should be given in return for such wondrous love. The temporal gifts you enjoy are merely lent you to aid in the advancement of the kingdom of God.

I speak of the tithing system, yet how meager it looks to my mind! How small the estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money and love against a love and a sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pitance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender.

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He promised the young ruler that if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, and lifted his cross and followed him, he should have treasure in Heaven. All we have should be consecrated to God. The Majesty of Heaven came^[#26p171] #171 to the world to die, a sacrifice for the sins of man. How cold and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from such incomparable love, and set itself upon the vain things of this world.

When selfishness is striving for the victory over you, bear in mind One who left the glorious courts of Heaven, and laid aside the robes of royalty for your sakes, becoming poor that, through his poverty, you might be made rich. Will you, then, disregard this great love and boundless mercy, by refusing to be inconvenienced, and to deny yourselves for his dear sake? Will you cling to the treasures of this life and neglect to aid in carrying forward the great work of truth?

The children of Israel were anciently commanded to make an offering for the entire congregation to purify them from ceremonial defilement. This sacrifice was a red heifer, and represented the more perfect offering that should redeem from the pollution of sin. This was an occasional sacrifice for the purification of all those who had necessarily or accidentally touched the dead. All who came in contact with death in any way were considered ceremonially unclean. This was to forcibly impress the minds of the Hebrews with the fact^[#26p172] #172 that death came in consequence of sin, and therefore is a representative of sin. The one heifer, the one ark, the one brazen serpent impressively point to the one great offering, the sacrifice of Christ.

This heifer was to be red without spot, which was a symbol of blood. It must be without blemish, and one that had never borne a yoke. Here again was Christ typified. The Son of God

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came voluntarily to accomplish the work of atonement. There was no obligatory yoke upon him, for he was independent and above all law. The angels, as God's intelligent messengers, were under the yoke of obligation, no personal sacrifice of theirs would atone for the guilt of fallen man. Christ alone was free from the claims of the law to undertake the redemption of the sinful race. He had power to lay down his life and to take it up again. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

Yet this glorious being loved the poor sinner, and took upon himself the form of a servant, that he might suffer and die in man's behalf. Jesus might have remained at his Father's right hand, wearing his kingly crown and royal robes. But he chose to exchange all the riches, honor and glory of Heaven for ^{#173} _[#26p173] the poverty of humanity, and his station of high command for the horrors of Gethsemane, and the humiliation and agony of Calvary. He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that, by his baptism of suffering and blood, he might purify and redeem a guilty world. Lo, "I come," was the joyful assent, "to do thy will, O God!"

The sacrificial heifer was conducted without the camp, and slain in the most imposing manner. Thus Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that Christ did not die for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind. He proclaims to a fallen world that he has come to be their Redeemer, and urges them to accept the salvation he offers them.

The heifer having been slain in a most solemn manner, the priest clothed in pure white garments, took the blood in his hands as it issued from the body of the victim, and cast it towards the temple seven times. "And having a high priest

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over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

The body of the heifer was burned to^[#26p174] #174 ashes, which signified a whole and ample sacrifice. The ashes were then gathered up by a person uncontaminated by contact with the dead, and placed in a vessel containing water from a running stream. This clean and pure person then took a cedar stick with scarlet cloth and a bunch of hyssop and sprinkled the contents of the vessel upon the tent and the people assembled. This ceremony was repeated several times in order to be thorough, and was done as a purification from sin.

Thus Christ in his own spotless righteousness, after shedding his precious blood, enters into the holy place to cleanse the sanctuary. And there the crimson current is brought into the service of reconciling God to man. Some may look upon this slaying of the heifer as a meaningless ceremony, but it was done by the command of God, and bears a deep significance that has not lost its application to the present time.

The priest used cedar and hyssop, dipping them into the cleansing water and sprinkling the unclean. This symbolized the blood of Christ spilled to cleanse us from moral impurities. The repeated sprinklings illustrate the thoroughness of the work that must be accomplished for the repenting sinner. All^[#26p175] #175 that he has must be consecrated. Not only should his own soul be washed clean and pure, but he should strive to have his family, his domestic arrangements, his property and entire belongings consecrated to God.

After the sprinkling with hyssop of the tent, over the door of those cleansed was written,

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I am not my own; Lord, I am thine. Thus should it be with those who profess to be cleansed by the blood of Christ. God is no less exacting now than he was in olden times. The Psalmist, in his prayer, refers to this symbolic ceremony when he says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit."

The blood of Christ is efficacious but needs continually to be applied. God not only wants his servants to use the means he has intrusted to them for his glory, but he desires them to make a consecration of themselves to his cause. If you, my brethren, have become selfish and are withholding from the Lord that which you should cheerfully give to his service, then you need the blood of sprinkling thoroughly applied, consecrating^{#176}_[#26p176] you and all your possessions to God.

My much respected brethren, you have not that earnest and unselfish devotion to the work of God that he requires of you. You have given your attention to temporal matters. You have trained your minds for business in order to benefit yourselves thereby. But God calls for you to come more closely into union with him, that he may mould and train you for his work. A solemn statement was made to ancient Israel that the man who should remain unclean and refuse to purify himself, should be cut off from among the congregation. This has a special meaning for us. If it was necessary in ancient times for the unclean to be purified by the blood of sprinkling, how essential for those living in the perils of the last days and exposed to the temptations of Satan, to have the blood of Christ applied to their

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hearts daily. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

You should both do much more than you have done towards bearing the burdens^[#26p177] of the work of the Lord. I adjure you to arouse from your lethargy, leave the vain idolatry of worldly things, and be in earnest to secure a title to your immortal inheritance. Work while it is day. Do not imperil your souls by forfeiting present opportunities. Do not make your eternal interest of secondary importance. Do not put the world before religion, and toil day after day to acquire its riches, while the peril of eternal bankruptcy threatens you. Every day is bringing you nearer to the final reckoning. Be ready to yield up the talents lent you with the increase gained by their wise use. #177

You cannot afford to sacrifice Heaven, or jeopardize your safety. Do not let the deceitfulness of riches lead you to neglect the immortal treasure. Satan is a wily foe and he is ever on your track, striving to ensnare you and compass your ruin. We are in the waiting time, let your loins be girded about, and your lights shining, that you may wait for the Lord when he returneth from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh you may open unto him immediately.

Watch, brethren, the first dimming of your light, the first neglect of prayer, the first symptom of spiritual slumber.^[#26p178] He that endureth unto the end shall be saved. It is by the constant exercise of faith and love that believers are made to shine as lights in the world. You are making but poor preparation for the Master's coming, if, when he appears, you must present to him talents that #178

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you have buried in the earth, talents neglected, abused, misused, a divided love, serving mammon while professedly serving God.

You have both professed to be servants of Christ. How necessary that you should obey your Master's directions and be faithful to your duties. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This love is without parallel, giving to men the relationship of sons to God. Therefore the Father expects obedience from his children, therefore he requires a right disposition of the property he has placed in their hands. It is not their own to use for their personal gratification, but it is the capital of the Lord, for which they are responsible to him.

#179 Children of the Lord, how precious is the promise! How full the atonement of the Saviour for our guilt! The Redeemer, with a heart of unalterable love, still sheds his sacred blood in the sinner's^[#26p179] behalf. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet plead eloquently for fallen man whose redemption is purchased at such an infinite cost. Oh, matchless condescension! Time nor events can lessen the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice. As the fragrant cloud of incense rose acceptably to Heaven, and Aaron sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat of ancient Israel, and cleansed the people from guilt, so the merits of the slain Lamb are accepted by God today as a purifier from the defilement of sin.

Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. There are stern battles for you to fight. You should put on the whole armor of righteousness and prove yourselves strong and true in your Redeemer's service. God wants no idlers in his field, but co-laborers with Christ, vigilant sentinels at their posts, valiant soldiers of the cross,

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ready to do and dare all things for the cause in which they are enlisted.

It is not wealth or intellect that gives happiness, it is true moral worth and a sense of duty performed. You may have the overcomer's reward and stand before the throne of Christ to sing his praises in the day when he assembles his saints, but your robes must be^{#[26p180]} cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, and charity must cover you as a garment and you be found spotless and without blemish. #180

John says:--"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."^{#[26p181]} #181

Epistle Number Nine.

Dear Bro.----: In my last vision your case was presented before me. I was shown that there are defects in your Christian character that must be overcome before you can perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. You love the truth, but you need to be sanctified by the truth. You are not

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selfish nor niggardly in hospitality or in sustaining the cause of truth; but there is one kind of selfishness which exists in your heart. You are wedded to your own opinion, and extol your own judgment above that of others. You are in danger of exalting yourself above your brethren. You are exacting and inclined to carry out your own ideas, independent of your brethren, because you consider your intelligence and experience superior to theirs.

In this you fail to carry out the apostle's injunction, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." You have your notions, your purposes and your plans, and imagine they can never be incorrect.

In your household you have always taken too much of the management upon yourself. When your opinions or plans have been crossed, instead of ^{#182}conceding to, or compromising with, those who opposed you, considering that they, as well as yourself, had a right to their independent judgment, you have felt vexed and hurt. You could not endure that your family should call your plans in question, or offer suggestions differing from your opinions. In consequence of this unpleasant state of affairs, your family have usually submitted their wishes to yours and allowed you to have your own way in order to preserve harmony at home. Therefore there has been in your family much longsuffering and patient indulgence of your whims, which appears to you only proper observance of your legitimate authority. This you consider sound and correct management on your part.

Whenever your determined spirit to carry out your own judgment at all hazards has driven friends to the opposite extreme and to feel contempt for your arbitrary spirit, you have felt, and

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intimated, that all such opposition was instigated by the temptations of the enemy. This has made you more persistent in carrying out your own ideas, regardless of the wishes of others.

You are in danger of having trouble because you are unwilling to grant liberty of judgment and opinion to those^[#26p183] connected with you. It is well for you to remember that their ways and their opinions may be as dear to them as yours are to you. We are very apt to lose sight of this fact when we censure others for not agreeing with us. You govern the members of your family too rigidly. You are very punctilious in giving them line upon line and precept upon precept, and if they venture to differ with you, it only renders you more determined to act according to your own mind and show that you are master in your own house, and not to be interfered with. #183

You seem to consider that it is enough for you to say that a thing must be done in order to have it done in the very manner you indicated. In this arbitrary way you often place your mind and judgment between your family and their own good sense of what is right and proper under the circumstances. You have made a sad mistake in breaking down the will and judgment of your wife, and requiring her to unquestioningly yield to your superior wisdom or bring discord into the home.

You should not seek to rule the actions of your wife or treat her as a servile dependent. Never lift yourself above her and excuse yourself by thinking, "She is inexperienced and inferior to me." Never^[#26p184] seek to unreasonably bend her will to yours, for she has an individuality that can never be submerged in yours. I have seen many families shipwrecked through over management on the part of its head, whereas, through consultation and agreement together, all might have moved off harmoniously and well. #184

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My brother, you are self-conceited. You go out of your proper province in order to exercise your authority. You imagine that you understand the best way of doing the work in your kitchen; and in the working department you have your own peculiar ideas of how everything should be done. You expect all to adapt themselves like machinery to these ideas, and observe the particular order that pleases you.

These efforts to bring your friends into a position where they will meekly yield every wish and inclination to your will, is vain and futile. All minds are not moulded alike, and it is well that it is so, for if they were exactly similar, there would be less harmony and natural adaptability to each other than now. But we are all represented as being members of the body, united in Christ. In this body there are various members, and one member cannot perform exactly the same office as another. The eyes are made for^{#185} seeing, and in no case can they perform the work of the ears, which is that of hearing, neither can the ears take the place of the mouth, nor the mouth perform the office of the nose. Yet all these organs are necessary to the perfect whole, and work in beautiful harmony with each other.

The hands have their office and the feet theirs; one is not to say to the other "You are inferior to me;" the hands are not to say to the feet, "We have no need of you;" but all are united in the body, to do their specific work, and should be alike respected as they conduce to the comfort and usefulness of the perfect whole.

We cannot all have the same minds nor cherish the same ideas, but one is to be a benefit and blessing to the other, that where one lacks, another may supply what is requisite. You have certain deficiencies of character and natural biases that render it profitable for you to be brought

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in contact with a mind differently organized, in order to properly balance your own. Instead of superintending so exclusively, you should consult with your wife and mutually arrive at joint decisions. You do not encourage independent effort on the part of your family, but if your specific directions are not_[#26p186] scrupulously carried out you too frequently find fault with the delinquents. #186

Were your wife, and other members of your family, without tact or skill, you would be more excusable in taking the reins so entirely in your own hands, but this not being the case, your course is altogether unwarrantable. After you have kindly informed them concerning your views of cooking and the management of household matters, and intimated what your desires are in regard to it, go no farther, but let them use your suggestions as they choose. They will be much more likely to be pleasantly influenced to please you than if you resorted to peremptory measures. And even if they do not adapt themselves to your opinions, do not persist in ruling every thing to be done in your own way.

You must remember that the natural independence of others should be respected. If your wife does her work in a way convenient to herself, you have no right to interfere with her affairs and fret and burden her with your many suggestions and reflections upon her management.

You have many good and generous traits of character. You are a courteous, affable man, in general, to those outside your own family. Perhaps this is attributable, in some measure, to the fact that_[#26p187] you dare not exhibit to them your natural disposition, excepting to those whom you consider greatly your inferior. If your superiority is not sufficiently recognized in society, you are determined that it shall be at home, where you #187

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think that none will presume to dispute its claims.

You should go diligently about affecting a change in yourself. If you are willing to sacrifice your selfishness, your exacting disposition, your pet notions and ideas, you can have a peaceful and happy home that angels will delight to look upon. Is it sweeter to have your will than to see a proper freedom of action and spirit in your household? Your home is not always just what it should be, but you are the principal cause of its discord. If you stand as a representative of Christ upon the earth, do not, I beseech you, misrepresent your blessed Redeemer, who was meek and kind, gentle and forgiving.

It is a fact well worth your consideration that it is a difficult thing for people who have sound minds and ideas of their own, to work precisely in the groove that another may lay out for them. Therefore you have no moral right to embarrass your wife and family with your whims and petulant notions concerning their employments. It will be hard for^{#188}_[#26p188] you to change at once your mode of operation; but make a firm determination that you will not enter your kitchen unless it be to encourage the efforts and praise the management of those who are laboring there. Let commendation take the place of censure.

Cultivate traits of character the opposite of those which are here reproved. Seek to develop goodness, patience, love, and all the graces which will have a transforming influence in your home and brighten the lives of your family and your friends. Confess that you have done wrong and then turn squarely about and strive to be just and right. Do not endeavor to make your wife a slave to your will, but draw her into close sympathy with yourself by kindness and an unselfish desire to promote her comfort and happiness. Give her

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an opportunity to exercise her faculties, and do not try to warp her mind and mould her judgment till she loses her mental identity.

She is a child of God and a woman of fine capabilities and good taste, one who has a humble opinion of herself at best. And you have dictated to her so long and discouraged her independent thought, that it has had an influence to make her shut herself within herself and fail to develop the noble womanhood that is hers^[#26p189] #189 by right. While consulting with your wife upon matters that effect her interests equally with your own, you well know that if she expresses an opinion contrary to yours, a feeling of injury rises in your heart and self takes possession of you and excludes that feeling of deference that you should naturally cherish towards the companion of your life.

The very same spirit that you exercise at home will be manifested more or less in your church relations. Your determined will, your rigid opinions will be urged and made a ruling power as far as possible. This will never do, you must feel the necessity of yielding your judgment occasionally to that of others, and not persist in your way to a degree that often approaches stubbornness. If you wish for the daily blessing of God you should modulate your imperious disposition, and make it correspond to the Divine Pattern.

You frequently grieve your wife unconsciously to yourself, because you do not guard your words and acts with that tenderness that you should. You thus lessen her love for you, and foster a coldness that is creeping into your home unawares. If you think less of yourself and more of the treasures in your household, giving due consideration to the members of your family, and allowing^[#26p190] #190 them a proper exercise of their individual judgment, you will bring a blessing upon

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yourself and them, and increase the respect they feel for you.

You have been inclined to look with a sort of contempt upon your brethren who were faulty, and, from their natural temperament, found it hard to overcome the evils that beset them. But Jesus pities them, he loves them and bears with their infirmities, even as he does with yours. You do wrong to exalt yourself above those who are not so strong as you are. You do wrong to shut yourself up in a self-righteous spirit, thanking God that you are not like other men, but that your faith and zeal exceeds those of the poor, feeble ones striving to do right under discouragements and darkness.

Angels from a pure and holy Heaven come to this polluted world to sympathize with the weakest, the most helpless and needy, while Christ himself descended from his throne to help just such as these. You have no right to hold yourself aloof from these faltering ones, or assert your marked superiority to them. Come more in unison with Christ, pity the erring and lift up the hands that hang downward, strengthen the feeble knees, bid the fearful hearts be strong. Pity and help them even as Christ has pitied you. [#26p191]

You have desired to do a work for the Master. Here is work for you to do that will be acceptable to him, the very work that angels are engaged in carrying forward. You may be a collaborer with them. But you will never be called to preach the word to the people. You may have a generally correct knowledge of our faith, but you lack the qualifications of a teacher. You have not the faculty of adapting yourself to the needs and ways of others. You have not sufficient volume of voice; even in conference meetings you speak too low to be heard by those assembled. Also, my dear brother, you are frequently in danger of be-

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ing tedious; even in small meetings, your remarks are too lengthy. Every word of what you say may be true, but in order to find its way to the soul, it should be accompanied with a fervor of spiritual power. What we say should be right to the point and not of sufficient length to weary the listeners, else the subject matter will find no lodgment in their hearts.

There is plenty of work for all to do. You, my dear brother, can with all safety do good service for the Lord in helping those who most need aid. You may feel that your work in this direction is not rightly appreciated, but remember that our Saviour's work was also lightly ^{#192}considered by those whom he benefited. He came to save those who were lost, and the very ones he sought to rescue, refused his help and finally put him to death.

If you fail ninety-nine times in a hundred, but succeed in saving the one soul from ruin, you have done a noble deed for the Master's cause. But to be a co-worker with Jesus, you should have all patience with those for whom you labor, not scorning the simplicity of the work, but looking to the blessed result. When those for whom you labor do not exactly meet your mind, you often say in your heart, "Let them go, they are not worth saving." What if Christ had treated poor outcasts in like manner? He died to save miserable sinners, and if you, in the same spirit, work in the same manner indicated by the example of Him whom you follow, leaving the results with God, you can never measure, in this life, the amount of good you have accomplished.

You are inclined to reach for higher work than that which naturally presents itself to you. You would seek to influence only the intellectual and honorable among men. But this class will surely disappoint your expectations; if they con-

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#193 tinue long in transgressions, they^[#26p193] seldom fully feel their lost and hopeless condition. You should work, as did Christ, in all humility, and you will not lose your reward. It is as honorable to work among the humble and lowly, leading them to the Saviour, as among the rich and great. Above all, do not undertake responsibilities that you are unable to carry.

Every thing possible should be done to make the meetings of our people interesting. You may be a great help in this if you take the proper course. Especially should our social meetings be properly conducted.

A few words spoken in a clear and audible voice, in an earnest manner, without any effort of speech, to the point, in relation to your progress in the divine life, would be to the edification of others and a blessing to your own soul.

You need the softening, subduing influence of the Spirit of God upon your heart. No one should receive the idea that a correct knowledge of the truth alone will meet the demands of God. A love and good will that exists only when our ways are acknowledged by our friends as right, is of no real value, for these are natural to the unregenerate heart. Those who profess to be children of God and walking in the right, should not feel
#194 ^[#26p194] annoyed or angered when their track is crossed.

You love the truth, and are anxious for its advancement. You will be placed in various circumstances in order to prove and try you. You may develop a true Christian character if you will submit yourself to discipline. Your vital interests are at stake, and true holiness and a spirit of self-sacrifice is what you most need. We may obtain a knowledge of the truth and read its most hidden mysteries, and even give our bodies to be burned

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for its sake, yet, if we have not love and charity, we are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

Cultivate a disposition to esteem others better than yourself. Be less self-sufficient, less confident, cherish patience, forbearance and brotherly love. Be ready to help the erring, and have pity and tender sympathy towards those who are weak. You need not leave your business in order to glorify the Lord, but you may, from day to day, while pursuing your usual avocations, honor him whom you serve in every deed and word, thereby influencing for the right those with whom you are brought in contact.

Be courteous, tender-hearted, forgiving towards others. Let self sink into the love of Jesus, that you may honor^[#26p195] your Redeemer #195 and do the work that he has appointed for you to do. How little you know of the heart-trials of poor souls who have been bound in the chains of darkness, and lack resolution and moral power. Strive to understand the weakness of others. Help the needy, crucify self, and let Jesus take possession of your soul in order that you may carry out the principles of truth in your daily life. Then will you be as never before, a blessing to the church and all those with whom you come in contact.

Epistle Number Ten.

Dear Sister:--I have been shown that you have certain faults that you should feel the importance of correcting, in order to enjoy the blessing of God. Many of your trials you have brought upon yourself, because of your freedom of speech. You feel that it is a virtue to talk plainly and tell people just what you think of them and their acts; you call this frankness, but it is down-right discourtesy, and arouses the combativeness of those with whom you are brought in contact. If others should pursue the same course toward you, it

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would be more than you could bear. Those who are accustomed to speak plainly and severely to others, are not pleased to receive the same treatment in return.

#196 You have brought upon yourself many grievances that could have been avoided, had you possessed a meek and quiet spirit. You^[#26p196] provoke contention, for when your will has been crossed your spirit has arisen for conflict. Your disposition to rule is a constant source of trouble to yourself. Your nature has become jealous and distrustful. You are overbearing and stir up strife by fault-finding and hasty condemnation. You have so long cultivated a spirit of retaliation, that you need continually the grace of God to soften and subdue your nature. The dear Saviour has said, "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

Dear sister, I was shown that you bring darkness into your own soul by dwelling upon the mistakes and imperfections of others. You will never have their sins to answer for, but you have a work to do for your own soul, and for your own family that no other can do for you. You need to crucify self, to check the disposition to magnify your neighbors' faults and talk thoughtlessly.

There are subjects upon which you may converse with the very best results; it is always safe to speak of Jesus, of the Christian's hope, and the beauties of our faith. Let your tongue be sanctified to God, that your speech may be ever seasoned with grace.

#197 "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."^[#26p197]

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The apostle's exhortation should be explicitly followed. There is often a great temptation to talk of things which do not profit the speaker or hearer, but bring barrenness of evil to both. Our probationary time is too brief to spend in dwelling upon the shortcomings of others. We have a work before us which requires the closest diligence, and the strictest watchfulness, united with unceasing prayer, or we shall be unable to overcome the defects in our characters, and copy the Divine Pattern.

We should all study to imitate the life of Christ, then we shall have a sanctifying influence upon those with whom we associate. It is a wonderful thing to be a Christian, truly Christ-like, peaceable, pure and undefiled. Dear sister, God must be with us in all our efforts or they will avail nothing. Our good works will end in self-righteousness.

In your own family there is much to correct. You have failed to give your children the attention and encouragement they need. You have not bound them to your heart by the tenderest cords of love. Your business is a great tax upon your time and energies, and causes you to neglect your home duties. Yet you have become so accustomed to this burden that it would seem a great sacrifice to lay it down; still, if you could do this, it would be for your spiritual interest, and for the happiness and morals of your children. It would be well for you to lay by your perplexing cares, and find a retreat in the country where there is not so strong an^{#26p198} influence to corrupt the morals of the young. #198

True, you would not be entirely free from annoyances and perplexing cares in the country, but you would there avoid many evils and close the door against a flood of temptations which threatens to over-power the minds of your chil-

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dren. They need employment and variety, the sameness of their home makes them uneasy and restless, and they have fallen into the habit of mingling with the vicious lads of the town, obtaining a street education.

You have devoted so much time to missionary work, which has no connection with our faith, and been so pressed with cares and responsibilities that you have not kept pace with the work of God for this time, and have had little leisure to afford your children innocent attractions within the narrow precincts of their home. You have not studied their needs, nor understood their active, developing minds, therefore you have withheld from them simple indulgences that would have gratified them without injury. It would have been a trifling tax upon you to have given your children greater attention, and it would have been of the greatest value to them.

To live in the country would be very beneficial to them; an active out-door life would healthfully develop both their minds and bodies. They should have a garden to cultivate, where they might find both useful employment and amusement. The training of plants and flowers tends to the improvement of taste and judgment, while an^{#26p199} acquaintance with God's useful and beautiful creations has a refining and ennobling influence upon the mind, referring it to the Maker and Master of all.

The father of your children was harsh, relentless and unfeeling, cold and stern in his associations with them, severe in his discipline, and unreasonable in his demands. He was a man of peculiar temperament, wrapt up in himself, thinking only of his own pleasure, and reaching out for means to gratify himself and secure the esteem of others. His indolence and dissipated habits, together with his lack of sympathy and

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love for you and his children, weaned your affections from him at an early day. Your life was filled with hard and peculiar trials, while he was utterly indifferent to your cares and burdens.

These things have left their impress upon you and your children, especially have they tended to warp your character. You have almost unconsciously developed an independent spirit. Finding that you could not depend upon your husband, you have taken that course which you thought best, without taking him into your confidence. As your best endeavors were not appreciated, you mentally braced yourself to move forward according to your best judgment, regardless of censure or approval. Conscious of being wronged and misjudged by your husband, you have cherished a feeling of bitterness against him, and when censured you have retaliated upon those who questioned your course. [#26p200] #200

But while you have fully realized your husband's faults, you have failed to mark your own. You have erred in talking of his failings to others, thus cultivating a love to dwell upon disagreeable topics, and keeping your disappointments and trials constantly before you. You have thus fallen into the habit of making the most of which you create by exaggeration and talking to others.

If you should turn your attention away from outside annoyances and center them upon your family, you would be happier and become the means of doing good. The very fact that your children have missed the proper counsel and example of a father, renders it more obligatory upon you to be a tender and devoted mother. Your duty is more in your home and with your family. Here is real missionary labor to perform. This responsibility cannot be shifted upon another, it is the life-work God has appointed for you.

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In devoting yourself so entirely to the details of business you are robbing yourself of time for meditation and prayer, and you are robbing your children of the patient care and attention that they have a right to claim from their mother. You find it easier and quicker to hurry through with many tasks yourself, than to patiently teach your children to do them for you, yet it would be much better to put certain responsibilities upon them and instruct them to be useful. This would encourage and occupy them, as well as relieve

#201 you in part. [#26p201]

You give considerable time to those who have no special claims upon you; in so doing you neglect the sacred duties of a mother. God has not laid upon you many of the burdens which you have assumed. You have visited and helped those who did not need your time and care half so much as your own children, who are now forming characters for heaven or perdition. God will not sustain you in ministering to many who are really suffering under the curse of God for their dissolute and wicked lives.

The first great business of your life is to be a missionary at home. Clothe yourself with humility and patience, forbearance and love, and go about the work that God has ordained you should do, which no other one can do for you. It is a work for which you will be held responsible in the day of retribution. God's blessing cannot rest upon an ill-disciplined household. Kindness and patience must rule in the home to make it happy.

From a worldly point of view money is power, but from the Christian standpoint love is power. Intellectual and spiritual strength are involved in this principle. Pure love has special efficacy to do good, and can do nothing but good. It prevents discord and misery, and brings the truest happiness. Wealth is often an influence to cor-

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rupt and destroy; force is strong to do hurt; but truth and goodness are the properties of pure love.

My sister, if you could see yourself as God sees you, it would be plain to your mind that without a thorough conversion you can never^[#26p202] #202 enter the kingdom of God. If you would bear in mind that whatever measure you mete to others it shall be meted to you again, you would be more cautious in your speech, milder and more forgiving in your disposition. Christ came into the world to bring all resistance and authority into subjection to himself, but he did not claim obedience through the strength of argument or the voice of command; he went about doing good and teaching his followers the things which belonged to their peace. He stirred up no strife, he resented no personal injuries, he met with meek submission the insults, the false accusations and cruel scourging of those who hated and condemned him to death. Christ is our example. His life is a practical illustration of his divine teachings. His character is a living exhibition of the way to do good and overcome evil.

You have nursed your resentment against your husband and others who have wronged you, but have failed to perceive wherein you have erred and made matters worse by your own wrong course. Your spirit has been bitter against those who have done you injustice, and your feelings have found vent in reproaches and censure; this would give momentary relief to your burdened heart, but leave a lasting scar upon your soul. The tongue is a little member, but you have cultivated its improper use until it has become a consuming fire.

All these things have tended to check your spiritual advancement. But God sees^[#26p203] #203 how hard it is for you to be patient and forgiving, he

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knows how to pity and to help. He requires you to reform your life, to correct your defects. He desires that your firm and unyielding spirit should be subdued by his grace. You should seek the help of God, for you need peace and quiet instead of storm and contention. The religion of Christ enjoins upon you to move less from impulse, and more from sanctified reason and calm judgment.

You allow your surroundings to affect you too much. Let daily watchfulness and prayer be your safe-guard; then the angels of God will be around you to shed clear and precious light upon your mind and uphold you with their heavenly strength. Your influence over your children, and your course toward them should be such as to attract these holy visitors to your dwelling, that they may assist you in your efforts to make your family and your home as God would have them. When you essay to independently fight your own way through, the heavenly angels are repelled and retire from your presence in grief, leaving you to struggle on alone.

Your children have the stamp of character that their parents have given them; then how careful should be your treatment of them, how tenderly should you rebuke and correct their faults. You are too stern and exacting, and have frequently dealt with them when you were excited and angry; this has almost fretted away the golden cord of love that binds their hearts to yours. You should #26p204 ever impress upon your children the fact that you love them, that you are laboring for their interest, that their happiness is dear to you, and you design to do only that which is for their good.

You should gratify their little wants whenever you can reasonable do so. There is but little variety or amusement that your present location affords their young and restless minds, and every

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year the difficulty increases. Your first consideration should be in the fear of God for your children. As a Christian mother you have obligations to them neither light nor small, and in order to fill them properly, you should lay down some of your burdens and devote your time and energies to this work. The home of your children should be the most desirable and happy place in the world to them, and the mother's presence should be the greatest attraction.

The power of Satan over the youth of this age is fearful. Unless the minds of the young are firmly balanced by religious principles, their morals will become corrupted by the vicious children with whom they come in contact. You think you understand these things but you fail to fully comprehend the seducing power of evil upon youthful minds. Their greatest danger is from a lack of proper training and discipline. Indulgent parents do not teach their children self-denial. The very food they place before their children is such as to irritate the tender coats of the stomach; this excitement is communicated to the brain through the nerves, and the result_[#26p205] is that the animal passions are roused and control the moral powers. Reason is thus made a servant to the lower qualities of the mind. Anything which is taken into the stomach and converted into blood, becomes a part of the being. Children should not be allowed to eat gross articles of food, such as pork, sausage, spices, rich cakes and pastry, for by so doing their blood becomes fevered, the nervous system unduly excited, and the morals are in danger of being affected. It is impossible for any one to live intemperately in regard to diet, and yet retain a large degree of patience. Our Heavenly Father sent the light of Health Reform to guard against the evils resulting from a debased appetite, that those who love purity and holiness may

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use with discretion the good things he has provided for them, and exercise temperance in their daily lives, that they may be sanctified through the truth.

You are not uniform in your treatment of your children. At times you indulge them to their injury, while at other times you refuse them some innocent gratification that would make them very happy. You turn from them with impatience, and scorn their simple requests, forgetting that they can enjoy pleasures that to you seem foolish and childish. You do not stoop from the dignity of your age and station, to understand and minister to the wants of your children.

#206 In this you fail to imitate Christ. He identified himself with the lowly, the needy and the afflicted. He took little children in ⁱⁿ~~in~~_{his arms} and descended to the level of the young. His large heart of love could comprehend their trials and necessities, and he enjoyed their happiness. His spirit, wearied with the bustle and confusion of the crowded city, tired of association with the crafty and hypocritical men, found rest and peace in the society of innocent children. His presence never repulsed them, the Majesty of Heaven condescended to answer their questions, and simplify his important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their young, expanding minds the seeds of truth, that would spring up and produce plentiful harvest in their riper years.

In these children, who were brought to him that he might bless them, he saw the future man and women who should be heirs of his grace and subjects to his kingdom, and some of whom would be martyrs for his name's sake. Certain unsympathizing disciples commanded that the children be taken away lest they should trouble the Master; but as they were turning away in sad-

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ness, Christ rebuked his followers, saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

He knew that these children would listen to his counsel and accept him as their Redeemer, while those who were world-wise and hard-hearted, would be less likely to follow him and find a place in the kingdom of God. These little ones, coming to Christ and receiving his advice and benediction, had his image and his gracious words stamped upon_[#26p207] their plastic minds, never to be effaced. We should learn a lesson from this act of Christ, that the hearts of the young are most susceptible to the teachings of Christianity, easy to influence towards piety and virtue, and strong to retain the impressions received. But these tender, youthful ones should be approached with kindness, and taught with love and patience. #207

My sister, bind your children to your heart by affection. Give them proper care and attention in all things. Furnish them with becoming garments, that they may not be mortified by their appearance, for this would be injurious to their self-respect. You have seen that the world is devoted to fashion and dress, neglecting the mind and morals to decorate the person; but in avoiding this evil you verge upon the opposite extreme, and do not pay sufficient attention to your own dress and that of your children. It is always right to be neat and appropriately clad, as becomes your age and station in life.

Order and cleanliness is the law of Heaven; and in order to come in harmony with the divine arrangement, it is our duty to be neat and tasteful. Your ideas are perverted upon this subject. While condemning the extravagance and vanity of the world, you fall into the error of stretching economy into penuriousness. You deny yourself that which is right and proper you

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should have, and which God has furnished you means to procure. You do not suitably clothe yourself or your children. Our outward appearance should²⁰⁸ not dishonor the One we profess to follow, but reflect credit upon his cause.

The apostle says: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." Your means are given you to use where needed, not to hoard up for destruction in the great conflagration. You are bidden to enjoy the good gifts of the Lord, and should use them for your own comfort and to advance His cause, by charity and good works, thereby laying up for yourself treasures in Heaven.

Many of your afflictions have been visited upon you, in the wisdom of God, to bring you closer to the Throne of Grace. He softens and subdues his children by sorrows and trials. This world is God's work-shop, where he fashions us for the courts of Heaven. He uses the planing-knife upon our quivering hearts until the roughness and irregularities are removed, and they are fitted for their proper places in the heavenly building.

Through tribulation and distress, the Christian becomes purified and strengthened, developing a character after the model Christ has given. The influence of a true godly life cannot be measured. It reaches beyond the immediate circle of home and friends, shedding a light that wins souls to Jesus.