

Swelling the
Third Angel's Message
to Its Loud Cry

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DR. ELLIOT DOUGLIN

CAMP MEETING 2005

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PREFACE

It is Camp meeting time again! How quickly another year has passed since our last Camp meeting!

At our 2004 Camp meeting we studied the *Harvest Principle and The Generation Concept in The Proclamation of the Acceptable Year of the LORD*.

Our theme this year (2005) is *Swelling The Third Angel's Message To Its Loud Cry* and is based on the parable of Jesus in Mark 4:26-29 with special emphasis on verse 28:

*“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the **full corn in the ear.**” Matthew 4:28*

To what stage of spiritual growth must the **Remnant** reach in order for the image of the beast to be set up and the **Latter Rain** poured out? This is the crucial question answered in this series of Camp lectures.

It is of the utmost importance to know what our goal is and how to reach it. We have delayed the finishing of God's work for too long. It is time now for **genuine revival and reformation** that will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness.

If you have not read our 2004 Camp book, it would be good to do so before studying this year's Camp book. Other books which should be studied for a broad foundation in understanding the swelling of the Third Angel's Message are:

Early & Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit

by Elder Saul Leacock—1992 Camp Book

The Sealing Work in the Final Generation

by Dr. E.O. Douglin—1994 Camp Book

The New World Economic Order

by Dr. E.O. Douglin—1997 Camp Book

Light On The Dark Side of God

by M.M. Campbell

God's Character—The Best News In The Universe

by Dr. E.O. Douglin—2001 Camp Book

Prayer Preparation For The Latter Rain

by Elder O. Newton

God has rich blessings for us at our 2005 Camp meeting. Let us pray and study and enjoy the sweet fellowship of Camp meeting.

Welcome to Camp Meeting 2005!

May God richly bless you and accelerate your spiritual growth to the **ear** so that you can be **ripened** by the **latter rain** to the **full corn in the ear** and be **sealed** for the great time of trouble.

DR. ELLIOT O. DOUGLIN

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

RH	<i>Review & Herald</i>
2T	<i>Testimonies Volume Two</i>
5T	<i>Testimonies Volume Five</i>
GC	<i>The Great Controversy</i>
ST	<i>Signs of the Times</i>
DA	<i>The Desire of Ages</i>
AA	<i>The Acts of the Apostles</i>
EW	<i>Early Writings</i>
COL	<i>Christ Object Lessons</i>
LDE	<i>Last Day Events</i>
SM	<i>Selected Messages</i>
GCDB	<i>General Conference Daily Bulletin</i>

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INTRODUCTION

Will You Be A Spiritual Giant Or Dwarf?

“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.” 2 Cor 7:1

“The Lord reprove and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear and be prepared to die in the Lord or to be translated to heaven

“God will accept nothing but purity and holiness; one spot, one wrinkle, one defect in the character, will forever debar them from heaven, with all its glories and treasures.” 2T 453

“Most professed Christians have no sense of the spiritual strength they might obtain were they as ambitious, zealous, and persevering to gain a knowledge of divine things as they are to obtain the paltry, perishable things of this life. The masses professing to be Christians have been satisfied to be spiritual dwarfs. They have no disposition to make it their object to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; hence godliness is a hidden mystery to them, they cannot understand it. They know not Christ by experimental knowledge.” 2T 266

“Ample provisions have been made for all who sincerely, earnestly, and thoughtfully set about the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Strength, grace, and glory have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation. None are so low, so corrupt and vile, that they cannot find in Jesus, who died for them, strength, purity, and righteousness, if they will put away their sins, cease their course of iniquity, and turn with full purpose of heart to the living God. He is waiting to strip them of their garments, stained and polluted by sin, and to put upon them the white, bright robes of righteousness; and He bids them live and not die. In Him they may flourish. Their branches will not wither nor be fruitless. If they abide in Him, they can draw sap and nourishment from Him, be imbued with His Spirit, walk even as He walked, overcome as He overcame, and be exalted to His own right hand.” 2T 453, 454

APPLYING THE HARVEST PRINCIPLE TO THE SETTING UP OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST — PART I



If you aim at nothing you will hit it—this is what God’s professed people have been doing for a long time. The Bible tells us in Proverbs 29:18 that “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” The people of God are drifting aimlessly along, waiting and wandering what will happen next, not sure how the final events will be triggered and without a knowledge of their own spiritual condition.

Many, if honest, will even admit that they have been hearing about the coming of the Sunday law for so long and we seem no closer to it now than a generation ago. Can we do anything about it?

In terms of spiritual growth, do we know where we should be at and how to get there?

Are we to continue waiting in idle expectancy, simply marking time, without any clear objectives or aims while Satan makes inroads among us producing sin, shame, confusion and deepening lukewarmness?

Furthermore, can you imagine what the angels must be thinking about our spiritual apathy, inconsistent faith and persistent disobedience? Yet we are told that:

“All heaven has been looking on with interest, ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. God will work for his children, but not without their

co-operation. They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be." RH 4-8-1890

In this series of messages our Lord Jesus Christ will clearly reveal to us what level of growth we must be at in order for the image of the beast to be set up, and how we are to co-operate with Him in achieving that wonderful objective!

The Shaking (Hebrews 12:25-29)

The shaking now going on in Adventism is being caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans (Rev 3:14-22). This shaking has been developing progressively and will soon be completed.

The counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans is the presentation of the true gospel. This true gospel is **Christ our righteousness**. It is the full revelation of the character of God through fallen human nature by Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:1-4)

This true gospel was presented in the Heaven-sent message of righteousness by faith in the 1888-1901 period, but, sadly, it was rejected by the church leadership. The 1888 message was the beginning of the glory that is to lighten the earth as described in Revelation 18:1.

Adventism has already completed four generations in lukewarmness and now in this first generation of a new cycle God must complete the preparation of His remnant. They are described as a 'little company' that are resisting Satan's supremacy. (5T 473) They are also described as those who truly receive the straight testimony of the True Witness which must work deep repentance and purify their souls unto obedience. (EW 270)

An Important Question

Now comes an important question. What is the **minimum** requirement, in terms of the harvest principle, for this 'little company' in order that the latter rain may fall? Now **remember** that the signal that the latter rain will have started to fall will be the passing of the National Sunday law. Therefore we can rephrase our question.

What is the **minimum** level of growth required of the true remnant before the passing of the Sunday law?

The answer is clearly given in the word of God. The true remnant must, **at least**, be at the stage of growth called the **ear**.

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”
Mark 4:28-29

The early rain produces the blade (conversion) as well as growth from conversion (the blade) to a specific stage which Jesus calls the **ear**. The latter rain fills out the ears and ripens the grain for the harvest.

Early Rain, Latter Rain and Growth Stages

“The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of Man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

“There is to be ‘first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.’ There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

“Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving his light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement, and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and he will finish his work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing

in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

“At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, **to fill out the ears and ripen the grain**, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the warnings of Christ, “Watch unto prayer,” “Watch and pray always.” A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door.” RH March 2, 1897

The Ear

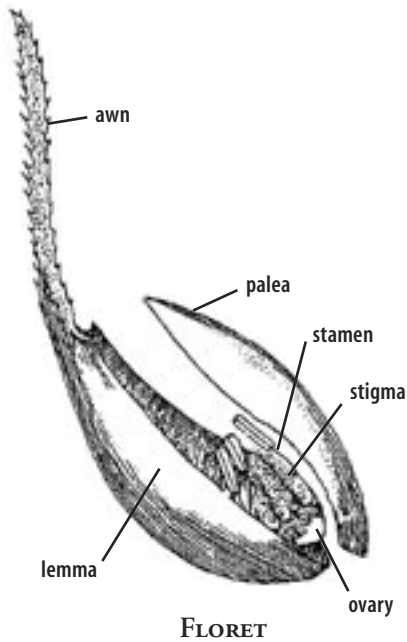
In order to better understand what Jesus means by the *ear* we need to spend a little time studying the flower of the wheat plant. But before we do so remember that our single English word *ear* is used to translate a number of different words in the ancient languages.

In Greek, *ear*, meaning the organ of hearing, is *ous*. And *ear* meaning the external ear lobe is *otion*. But the Greek word translated *ear* in Mark 4:28 is *stachus* and it really means the immature kernel of grain in the grain-bearing spike of a cereal plant such as wheat or corn.

The *ear* is really the wheat flower with its coverings and is called a floret. The lower covering is called the *lemma*, the upper covering is called the *palea*. At the base of the floret is the ovary and at the base of the ovary are the lodicules which, at **blooming time**, swell and force open the coverings of the flower.



WHEAT
SPIKE



After pollination and fertilization the ovary produces the immature kernel or grain of wheat which then matures and ripens into the full grain in the ear.

The fertilization of the ovaries in the flowers to produce the kernel of grain means that the plant is now fixed in its commitment to produce a harvest. This is the signal for the latter rains to fall. The latter rains will ripen the kernel and produce a full grain which fills the ear.

As in nature so in grace. The fertilization of the ovary to produce the kernels represents

that **permanence** and **depth** of the union of the believer's soul with Christ through **absolute surrender** so that Christ has total and unrestricted control of the believer's character at all times!

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church." COL 69

The signal to heaven and to Satan that this desire of Christ is about to be fulfilled is that His true people reach the stage of the **ear**; that is, permanent, absolute surrender to Christ to allow Him to manifest only Himself in them!

Such absoluteness and permanence of surrender requires the believer to know and to experience the fact that in Christ God has already established the union of fallen human nature with the Divine Nature, has conquered fallen human nature and has fully manifested His character through fallen human nature in Christ. In other words, Christ in His incarnation took on our fallen human nature and in Him Divinity has already conquered, crucified, resurrected and glorified fallen humanity! Oh praise the Lord!

What Is Involved In Reaching the Stage Called the Ear

At initial conversion there is, of necessity, a total surrender of the soul to Christ. Christian growth begins. The indwelling Spirit reigns and must do so until all areas of the soul, of the character, are opened up and surrendered to the entrance and control of Christ.

For most individual believers this period of growth between initial conversion (the **blade**) and the deep spiritual intimacy of absolute surrender (the **ear**) is turbulent. Indeed, early spiritual growth failure is the most common spiritual malady among Christians. It often results in spiritual death and therefore the need for reconversion.

Laodicean lukewarmness is the peculiar end-time form of spiritual growth failure and spiritual death from which God's people must be delivered before the latter rain can fall. Therefore, a critically important fact which we must know is that victory over lukewarmness is a pre-requisite for entering the stage called the ear! Only those professed believers in the Third Angel's message who obtain victory over lukewarmness will be empowered with the latter rain to give the final warning message called the loud cry!

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

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

"Said the angel, "List ye!" Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head

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

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

“I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, “It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.” EW 270-271

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” 1T188

The Ear Signals the End of Early Rain Experience and the Beginning of Latter Rain Experience

Those who will be used by God to give the final warning message must be cleansed of every defect of character before the outpouring of the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. But the stage of growth called the ear signals the **end of early rain** experience and the **beginning of latter rain** experience. Therefore at the stage of growth called the ear all deep seated defects must have been cleansed out by a completed early rain experience!

“I was shown that if God’s people make no efforts on their part, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct

their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 1T619

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence." EW 71

"It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost." 5T 214

"...I look forward to the time when the events of the day of Pentecost shall be repeated with even greater power than on that occasion. John says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue. God can breathe new life into every soul that sincerely desires to serve him, and can touch the lips with a live coal from off the altar, and cause them

to become eloquent with his praise. Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God's word. The stammering tongue will be unloosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. **May the Lord help his people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out.**" RH July 20, 1886.

"The third angel's message is swelling into a loud cry, and you must not feel at liberty to neglect the present duty, and still entertain the idea that at some future time you will be the recipients of great blessing, when without any effort on your part a wonderful revival will take place. To-day you are to give yourselves to God, that he may make of you vessels unto honor, and meet for his service. To-day you are to give yourself to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. To-day you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work to-day to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit." RH March 22, 1892

Conclusion

Before the outpouring of the latter rain and the passing of the Sunday law those who will be qualified to receive the latter rain and to give the "loud cry" must, at least, have reached the stage of the **ear**. This means the completion of early rain experience in the soul and includes the following:

- (i) Cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.
- (ii) Victory over every besetment, over pride and over every wrong word and action
- (iii) Victory over the love of the world
- (iv) Cleansing our characters of all spots and stains and of every defilement
- (v) Maintaining such a close connection with God that nothing can interrupt the abiding relationship between the soul and Christ.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:7-10

Appeal

“Nothing can be more helpless, nothing can be more dependent, than the soul that feels its nothingness, and relies wholly upon the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. The Christian life is a life of warfare, of continual conflict. It is a battle and a march. But every act of obedience to Christ, every act of self-denial for his sake, every trial well endured, every victory gained over temptation, is a step in the march to the glory of final victory. If we take Christ for our guide, he will lead us safely along the narrow way. The road may be rough and thorny; the ascent may be steep and dangerous; there may be pitfalls upon the right hand and upon the left; we may have to endure toil in our journey; when weary, when longing for rest, we may have to toil on; when faint, we may have to fight; when discouraged, we may be called upon to hope; but with Christ as our Guide, we shall not lose the path to immortal life, we shall not fail to reach the desired haven at last. Christ himself has trod the rough pathway before us, and has smoothed the path for our feet. The narrow path of holiness, the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, is illuminated by Him who is the Light of the world. As we follow in his steps, his light will shine upon us; and as we reflect the light borrowed from the glory of Christ, the path will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

“We may think it pleasant at first to follow pride and worldly ambition; but the end is pain and sorrow. Selfish plans may present flattering promises, and hold out the hope of enjoyment; but we shall find that our happiness is poisoned and our life embittered by hopes that center in self. In following Christ we are safe; for he will not suffer the powers of darkness to hurt one hair of our heads. He will keep that which is committed to his trust, and we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us.” RH Feb 5 1895

Early Rain Therapy

“Closely examine your own heart as in the light of eternity. Hide nothing from your examination. Search, oh! search, as for your life, and condemn

yourself, pass judgment upon yourself, and then by faith claim the cleansing blood of Christ to remove the stains from your Christian character. Do not flatter or excuse yourself. Deal truly with your own soul. And then as you view yourself a sinner, fall, all broken, at the foot of the cross. Jesus will receive you, all polluted as you are, and will wash you in His blood, and cleanse you from all pollution, and make you fit for the society of heavenly angels, in a pure, harmonious heaven. There is no jar, no discord, there. All is health, happiness, and joy." 2T 81

APPLYING THE HARVEST PRINCIPLE TO THE SETTING UP OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST — PART II



“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”
Rev 7:1-3

The four angels holding the four winds of the earth will not **completely** let go until after the close of probation and the sealing of the 144,000. But although they will not completely let go **until** that time, they will begin to loosen their hold gradually **before** then. As a matter of fact, in order for the “image of the beast” to be set up, the four angels’ hold must loosen enough to allow the forces of evil enough scope to successfully enforce a religious duty by the civil law, i.e, a national Sunday law.

The test which the people of God must successfully endure in order to be sealed is the test of the *image* and *mark* of the beast. But, according to the principle of 1 Cor. 10:13, God will not suffer His remnant to be tested by the final test until they are able to bear it.

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

This principle of 1 Cor 10:13 is further amplified by another closely related principle found in *Christ’s Object Lessons* page 47. It reads thus:

“The hot summer sun that strengthens and ripens the hardy grain destroys that which has no depth of root” COL 47

In nature, during the latter rain season the plant is exposed to heavy rains and afterwards, the hot sun, both of which strengthen and ripen the ears of immature grain into the full grains in the ear and harvest ripe grain respectively.

As in nature so in grace. The remnant must be at the stage of the **ear** *before* the crisis breaks. The “*latter rains*” of the Holy Spirit coupled with the “*hot sun*” of the mark of the beast persecutory tests will ripen the remnant into harvest-ripe maturity.

It should be clearly seen then, that God will not allow the passing of the Sunday law until his remnant reaches the stage of the **ear!**

But Satan too is watching God’s people. He has formulated long range plans aimed at defeating God’s work or delaying it indefinitely. As a matter of fact, Satan has two main strategies. His **second** strategy is his last resort and includes the extreme measures of the mark of the beast persecutory test. But before proceeding to those extreme measures he implements his **first** strategy which is aimed at preventing the people of God from reaching the stage of the ear.

Sister E.G. White has left on record Satan’s own announcement of his strategies against God’s people. Follow carefully from TM 472-475.

“As the people of God approach the perils of the last days, Satan holds earnest consultation with his angels as to the most successful plan of overthrowing their faith. He sees that the popular churches are already lulled to sleep by his deceptive power. By pleasing sophistry and lying wonders he can continue to hold them under his control. Therefore he directs his angels to lay their snares especially for those who are looking for the second advent of Christ and endeavoring to keep all the commandments of God.

“Says the great deceiver: ‘We must watch those who are calling the attention of the people to the Sabbath of Jehovah; they will lead many to see the claims of the law of God; and the same light which reveals the true Sabbath reveals also the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and shows that the last work for man’s salvation is now going forward. Hold the minds of the people in darkness till that work is ended, and we shall secure the world and the church also.

“The Sabbath is the great question which is to decide the destiny of souls. We must exalt the Sabbath of our creating. We have caused it to be accepted by both worldlings and church members; now the church must be led to unite with the world in its support. We must work by signs and wonders to blind their eyes to the truth, and lead them to lay aside reason and the fear of God and follow custom and tradition.

“I will influence popular ministers to turn the attention of their hearers from the commandments of God. That which the Scriptures declare to be a perfect law of liberty shall be represented as a yoke of bondage. The people accept their minister’s explanations of Scripture and do not investigate for themselves. Therefore, by working through the ministers, I can control the people according to my will.

“But our principal concern is to silence this sect of Sabbath keepers. We must excite popular indignation against them. We will enlist great men and worldly-wise men upon our side, and induce those in authority to carry out our purposes. Then the Sabbath which I have set up shall be enforced by laws the most severe and exacting. Those who disregard them shall be driven out from the cities and villages, and made to suffer hunger and privation. When once we have the power, we will show what we can do with those who will not swerve from their allegiance to God. We led the Romish church to inflict imprisonment, torture, and death upon those who refused to yield to her decrees; and now that we are bringing the Protestant churches and the world into harmony with this right arm of our strength, we will finally have a law to exterminate all who will not submit to our authority. When death shall be made the penalty of violating our Sabbath, then many who are now ranked with commandment keepers will come over to our side.

“But before proceeding to these extreme measures, we must exert all our wisdom and subtlety to deceive and ensnare those who honor the true Sabbath. We can separate many from Christ by worldliness, lust, and pride. They may think themselves safe because they believe the truth, but

indulgence of appetite or the lower passions, which will confuse judgment and destroy discrimination, will cause their fall.

“Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with the cares of this life. Present the world before them in its most attractive light, that they may lay up their treasure here and fix their affections upon earthly things. We must do our utmost to prevent those who labor in God’s cause from obtaining means to use against us. Keep the money in our own ranks. The more means they obtain, the more they will injure our kingdom by taking from us our subjects. Make them care more for money than for the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom and the spread of the truths we hate, and we need not fear their influence; for we know that every selfish, covetous person will fall under our power, and will finally be separated from God’s people.

“Through those that have a form of godliness but know not the power, we can gain many who would otherwise do us harm. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God will be our most effective helpers. Those of this class who are apt and intelligent will serve as decoys to draw others into our snares. Many will not fear their influence, because they profess the same faith. We will thus lead them to conclude that the requirements of Christ are less strict than they once believed, and that by conformity to the world they would exert a greater influence with worldlings. Thus they will separate from Christ; then they will have no strength to resist our power, and ere long they will be ready to ridicule their former zeal and devotion.

“Until the great decisive blow shall be struck, our efforts against commandment keepers must be untiring. We must be present at all their gatherings. In their large meetings especially our cause will suffer much, and we must exercise great vigilance, and employ all our seductive arts to prevent souls from hearing the truth and becoming impressed by it.

“I will have upon the ground, as my agents, men holding false doctrines mingled with just enough truth to deceive souls. I will also have unbelieving ones present who will express doubts in regard to the Lord’s messages of warning to His church. Should the people read and believe these admonitions, we could have little hope of overcoming them. But if we can divert their attention from these warnings, they will remain ignorant of our power and cunning, and we shall secure them in our ranks at last. God will not permit His words to be slighted with impunity. If we can keep souls deceived for a time, God’s mercy will be withdrawn, and He will give them up to our full control.

“We must cause distraction and division. We must destroy their anxiety for their own souls, and lead them to criticize, to judge, and to accuse and condemn one another, and to cherish selfishness and enmity. For these sins, God banished us from His presence; and all who follow our example will meet a similar fate.” TM 472-475

When Satan sees that the remnant have reached the **ear** stage, he will implement his second strategy: making his move to pass the National Sunday law. And he will be able to do so because the hold of the four angels will have loosened enough to permit the test which God’s remnant will then be able to endure by His grace.

Satan knows only too well that the setting up of the image of the beast and the enforcement of the mark of the beast will be his last resort. He also knows that, although it will be his most severe attack on God’s people, the remnant will emerge victorious, sealing the fate to which he had been condemned by Christ’s victory at Calvary.

“Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, “It is finished.” John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour’s victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.” DA 758

Therefore Satan prefers to keep working at his *first* strategy which is to so delay the growth of the remnant that they take an indefinitely long time to reach the *ear* stage. So successful has he been that he has hitherto delayed the finishing of God’s work for four generations, or 160 years, since Christ entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary.

Let us now go back to Mark 4:26-29:

“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” Mark 4:26-29

Mark 4:26-29							
Stages In Growth And Development From Sowing To Harvest							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sowing		Germination		The Ear		The full corn in the ear	Harvest
Mark 4:26	Mark 4:27	Mark 4:27	Mark 4:28	Mark 4:28	Mark 4:28	Mark 4:28	Mark 4:29
Cast seed into the ground	Nights and days of waiting	The seed should spring	The seed should grow up, first the blade...	Then the ear	After that,	The full corn in the ear	Grain ready for immediate harvest

In his plan to prevent God’s people from reaching the stage of the **ear**, Satan attacks the growth stages 1 through 4.

In the parable of the sower in the gospels (Matt 13:1-9, 18-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15), Jesus exposed Satan’s methods of attack on the early stages of growth.

“Because of its simplicity the parable of the sower has not been valued as it should be.” COL 33

The *wayside soil* prevents conversion. The *stony soil* and the *thorny soil* cause growth failure at stage 4, i.e. in the period between *conversion* (the **blade**) and that depth of spiritual intimacy called the **ear**. Growth failure, if not remedied in a reasonable period of time, results in spiritual death.

In the last-day church it is the *stony soil* which produces a *foolish virgin*. Both *stony soil* and *thorny soil* produce *Laodicean lukewarmness*.

In Laodicean lukewarmness the professed believer has suffered growth failure to the point of spiritual death but does not know that he is spiritually dead. In fact he firmly believes he is flourishing spiritually.

“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:*” Rev. 3:17

What a delusion!

The remedy for spiritual growth failure and spiritual death is *Christ!* Yes, friend, Christ has always been, is and always will be the complete cure for all the spiritual maladies afflicting us in this long period of delay.

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Rev. 3:18-20

When God intervened in 1888 to deliver His people from lukewarmness and develop them to the stage of the *ear* so that the latter rain could have been poured out in its fullness, He sent the message of *Christ Our Righteousness*. The people had lost sight of Jesus and needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for sinners.

And so it is now again—the cure for our spiritual sickness and death is *Christ* and His righteousness.

“The germination of the seed represents the beginning of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian growth. As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges.

“The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew, and the rain. It receives the life-giving properties from the air. So the Christian is to grow by co-operating with the divine agencies. Feeling our helplessness, we are to improve all the opportunities granted us to gain a fuller experience. **As the plant takes root in the soil, so we are to take deep root in Christ.** As the plant receives the sunshine, the dew, and the rain, we are to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. The work is to be done “not by might, nor

by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4:6. If we keep our minds stayed upon Christ, He will come unto us "as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3. As the Sun of Righteousness, He will arise upon us "with healing in His wings." Mal. 4:2. We shall "grow as the lily." We shall "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." Hosea 14:5, 7. By constantly relying upon Christ as our personal Saviour, we shall grow up into Him in all things who is our head." COL 65-67

Early Rain Therapy

"Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command. We are to draw from the well of salvation. Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone who believeth. In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. He looks upon us as His dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1, 2)." 1SM 394

REACHING THE STAGE OF THE 'EAR' — HOW AND WHEN?

3

So successful has Satan been in preventing God's professed end-time people from reaching the stage of growth called the ear that many no longer believe it possible to do so. And for those who still believe it possible, they have a twofold question: **how** and **when**?

Historical Background

When Jesus was on the cross and exclaimed with His parting breath, "*It is finished*" (John 19:30), Satan was defeated and he knew it!

"Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost."
DA 758

The end could have come fairly quickly but Satan, desperate to prolong his survival on "death row," launched an "all out" attack on the early church. He succeeded in causing the Corinthian church to remain spiritual babes too long (1 Cor 3:1-3). This was to be his first success in producing growth failure in the Christian era and he would continue

to develop his skill at doing this until his technique would become refined in the end-time.

He succeeded in causing the Galatians to try to reach perfection by the flesh after having begun in the Spirit (Gal 3:3). Having practiced this strategy against the Galatians, Satan used it again with remarkable success on early Adventism.

Most remarkably, he induced Ephesus to leave her first love (Rev 2:4). This is another strategy which he has refined and which he employs with easy success in our day. So, when the Thessalonian saints were looking for the second coming of Christ in their day they did not even realize that the stage of the **ear** had not been reached!

Paul advised them not to look for the second coming in their day because the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work and it would produce the falling away. (2 Thess 2:1-7)

The **falling away** led to the development of the Papacy. It took 1260 years for Christianity to recover from the malady. God achieved that recovery through the Protestant Reformation which started in earnest in 1526. After an excellent start and rapid early growth, Protestantism failed to advance and became spiritually dead by the start of the nineteenth century.

“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Rev 3:1

God then had to make a new move in the development of the first and second angel’s messages. Then (after the end of the 2300 year prophecy) on Oct. 23, 1844 the third angel’s message and movement commenced. Christ entered the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly sanctuary with the intention of making his remnant harvest ripe in quick time but alas, a desperate Satan induced the Third Angel Movement to become lukewarm in the 1850’s and to reject the heaven-sent message of **Christ our righteousness** in 1888. Consequently, the end-time people of God have been involved in a four generation delay and we are now in the **first** generation of a **new** cycle!

Can God’s people reach the stage of the **ear**?

God's Promises are Sure

God has promised to finish the work. He has promised to wholly sanctify and perfect His people. The word of God declares that He who has begun the good work in His remnant will finish it! Jesus emphatically declares that there is to be first the blade, then ear, then harvest ripe grain. Our duty is to exercise genuine faith—faith which obeys.

“For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” Rom 9:28

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” 1 Thes 5:23,24

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Heb 13:20,21

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:” Phil 1:6

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” Mark 4:28,29

Reaching the stage of the **ear** cannot be achieved by a human legalistic works program. Spiritual growth is the *gift of God*. The plant grows by *receiving* that which God *gives!* As in nature, so in grace. God *gives* all that is needed. We are to *receive* all that He gives by faith—faith which *submits, asks, believes, receives and works by love* to purify the soul and produce love-motivated, willing obedience to God's will. Always remember that all of God's promises and gifts come to us in Christ by the Holy Spirit. But we must co-operate with God!

“The change of heart by which we become children of God is in the Bible spoken of as birth. Again, it is compared to the germination of the good seed sown by the husbandman. In like manner those who are just converted

to Christ are, “as new-born babes,” to “grow up” to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. 1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:15. Or like the good seed sown in the field, they are to grow up and bring forth fruit. Isaiah says that they shall “be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3. So from natural life, illustrations are drawn, to help us better to understand the mysterious truths of spiritual life.

“Not all the wisdom and skill of man can produce life in the smallest object in nature. It is only through the life which God Himself has imparted, that either plant or animal can live. So it is only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in the hearts of men. Unless a man is “born from above,” he cannot become a partaker of the life which Christ came to give. John 3:3, margin.

“As with life, so it is with growth. It is God who brings the bud to bloom and the flower to fruit. It is by His power that the seed develops, “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” Mark 4:28. And the prophet Hosea says of Israel, that “he shall grow as the lily.” “They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine.” Hosea 14:5, 7. And Jesus bids us “consider the lilies how they grow.” Luke 12:27. The plants and flowers grow not by their own care or anxiety or effort, but by receiving that which God has furnished to minister to their life. The child cannot, by any anxiety or power of its own, add to its stature. No more can you, by anxiety or effort of yourself, secure spiritual growth. The plant, the child, grows by receiving from its surroundings that which ministers to its life —air, sunshine, and food. What these gifts of nature are to animal and plant, such is Christ to those who trust in Him. He is their “everlasting light,” “a sun and shield.” Isaiah 60:19; Psalm 84:11. He shall be as “the dew unto Israel.” “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass.” Hosea 14:5; Psalm 72:6. He is the living water, “the Bread of God . . . which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” John 6:33.

“In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

“As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven’s light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ.

“Jesus teaches the same thing when He says, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. . . . Without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:4, 5. You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

“Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him, —that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, “I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:8.

“Do you ask, “How am I to abide in Christ?” In the same way as you received Him at first. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” “The just shall live by faith.” Colossians 2:6; Hebrews 10:38. You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believe that He for Christ’s sake did all this for you. By faith you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to give all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him to **obey all His requirements**; and you must take all,—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,—**to give you power to obey**.

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.” This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your

life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.

“A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection, of His character. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love —this is the subject for the soul’s contemplation. It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness.

“Jesus says, “Abide in Me.” These words convey the idea of rest, stability, confidence. Again He invites, “Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. The words of the psalmist express the same thought: “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” And Isaiah gives the assurance, “In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.” Psalm 37:7; Isaiah 30:15. This rest is not found in inactivity; for in the Saviour’s invitation the promise of rest is united with the call to labor: “Take My yoke upon you: . . . and ye shall find rest.” Matthew 11:29. The heart that rests most fully upon Christ will be most earnest and active in labor for Him.

“When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ, the source of strength and life. Hence it is Satan’s constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Saviour and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ. The pleasures of the world, life’s cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections—to any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices. Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. Say with the apostle Paul, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave

Himself for me." Galatian 2:20. Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you" SC 67-71

Early Rain Therapy

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23.

"Many who are sincerely seeking for holiness of heart and purity of life seem perplexed and discouraged. They are constantly looking to themselves, and lamenting their lack of faith; and because they have no faith, they feel that they cannot claim the blessing of God. These persons mistake faith for feeling. They look above the simplicity of true faith, and thus bring great darkness upon their souls. They should turn the mind from self, to dwell upon the mercy and goodness of God and to recount his promises, and then simply believe that he will fulfill his word. We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God. When we repent of our past transgressions of his law, and resolve to render obedience in the future, we should believe that God for Christ's sake accepts us, and forgives our sins.

"Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul, and threaten to overwhelm us; but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.

"At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel to-day the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust him as fully in the darkness as in the light.

"Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on Christ." The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith. An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and assurance to the soul.

“Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults. When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings; say to your soul, “How can I dishonor my Redeemer? I have given myself to Christ; I cannot do the works of Satan.” Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol, and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father’s throne, presenting his wounded hands as he pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour.

“By faith look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; listen to the exultant song of the redeemed, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hast redeemed us to God! Endeavor to make these scenes a reality. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in his terrible conflict with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, exclaimed, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” The Saviour of the world was revealed to him as looking down from Heaven upon him with the deepest interest; and the glorious light of Christ’s countenance shone upon Stephen with such brightness that even his enemies saw his face shine like the face of an angel.

“If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth.

“Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God’s love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears, too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would ever enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in his glory, we must become accustomed to beholding him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.

“Sanctification is a daily work. Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will pardon and bless them while they are trampling upon one of

his requirements. The willful commission of one known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Whatever may be the ecstasies of religious feeling, Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor him.

“His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.” If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. “No man can serve two masters.” If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims, “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

“If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have his presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which he has himself laid down.”
RH May 3, 1881

INTRODUCING THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER



According to the word of God, spiritual growth from the **blade** to the **ear** can be accomplished in a reasonable time, notwithstanding the obstacles stacked against such growth. In the antediluvian world, Enoch experienced progressive acceleration of spiritual growth from blade to ear and then on to the full corn in the ear. And he was translated!

We also have the examples of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel and John the Baptist. These men overcame all odds in their pursuit of perfection of character. Yet, with all these illustrious examples before us, we—the professed believers in the Third Angel’s Message—have taken too long to reach at least the growth stage of the **ear**.

In the parable of the Sower, Jesus explains the spiritual diseases that cause spiritual growth failure. By careful study, we should be fully equipped to cure growth failure—or prevent it altogether.

In the parable of the Sower, there are four kinds of soil mentioned. Each kind of soil produces a specific result.

“And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they

were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.” Mat 13:3-8

“Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself; but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” Mat 13:18-23

The four types of soil represent the four types of spiritual conditions in the church. Notice that the proportion of the spiritually dead categories to the spiritually healthy category is three to one (3:1). If we express it in terms of numbers of professed individual believers, there are very many more individuals in the spiritually dead categories than in the spiritually healthy.

Study the diagram on the following page:

Type of soil	In nature	In grace	The parable of 10 virgins	The laodicean message application	Conversion status
Wayside soil	No germination	No initial conversion		Cold	Needs initial conversion
Stony soil	Quick germination Early growth failure Death	Initial conversion Early spiritual growth failure Spiritual death	5 Foolish virgins	Lukewarm	Needs re-conversion
Thorny soil	Germination Good early growth choked by thorns late growth failure Death	Initial conversion Good early growth. But failure just before the ear Spiritual death		Luke warm	Needs re-conversion
Good soil	Growth progresses from germination to harvest. Blade ear full corn in ear	Conversion. Steady growth to ear and harvest ripe perfection of character	5 Wise virgins	Hot	Possesses initial and daily conversions

This brings us to these solemn declarations in the *Spirit of Prophecy*.

Not One In Twenty Prepared

“It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are prepared to close their earthly history, and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner. They are professedly serving God, but they are more earnestly serving mammon. This half-and-half work is a constant denying of Christ, rather than a confessing of Christ. So many have brought into the church their own unsubdued spirit, unrefined; their spiritual taste is perverted by their own immoral, debasing corruptions, symbolizing the world in spirit, in heart, in purpose, confirming themselves in lustful practices, and are full of deception through and through in their professed Christian life. Living as sinners, claiming to be Christians! Those who claim to be Christians and will confess Christ should come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing, and be separate. . .

“I lay down my pen and lift up my soul in prayer, that the Lord would breathe upon His backslidden people, who are as dry bones, that they may live. The end is near, stealing upon us so stealthily, so imperceptibly, so noiselessly, like the muffled tread of the thief in the night, to surprise the sleepers off guard and unready. May the Lord grant to bring His Holy Spirit upon hearts that are now at ease, that they may no longer sleep as do others, but watch and be sober.

—General Conference Daily Bulletin, 1893, pp. 132, 133.” CS 41

Dead in Trespasses and Sins

“Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins. They come and go like the door upon its hinges. For years they have complacently listened to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths, but they have not put them in practice. Therefore they are less and less sensible of the preciousness of truth. . . . While making a profession, they deny the power of godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them. They are unfitting themselves to be members of His family.

— Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 426, 427.” CS 44

A State of Spiritual Weakness

“Accumulated light has shone upon God’s people, but many have neglected to follow the light, and for this reason they are in a state of great spiritual weakness. It is not for lack of knowledge that God’s people are now

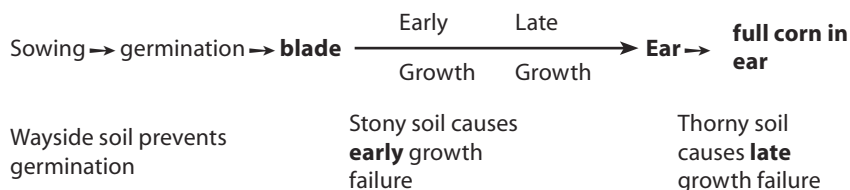
perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, but which has been neglected or refused, will condemn them. Those who never had the light to reject, will not be in condemnation. What more could have been done for God’s vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon God’s people; but it will not save them, unless they consent to be saved by it, fully live up to it, and transmit it to others in darkness.

—Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 123.” CS 39

In this message, we will study the “wayside soil.” In the next three messages we shall study the other types of soil. The lessons we learn should enable us, by God’s grace, to overcome all types of growth failure, accelerate to the stage of the ear and usher in the final events!

Before we study the *wayside soil* let us summarise how the four types of soil impact the growth process from *blade* to *ear*:

Good soil produces healthy growth to harvest



Wayside Hearers

“The great controversy between Christ, the prince of light, and Satan, the prince of darkness, is presented before us in the parable of the sower. A great multitude had gathered together to hear the words of Christ, so that he was thronged upon all sides; and in order that the people might better see and hear him, he stepped into a boat and pushed out a little from the shore. In plain sight were the sowers and the reapers, side by side, the one casting the seed, the other harvesting the early grain. Calling the attention of the people to the scene before him, he utters the parable that is to teach the lesson of the reception and rejection of gospel truth to the end of probation.

“He said: “Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they

sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred-fold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

“The Sower is the Son of God, or he to whom he delegates his work; for by cooperating with Christ, man is to become a laborer together with God. Those who by personal ministry open to others the Scriptures, are sowing the good seed, for the good seed is the word of God. In order that the seed may find a soil in which it may germinate and bring forth fruit, the heart must be prepared. The seed sown by the wayside represents the word of God as it falls upon the heart of him who is an inattentive hearer; for those who are to bring the fruit forth must meditate much upon the word of God which has been presented to them. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” As the birds of the air are ready to catch up the seed from the wayside, so Satan is represented as ready with his unseen agencies of evil, to catch away the seeds of divine truth from the heart, lest it should find a lodgment there, and bring forth fruit unto eternal life. He fears that the word of God may awaken the careless, and take effect upon the hardened heart.

“It is when souls are awakened to their condition that there is need of personal ministry on the part of him who is presenting the word of God; for the enemy waits to catch away the truth, and enshroud the seeker after light, in darkness. Much of the time spent in sermonizing should be devoted to personal labor for the souls of the lost. The minister should seek to break up the fallow ground of the heart, that the word of God may find a soil in which it may grow. The word must be preached, but this work of personal ministry must not be neglected.

“Satan and his angels are in the assembly where the gospel of the kingdom is preached. While heavenly angels also are present to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation, the enemy is ever on the alert that he may make of no effect the influence of the truth. With an earnestness that is only equaled by his malice, he seeks to thwart the operation of the Spirit of God on the heart of the hearer; for he sees that if the truth is accepted, he has lost control of his subject, and Christ has won the victory. Jesus says, in explaining the part of the parable where the seed fell by the wayside, “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not,

then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside."

"But in spite of all the efforts of the enemy to make of none effect the word of God, he who has a heart to search for truth will find it; for it lies open before him, revealed in the word of God, as the secrets of nature are open to him who studies her laws. God's word is the revelation of all truth; and in laboring for souls, the minister should seek to unveil the truth in such a way that it will make the right impression upon the heart, that the sinner may renounce his allegiance to Satan, and turn to Christ. Jesus is ready to accept the soul who turns to him, pleading the merits of the blood of Christ. He will receive, pardon, purify, and make him whole. But before this point is reached, before the soul surrenders to Christ, there is a time when the will is vacillating, when the soul is under conviction, and pressed by doubt, and it is then that a strong personal effort should be made. The minister should come close to the trembling one, and point him to Calvary, lifting up a crucified and risen Saviour as the sinner's only hope. There are many whose hearts are as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it is a useless effort to present the truth to them; but while logic may fail to move, and argument be worthless to convince, let the laborer for Christ come close to such in Christlike sympathy and compassion, and it may be that the love of Christ will subdue and melt the soul into tenderness and contrition. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Let the wayward and hard-hearted be led to the feet of Jesus; here they may learn precious lessons of love of their Creator and Redeemer, and hope will spring up. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"The wicked one is in continual controversy with God, seeking to make of no effect the mission and work of Christ. Christ came to save sinners; but when some hear the word, and become convicted, and their hearts are weighed down by a sense of their sins, and stirred by the forgiving love of God, lest they should be wholly persuaded to become the followers of Christ, the enemy immediately seeks to entice them to their former allegiance to him, by presenting to them the attractions of the world and its lusts, and the words of truth are made of no effect. The heart that has long yielded to the influences of the world, that has long indulged in the gratification of its own selfish desires, is not prepared for the reception of the word.

“Satan ever works to carry out to completion the scheme of rebellion which he originated in the courts of heaven. When Jesus, the sinner’s only hope, draws the soul by the cords of his love, the enemy begins a work of opposition, and tries to turn the attention of the one who is moved to seek Jesus, to the world. He engages the mind of the seeker in his delusive snares, and catches away the word of truth; for his falsehoods seem more palatable to the natural heart than do the truths of heavenly origin, and men accept them, rejecting the word of truth. But we can be saved only through the reception of the truth, whose power will sanctify and refine the soul, for the gospel of Christ is adapted to the need of a fallen, apostate race.

“The reason why it seems so difficult to win souls for Christ, is that Satan is continually engaged in misrepresenting the character of God to the human mind. Christ came to reveal the Father to the world in his true character, that the false conceptions which men entertained of the divine character might be swept away. Proud and worldly hearts sometimes are subdued by the power of the truth; but when the people of the world accept the truth, there will be much work to be done in their behalf, that their false theories of religion may be replaced by true theories, that their false conceptions of God may be banished through the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness shining into the darkened chambers of mind and heart. They must be awakened to investigate the truth, and to meditate much upon the plan of salvation in the light of Calvary’s cross.

“Through every possible device, through evil angels, and wicked men, Satan will seek to catch away the truth from the soul, and lead the sinner from the path of peace and righteousness. This is the special work of the enemy, and when he who has been seeking light, turns to engage in pleasure, to follow the ways of the world, manifesting pride and unbelief, it is evident that he has permitted the enemy to catch away the good seed from his heart; he has chosen darkness, rather than light. He did not accept the love of the truth, but yielded to the suggestions of Satan, and was taken captive by his strong delusions. He was led to believe a lie.

“Through the years of probation, God is testing and proving the hearts of men, that it may be seen who will find room for Jesus. The question to be answered by every soul is, Will you accept the pardoning love of God, which is a remedy for the diseases of the soul, or will you choose the enmity of Satan, and reap the terrible doom of the lost? In order that sin may be cleansed from the soul, it is necessary to believe the word of God. Satan

will suggest unbelief, and while it is not always necessary or wise to seek to answer the cavils of infidels and skeptics, it is well to be able to give an answer to every honest inquirer, the reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Plant your feet on the word of God, and give the reason of your faith and hope, but let not the unbeliever drag you down into his cave of darkness; rather invite him up to stand under the light of the Sun of righteousness, that he may recognize the voice of God. There will no excuse be found for unbelief in the judgment.

In order to be able to help those who are in unbelief and sin, we must needs feel our own weakness, our utter helplessness without Christ. Through the grace of God given unto us, we must be delivered from all our worldliness, our pride, our selfishness. By looking to Jesus we may see what changes must take place in our character, and by beholding him we shall become changed. We cannot change ourselves. We cannot be good, or do good to others, of ourselves. Christ has said: "Without me ye can do nothing." But Jesus can cleanse us. He is the hope of the lost." RH May 31, 1892

Early Rain Therapy For The Wayside Mind

"He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. If a man could save himself by his own works, he might have something in himself in which to rejoice. The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation, is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin; but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God. When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God. Living faith enables its possessor to lay hold on the merits of Christ, enables him to derive great comfort and satisfaction from the plan of salvation. The true Christian will have an earnest desire to bring others to Christ. When Philip was assured that he had found the Messiah, he went to Nathanael, and said unto him, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

“What are we doing for Christ? Are we telling of his goodness and his excellency, and seeking to win souls for the Master? If Jesus is precious to your soul, you will feel it your duty to make him known to others. Jesus has said to his people, “Ye are the light of the world.” “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The gospel of Christ is not a dry theory; it is good tidings of great joy that reveal to us a personal Saviour, and we are to tell men and women and youth what they must do in order to be saved.” RH Jul 1, 1890

THE STONY GROUND-FOOLISH VIRGIN MALADY



This spiritual disease is quite prevalent among professed believers. Its malignity lies in the fact that it produces early spiritual death after *initial* conversion. The difficulty in dealing with it is that those afflicted sincerely believe that they are alright. It is, therefore, a major contributor to the Laodicean lukewarmness condition.

Stony Ground

“He that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”

“The seed sown upon stony ground finds little depth of soil. The plant springs up quickly, but the root cannot penetrate the rock to find nutriment to sustain its growth, and it soon perishes. Many who make a profession of religion are stony-ground hearers. Like the rock underlying the layer of earth, the selfishness of the natural heart underlies the soil of their good desires and aspirations. The love of self is not subdued. They have not seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the heart has not been humbled under a sense of its guilt. This class may be easily convinced, and appear to be bright converts, but they have only a superficial religion.

“It is not because men receive the word immediately, nor because they rejoice in it, that they fall away. As soon as Matthew heard the Saviour’s call,

immediately he rose up, left all, and followed Him. As soon as the divine word comes to our hearts, God desires us to receive it; and it is right to accept it with joy. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15:7. And there is joy in the soul that believes on Christ. But those who in the parable are said to receive the word immediately, do not count the cost. They do not consider what the word of God requires of them. They do not bring it face to face with all their habits of life, and yield themselves fully to its control.

"The roots of the plant strike down deep into the soil, and hidden from sight nourish the life of the plant. So with the Christian; it is by the invisible union of the soul with Christ, through faith, that the spiritual life is nourished. But the stony-ground hearers depend upon self instead of Christ. They trust in their good works and good impulses, and are strong in their own righteousness. They are not strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Such a one "hath not root in himself"; for he is not connected with Christ.

"The hot summer sun, that strengthens and ripens the hardy grain, destroys that which has no depth of root. So he who "hath not root in himself," "dureth for a while"; but "when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Many receive the gospel as a way of escape from suffering, rather than as a deliverance from sin. They rejoice for a season, for they think that religion will free them from difficulty and trial. While life moves smoothly with them, they may appear to be consistent Christians. But they faint beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ's sake. When the word of God points out some cherished sin, or requires self-denial or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too much effort to make a radical change in their life. They look at the present inconvenience and trial, and forget the eternal realities. Like the disciples who left Jesus, they are ready to say, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" John 6:60.

"There are very many who claim to serve God, but who have no experimental knowledge of Him. Their desire to do His will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal relation with a living Saviour, and their characters reveal defects both hereditary and cultivated.

"It is one thing to assent in a general way to the agency of the Holy Spirit, and another thing to accept His work as a reprover calling to repentance. Many feel a sense of estrangement from God, a realization of their bondage to self and sin; they make efforts for reform; but they do not crucify self. They do not give themselves entirely into the hands of Christ, seeking for divine power to do His will. They are not willing to be molded after the divine similitude. In a general way they acknowledge their imperfections, but they do not give up their particular sins. With each wrong act the old selfish nature is gaining strength.

"The only hope for these souls is to realize in themselves the truth of Christ's words to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God." John 3:7, 3, margin.

"True holiness is wholeness in the service of God. This is the condition of true Christian living. Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to himself is not a Christian.

"Love must be the principle of action. Love is the underlying principle of God's government in heaven and earth, and it must be the foundation of the Christian's character. This alone can make and keep him steadfast. This alone can enable him to withstand trial and temptation.

"And love will be revealed in sacrifice. The plan of redemption was laid in sacrifice—a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable. Christ gave all for us, and those who receive Christ will be ready to sacrifice all for the sake of their Redeemer. The thought of His honor and glory will come before anything else.

"If we love Jesus, we shall love to live for Him, to present our thank offerings to Him, to labor for Him. The very labor will be light. For His sake we shall covet pain and toil and sacrifice. We shall sympathize with His longing for the salvation of men. We shall feel the same tender craving for souls that He has felt.

"This is the religion of Christ. Anything short of it is a deception. No mere theory of truth or profession of discipleship will save any soul. We do not belong to Christ unless we are His wholly. It is by halfheartedness in the Christian life that men become feeble in purpose and changeable in desire. The effort to serve both self and Christ makes one a stony-ground hearer, and he will not endure when the test comes upon him." C.O.L 46-50

Foolish Virgins

“In the parable, all the ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom. All had lamps and vessels for oil. For a time there was seen no difference between them. So with the church that lives just before Christ’s second coming. All have a knowledge of the Scriptures. All have heard the message of Christ’s near approach, and confidently expect His appearing. But as in the parable, so it is now. A time of waiting intervenes, faith is tried; and when the cry is heard, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him,” many are unready. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit.

“Without the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The theory of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot quicken the soul or sanctify the heart. One may be familiar with the commands and promises of the Bible; but unless the Spirit of God sets the truth home, the character will not be transformed. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan.

“The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit’s working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up. This class are represented also by the stony-ground hearers. They receive the word with readiness, but they fail of assimilating its principles. Its influence is not abiding. The Spirit works upon man’s heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work. They do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. Their service to God degenerates into a form. “They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” Eze. 33:31. The apostle Paul points out that this will be the special characteristic of those who live just before Christ’s second coming. He says, “In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves; . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

"This is the class that in time of peril are found crying, Peace and safety. They lull their hearts into security, and dream not of danger. When startled from their lethargy, they discern their destitution, and entreat others to supply their lack; but in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Eze. 14:20.

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied.

"The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall.

"At the final day, many will claim admission to Christ's kingdom, saying, "We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets." "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" But the answer is, "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me." Luke 13:26, 27; Matt. 7:22. In this life they have not entered into fellowship with Christ; therefore they know not the language of heaven, they are strangers to its joy. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2:11.

“Saddest of all words that ever fell on mortal ear are those words of doom, “I know you not.” The fellowship of the Spirit, which you have slighted, could alone make you one with the joyous throng at the marriage feast. In that scene you cannot participate. Its light would fall on blinded eyes, its melody upon deaf ears. Its love and joy could awake no chord of gladness in the world-benumbed heart. You are shut out from heaven by your own unfitness for its companionship.

“We cannot be ready to meet the Lord by waking when the cry is heard, “Behold, the Bridegroom!” and then gathering up our empty lamps to have them replenished. We cannot keep Christ apart from our lives here, and yet be fitted for His companionship in heaven.” COL 408

The Stony Ground Malady Can Lead to the Unpardonable Sin

“There were many in Christ’s day, as there are today, over whom the control of Satan for the time seemed broken; through the grace of God they were set free from the evil spirits that had held dominion over the soul. They rejoiced in the love of God; but, like the stony-ground hearers of the parable, they did not abide in His love. They did not surrender themselves to God daily, that Christ might dwell in the heart; and when the evil spirit returned, with “seven other spirits more wicked than himself,” they were wholly dominated by the power of evil.

“When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love,

self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.

“The last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so,” said Jesus, “shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” There are none so hardened as those who have slighted the invitation of mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven’s invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.

“In rejecting Christ the Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error. We offer insult to the Prince of life, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ. So long as one does this, he can find no hope or pardon, and he will finally lose all desire to be reconciled to God.”
D.A 324,325

Invitation

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37

“Then come, and seek, and find. The reservoir of power is open, is full and free. Come with humble hearts, not thinking that you must do some good work to merit the favor of God, or that you must make yourself better before you can come to Christ. You are powerless to do good, and cannot better your condition. Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfection make it impossible that we should appear before God unless we are clothed in Christ’s spotless righteousness. We are to be found in Him not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is in Christ. Then in the name that is above every name, the only name given among men whereby men can be saved, claim the promise of God, saying, “Lord, forgive my sin; I put my hands into Thy hand for help, and I must have it, or perish. I now believe.” The Saviour says

to the repenting sinner, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6), "and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "I am thy salvation" (Ps. 35:3)." ISM 333

"The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state. The True Witness declares, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in the throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

"Half-hearted Christians obscure the glory of God, misinterpret piety, and cause men to receive false ideas as to what constitutes vital godliness. Others think that they, also, can be Christians and yet consult their own tastes and make provision for the flesh, if these false-hearted professors can do so. On many a professed Christian's banner the motto is written, "You can serve God and please self,—you can serve God and mammon." They profess to be wise virgins, but not having the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps, they shed forth no light to the glory of God and for the salvation of men. They seek to do what the world's Redeemer said was impossible to do; he has declared, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Those who profess to be Christians, but do not follow in the footsteps of Christ, make of none effect his words, and obscure the plan of salvation. By their spirit and deportment they virtually say, "Jesus, in your day you did not understand as well as we do in our day, that man can serve God and mammon." These professors of religion claim to keep the law of God, but they do not keep it. O, what would the standard of true manhood have become had it been left in the hands of man! God has lifted his own standard,—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; and the experience that follows complete surrender to God, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Everything that man touches with unholy hands and unsanctified intellect,

even the gospel of truth, becomes, by the contact, contaminated. Man puts confidence in man, and makes flesh his arm, but all the work of man is of the earth, earthy." RH Aug 19, 1890

"The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up. This class are represented also by the stony-ground hearers. They receive the word with readiness, but they fail of assimilating its principles. Its influence is not abiding. The Spirit works upon man's heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work. They do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. Their service to God degenerates into a form. "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Eze. 33:31. The apostle Paul points out that this will be the special characteristic of those who live just before Christ's second coming. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves; . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

"This is the class that in time of peril are found crying, Peace and safety. They lull their hearts into security, and dream not of danger. When startled from their lethargy, they discern their destitution, and entreat others to supply their lack; but in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Eze. 14:20.

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," and

the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied." COL 411, 412

THE THORNY GROUND MALADY

This spiritual malady produces late growth failure and ultimately spiritual death. Like the stony ground malady, it is also a major contributor to the condition of Laodicean lukewarmness.

Among Thorns

“He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”

“The gospel seed often falls among thorns and noxious weeds; and if there is not a moral transformation in the human heart, if old habits and practices and the former life of sin are not left behind, if the attributes of Satan are not expelled from the soul, the wheat crop will be choked. The thorns will come to be the crop, and will kill out the wheat.

“Grace can thrive only in the heart that is being constantly prepared for the precious seeds of truth. The thorns of sin will grow in any soil; they need no cultivation; but grace must be carefully cultivated. The briars and thorns are always ready to spring up, and the work of purification must advance continually. If the heart is not kept under the control of God, if the Holy Spirit does not work unceasingly to refine and ennoble the character, the old habits will reveal themselves in the life. Men may profess to believe the gospel; but unless they are sanctified by the gospel their profession is of no avail. If they do not gain the victory over sin, then sin is gaining the victory

over them. The thorns that have been cut off but not uprooted grow apace, until the soul is overspread with them.

“Christ specified the things that are dangerous to the soul. As recorded by Mark He mentions the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things. Luke specifies the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life. These are what choke the word, the growing spiritual seed. The soul ceases to draw nourishment from Christ, and spirituality dies out of the heart.

“The cares of this world.” No class is free from the temptation to worldly care. To the poor, toil and deprivation and the fear of want bring perplexities and burdens. To the rich come fear of loss and a multitude of anxious cares. Many of Christ’s followers forget the lesson He has bidden us learn from the flowers of the field. They do not trust to His constant care. Christ cannot carry their burden, because they do not cast it upon Him. Therefore the cares of life, which should drive them to the Saviour for help and comfort, separate them from Him.

“Many who might be fruitful in God’s service become bent on acquiring wealth. Their whole energy is absorbed in business enterprises, and they feel obliged to neglect things of a spiritual nature. Thus they separate themselves from God. We are enjoined in the Scriptures to be “not slothful in business.” Rom. 12:11. We are to labor that we may impart to him who needs. Christians must work, they must engage in business, and they can do this without committing sin. But many become so absorbed in business that they have no time for prayer, no time for the study of the Bible, no time to seek and serve God. At times the longings of the soul go out for holiness and heaven; but there is no time to turn aside from the din of the world to listen to the majestic and authoritative utterances of the Spirit of God. The things of eternity are made subordinate, the things of the world supreme. It is impossible for the seed of the word to bring forth fruit; for the life of the soul is given to nourish the thorns of worldliness.

“And many who are working with a very different purpose, fall into a like error. They are working for others’ good; their duties are pressing, their responsibilities are many, and they allow their labor to crowd out devotion. Communion with God through prayer and a study of His word is neglected. They forget that Christ has said, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. They walk apart from Christ, their life is not pervaded by His grace, and the characteristics of self are revealed. Their service is marred by desire for

supremacy, and the harsh, unlovely traits of the unsubdued heart. Here is one of the chief secrets of failure in Christian work. This is why its results are often so meager.

“The deceitfulness of riches.” The love of riches has an infatuating, deceptive power. Too often those who possess worldly treasure forget that it is God who gives them power to get wealth. They say, “My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.” Deut. 8:17. Their riches, instead of awakening gratitude to God, lead to the exaltation of self. They lose the sense of their dependence upon God and their obligation to their fellow men. Instead of regarding wealth as a talent to be employed for the glory of God and the uplifting of humanity, they look upon it as a means of serving themselves. Instead of developing in man the attributes of God, riches thus used are developing in him the attributes of Satan. The seed of the word is choked with thorns.

“And pleasures of this life.” There is danger in amusement that is sought merely for self-gratification. All habits of indulgence that weaken the physical powers, that becloud the mind, or that benumb the spiritual perceptions, are “fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” 1 Peter 2:11.

“And the lusts of other things.” These are not necessarily things sinful in themselves, but something that is made first instead of the kingdom of God. Whatever attracts the mind from God, whatever draws the affections away from Christ, is an enemy to the soul.

“When the mind is youthful and vigorous and susceptible of rapid development, there is great temptation to be ambitious for self, to serve self. If worldly schemes are successful, there is an inclination to continue in a line that deadens conscience, and prevents a correct estimate as to what constitutes real excellence of character. When circumstances favor this development, growth will be seen in a direction prohibited by the word of God.

“In this formative period of their children’s life, the responsibility of parents is very great. It should be their study to surround the youth with right influences, influences that will give them correct views of life and its true success. Instead of this, how many parents make it their first object to secure for their children worldly prosperity. All their associations are chosen with reference to this object. Many parents make their home in some large city, and introduce their children into fashionable society. They surround them with influences that encourage worldliness and pride. In this atmosphere

the mind and soul are dwarfed. The high and noble aims of life are lost sight of. The privilege of being sons of God, heirs of eternity, is bartered for worldly gain.

“Many parents seek to promote the happiness of their children by gratifying their love of amusement. They allow them to engage in sports, and to attend parties of pleasure, and provide them with money to use freely in display and self-gratification. The more the desire for pleasure is indulged, the stronger it becomes. The interest of these youth is more and more absorbed in amusement, until they come to look upon it as the great object of life. They form habits of idleness and self-indulgence that make it almost impossible for them ever to become steadfast Christians.

“Even the church, which should be the pillar and ground of the truth, is found encouraging the selfish love of pleasure. When money is to be raised for religious purposes, to what means do many churches resort? To bazaars, suppers, fancy fairs, even to lotteries, and like devices. Often the place set apart for God’s worship is desecrated by feasting and drinking, buying, selling, and merrymaking. Respect for the house of God and reverence for His worship are lessened in the minds of the youth. The barriers of self-restraint are weakened. Selfishness, appetite, the love of display, are appealed to, and they strengthen as they are indulged.

“The pursuit of pleasure and amusement centers in the cities. Many parents who choose a city home for their children, thinking to give them greater advantages, meet with disappointment, and too late repent their terrible mistake. The cities of today are fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. The many holidays encourage idleness. The exciting sports—theatergoing, horse racing, gambling, liquor-drinking, and reveling—stimulate every passion to intense activity. The youth are swept away by the popular current. Those who learn to love amusement for its own sake open the door to a flood of temptations. They give themselves up to social gaiety and thoughtless mirth, and their intercourse with pleasure lovers has an intoxicating effect upon the mind. They are led on from one form of dissipation to another, until they lose both the desire and the capacity for a life of usefulness. Their religious aspirations are chilled; their spiritual life is darkened. All the nobler faculties of the soul, all that link man with the spiritual world, are debased.

“It is true that some may see their folly and repent. God may pardon them. But they have wounded their own souls, and brought upon themselves a

lifelong peril. The power of discernment, which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive to distinguish between right and wrong, is in a great measure destroyed. They are not quick to recognize the guiding voice of the Holy Spirit, or to discern the devices of Satan. Too often in time of danger they fall under temptation, and are led away from God. The end of their pleasure-loving life is ruin for this world and for the world to come.

“Cares, riches, pleasures, all are used by Satan in playing the game of life for the human soul. The warning is given, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” 1 John 2:15, 16. He who reads the hearts of men as an open book says, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.” Luke 21:34. And the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit writes, “They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Tim. 6:9, 10.” C.O.L 50-56

Appeal

“Self must die if we would be counted as the followers of Christ. The apostle says, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. . . . For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” When a man is converted to God, a new moral taste is created; and he loves the things that God loves; for his life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises, to the life of Jesus. His heart is drawn out after God. His prayer is, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” In the immutable standard he sees the character of the Redeemer, and knows that though he has sinned, he is not to be saved in his sins, but from his sins; for Jesus is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. It is through the blood of Christ that he is brought nigh unto God. As he beholds the righteousness of Christ in the divine precepts, he exclaims, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” As the sinner is pardoned for his transgression through the merits of Christ,

as he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ through faith in him, he declares with the psalmist, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." This is conversion. When the Spirit of God controls the mind and heart, it turns the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. The law of Jehovah will then be regarded as a transcript of the divine character, and a new song bursts forth from the heart that has been touched by divine grace; for he realizes that the promise of God has been fulfilled in his experience, that his transgression is forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ who has died for his justification. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Love is the fulfilling of the law, and those who could not understand the precepts of heaven before they experience the new birth, now see the commandments as "holy, and just, and good," and in keeping of them there is great reward. The law of God is the rule of God's government, and through eternal ages it will be the standard of his kingdom. Those who trample upon its requirements, are trampling upon the authority of heaven, upon the throne of God. If we do not yield to its requirements in this life, learning to love God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves, we shall meet with no change in character at the appearing of Jesus. Rebellion will not give place to peace and love when he comes in the clouds of heaven. Now is the time to separate the thorns from the precious seeds of truth, that the heart may be wholly occupied with the truth from heaven.

"He who knows all things, who reads the heart of man as an open book, says, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." And Paul writes, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which

drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." RH June 21, 1892



HEALTHY GROWTH IN GOOD SOIL

BY E.G. WHITE

“The word of God is the seed. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God’s word. Christ says, “The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63. “He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.” John 5:24. In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.

“Every seed brings forth fruit after its kind. Sow the seed under right conditions, and it will develop its own life in the plant. Receive into the soul by faith the incorruptible seed of the word, and it will bring forth a character and a life after the similitude of the character and the life of God.” COL 38

Preparation of the Soil

“Throughout the parable of the sower, Christ represents the different results of the sowing as depending upon the soil. In every case the sower and the seed are the same. Thus He teaches that if the word of God fails of accomplishing its work in our hearts and lives, the reason is to be found in ourselves. But the result is not beyond our control. True, we cannot change ourselves; but the power of choice is ours, and it rests with us to determine what we will become. The wayside, the stony-ground, the thorny-ground hearers need not remain such. The Spirit of God is ever seeking to break the spell of infatuation that holds men absorbed in worldly things, and to awaken a desire for the imperishable treasure. It is by resisting the Spirit

that men become inattentive to or neglectful of God's word. They are themselves responsible for the hardness of heart that prevents the good seed from taking root, and for the evil growths that check its development.

"The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin. Poisonous, Satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labor. So the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus. The Lord bids us by His prophet, "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." "Sow to yourselves in righteousness; reap in mercy." Jer. 4:3; Hosea 10:12. This work He desires to accomplish for us, and He asks us to co-operate with Him.

"The sowers of the seed have a work to do in preparing hearts to receive the gospel. In the ministry of the word there is too much sermonizing, and too little of real heart-to-heart work. There is need of personal labor for the souls of the lost. In Christlike sympathy we should come close to men individually, and seek to awaken their interest in the great things of eternal life. Their hearts may be as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it may be a useless effort to present the Saviour to them; but while logic may fail to move, and argument be powerless to convince, the love of Christ, revealed in personal ministry, may soften the stony heart, so that the seed of truth can take root.

"So the sowers have something to do that the seed may not be choked with thorns or perish because of shallowness of soil. At the very outset of the Christian life every believer should be taught its foundation principles. He should be taught that he is not merely to be saved by Christ's sacrifice, but that he is to make the life of Christ his life and the character of Christ his character. Let all be taught that they are to bear burdens and to deny natural inclination. Let them learn the blessedness of working for Christ, following Him in self-denial, and enduring hardness as good soldiers. Let them learn to trust His love and to cast on Him their cares. Let them taste the joy of winning souls for Him. In their love and interest for the lost, they will lose sight of self. The pleasures of the world will lose their power to attract and its burdens to dishearten. The plowshare of truth will do its work. It will break up the fallow ground. It will not merely cut off the tops of the thorns, but will take them out by the roots." COL 56-58

In Good Ground

"The sower is not always to meet with disappointment. Of the seed that fell into good ground the Saviour said, This "is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an

hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." "That on the good ground are they, which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

"The "honest and good heart" of which the parable speaks, is not a heart without sin; for the gospel is to be preached to the lost. Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17. He has an honest heart who yields to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He confesses his guilt, and feels his need of the mercy and love of God. He has a sincere desire to know the truth, that he may obey it. The good heart is a believing heart, one that has faith in the word of God. Without faith it is impossible to receive the word. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Heb. 11:6.

"This "is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it." The Pharisees of Christ's day closed their eyes lest they should see, and their ears lest they should hear; therefore the truth could not reach their hearts. They were to suffer retribution for their willful ignorance and self-imposed blindness. But Christ taught His disciples that they were to open their minds to instruction, and be ready to believe. He pronounced a blessing upon them because they saw and heard with eyes and ears that believed.

"The good-ground hearer receives the word "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God." 1 Thess. 2:13. Only he who receives the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to himself is a true learner. He trembles at the word; for to him it is a living reality. He opens his understanding and his heart to receive it. Such hearers were Cornelius and his friends, who said to the apostle Peter, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." Acts 10:33.

"A knowledge of the truth depends not so much upon strength of intellect as upon pureness of purpose, the simplicity of an earnest, dependent faith. To those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance, angels of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is given to open to them the rich treasures of the truth.

"The good-ground hearers, having heard the word, keep it. Satan with all his agencies of evil is not able to catch it away.

"Merely to hear or to read the word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the Scriptures must meditate upon the truth that has been presented to him. By earnest attention and prayerful thought he must learn the meaning of the words of truth, and drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.

"God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the

great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures.

“And bring forth fruit.” Those who, having heard the word, keep it, will bring forth fruit in obedience. The word of God, received into the soul, will be manifest in good works. Its results will be seen in a Christlike character and life. Christ said of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Ps. 40:8. “I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me.” John 5:30. And the Scripture says, “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” 1 John 2:6.

“The word of God often comes in collision with man’s hereditary and cultivated traits of character and his habits of life. But the good-ground hearer, in receiving the word, accepts all its conditions and requirements. His habits, customs, and practices are brought into submission to God’s word. In his view the commands of finite, erring man sink into insignificance beside the word of the infinite God. With the whole heart, with undivided purpose, he is seeking the life eternal, and at the cost of loss, persecution, or death itself, he will obey the truth.

“And he brings forth fruit “with patience.” None who receive God’s word are exempt from difficulty and trial; but when affliction comes, the true Christian does not become restless, distrustful, or despondent. Though we can not see the definite outcome of affairs, or discern the purpose of God’s providences, we are not to cast away our confidence. Remembering the tender mercies of the Lord, we should cast our care upon Him, and with patience wait for His salvation.

“Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.

“The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” James 5:7. So the Christian is to wait with patience for the fruition in his life of the word of God. Often when we pray for the graces of the Spirit, God works to answer our prayers by placing us in circumstances to develop these fruits; but we do not understand His purpose, and wonder, and are dismayed. Yet none can develop these graces except through the process of growth and fruit bearing. Our part is to receive God’s word and to hold it fast, yielding ourselves fully to its control, and its purpose in us will be accomplished.

"If a man love Me," Christ said, "he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:23. The spell of a stronger, a perfect mind will be over us; for we have a living connection with the source of all-enduring strength. In our divine life we shall be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. We shall no longer live the common life of selfishness, but Christ will live in us. His character will be reproduced in our nature. Thus shall we bring forth the fruits of the Holy Spirit—"some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred." COL 58-61

"Jesus says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The convicted sinner sees himself a transgressor in the great moral mirror, God's holy law. He looks upon the Saviour, upon the cross of Calvary, and asks why this great sacrifice was made; and the cross points to the holy law of God, which has been transgressed. It was to save the transgressor from ruin that he who was co-equal with God, offered up his life on Calvary. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The law has no power to pardon the evil-doer; but Jesus has taken the sins of the transgressor upon himself, and as a sinner exercises faith in him as his sacrifice, Christ imputes his own righteousness to the guilty one. There has been but one way of salvation since the days of Adam. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." We have no reason to fear while we are looking to Jesus, believing that he is able to save all who come unto him.

"As the result of active faith in Christ, we are brought into the moral warfare with the world, the flesh, and the Devil. If we undertake this warfare in our own wisdom, our human ability, we shall certainly be overcome; but if we exercise living faith in Jesus, and practice godliness, we shall understand what it means to be sanctified through the truth, and we shall not be overcome in the conflict, for heavenly angels encamp around about us. Christ is the Captain of our salvation. He it is who strengthens his followers for the moral conflict which they are pledged to undertake.

"But if the love of the world, if self-esteem, or any defiling thoughts or actions, obtain the victory over us, then shall we lose confidence in Jesus, or in ourselves? Is it because Jesus failed us, and did not supply us with his grace?—No; it is because we did not do what the Lord has told us to do, Watch unto prayer; "Pray always;" Pray without ceasing." How can your soul be in health, when you shut yourself away from prayer, and have no connection with Christ, the source of all spiritual light and life and power? We must have a constant connection with Christ; for he is our sustenance. He is that bread which came down from heaven. Then let us be doers of his word, and we shall have spiritual life and power. We must place ourselves often before

God as suppliants, because prayer brings the soul into immediate contact with God through Jesus Christ. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. If a Christian fails, it is because he does not obey the orders of his Captain. He is off guard; he is not Christ-like. It will work disaster to the soul to neglect prayer; for you will be led to yield carelessly to temptation. But if you do yield, do not therefore cast away your confidence in God; lose confidence in yourself, and press closer to the side of Christ.

“He who opens the Scriptures, and feeds upon the heavenly manna, becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He has no life or experience apart from Christ. He hears the voice of God speaking from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” That voice is assurance to him that he is accepted in the Beloved. And he knows that in character he must be like him with whom God is well pleased. God has fully accepted Christ as our substitute, our surety; then let every one who names the name of Christ depart from all iniquity, and be one with Christ in character, that Jesus may not be ashamed to call us brethren. He in whom we trust has proved himself a present help in every time of need; and as we dwell with him, we grow more and more into his image. “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory [which means from character to character], even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

“If we bear much fruit to the glory of God, our souls must be absorbed in meditating upon the glorious truths of the word of God. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” RH June 28, 1892

EXAMINATION, DIAGNOSIS AND CURE



In the parable of the Sower Jesus gives us the wonderful knowledge of, and deep insights into, the various causes of spiritual growth failure between the **blade** and the **ear**.

We now know of course that we must be at the stage of the **ear** in order to call down the latter rain and induce the setting up of the image of the beast. It is imperative, therefore, that each professed believer in the Third Angel's Message examine himself or herself in order to determine his or her spiritual condition and then receive and apply the remedy.

Only believers who overcome every spiritual malady and every hindrance to growth will grow to the stage of the **ear** and be qualified to give the loud cry by receiving the latter rain outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Self-Examination

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor 13:5

"But let a man examine himself..." 1 Cor 11:28

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Gal 6:3,4

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5). Closely criticize the temper, the disposition, the thoughts, words,

inclinations, purposes, and deeds. How can we ask intelligently for the things we need unless we prove by the Scriptures the condition of our spiritual health?

“Many in their religious life are making crooked paths for their feet. Their prayers are offered in a loose, haphazard manner. He who is placed in a position of responsibility should remember that of himself he is not able to do that which is required of him. Every day he should remember that he is a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men.” 1SM 89

We should pay careful attention to the question asked in Selected Messages Book 1 page 89 which we just read:

“How can we ask intelligently for the things we need unless we prove by the scriptures the condition of our spiritual health?”

In other words, we must find out, or prove from the scriptures, the condition of our spiritual health or lack thereof, and then intelligently ask God for what is needed to cure our spiritual malady. We can, therefore, better appreciate the value of the parable of the sower because it is an important diagnostic instrument that helps to prove the condition of our spiritual health!

What is Correct Self-Examination?

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.” Some conscientious souls, on reading this, immediately begin to criticize their every feeling and emotion. But this is not correct self-examination. It is not the petty feelings and emotions that are to be examined. The life, the character, is to be measured by the only standard of character, God’s holy law. The fruit testifies to the character of the tree. Our works, not our feelings, bear witness of us.

The feelings, whether encouraging or discouraging, should not be made the test of the spiritual condition. By God’s Word we are to determine our true standing before him. Many are bewildered on this point. When they are happy and joyous, they think that they are accepted by God. When a change comes, and they feel depressed, they think that God has forsaken them.” RH Feb 28, 1907

Two Extremes to Avoid

“God does not look with favor upon those self-confident ones who loudly exclaim, “I am sanctified, I am holy, I am sinless.” These are Pharisees, who have no foundation for their assertion. Those who, because of their sense of

utter unworthiness, dare scarcely lift up their eyes to heaven, are nearer to God than those who claim so much piety. They are represented by the publican, who, with his head on his breast, prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and went to his house justified, rather than the self-righteous Pharisee.

"But God does not desire us to go through life filled with a distrust of him. We owe our Heavenly Father a more generous view of his goodness than is accorded to him by our manifest distrust of his love. We have an evidence of his love – an evidence that amazes angels and is far beyond the comprehension of the wisest of human beings. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." While we were yet sinners, God gave his Son to die for us. Can we doubt his goodness?"

Be Diligent and Thorough in Your Self-Examination

"We should now make diligent inquiry of ourselves, Can I, with my present attainments, stand before the face of the holy God? If in the great day of judgment, we come short, we shall have no excuse; for we have access to the Word of God. Take the Bible for your lesson book; for it is by obedience to its truths that we shall be sanctified. To ensure the work of our salvation, God gave to our world the gift of his only begotten Son. Shall we accept the blessing that Christ has bought for us at such infinite sacrifice? He has made it possible for us to be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

"Let us not give the impression that our religion consists principally in coming to the church on Sabbath, and numbering one among a number who listen to a sermon, and then go back to their homes to continue in sinful practises. Christ said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Christ has given us the pattern to which we are to work, but unless we make diligent effort with the help of God, we shall miss the mark. We must be sanctified to God, soul, body, and spirit."
RH Aug 15:1907

Diagnosis

"God says to his people to-day, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Will they heed the reproof? Will they dare to trifle with so direct and decided a statement,

and keep their commended excellencies blasted as with a mildew because they allow Satan to steal in among them. "Thou hast left thy first love," and therefore there is no steadfastness of purpose. Without this love, all knowledge, all capabilities, all outward zeal and service, are worthless. You do not receive from Christ grace to impart to others. And while you do not reveal the love that Christ has commanded you to reveal, your light is not shining forth to the world.

"Leaving the first love is represented as a spiritual fall. Many have fallen thus. In every church in our land, there is needed confession, repentance, and reconversion. The disappointment of Christ is beyond description. Unless those who have sinned speedily repent, the deceptions of the last days will overtake them. Some, though they do not realize it, are preparing to be overtaken. God calls for repentance without delay. So long have many trifled with salvation that their spiritual eyesight is dimmed, and they can not discern between light and darkness. Christ is humiliated in his people. The first love is gone, the faith is weak, there is need of a thorough transformation.

"My brethren and sisters, humble your hearts before the Lord. Seek him earnestly. I have an intense desire to see you walking in the light as Christ is in the light. I pray most earnestly for you. But I can not fail to see that the light which God has given me is not favorable to our ministers or our churches. You have left your first love. Self-righteousness is not the wedding-garment. A failure to follow the clear light of truth is our fearful danger. The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people.

"Satan is seeking with all his subtlety to corrupt mind and heart. And O how successful he is in leading men and women to depart from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ! Under his influence hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are roused into activity. Ministers and church-members are in danger of allowing self to take the throne.

"Human wisdom, human ability, is nothingness in God's sight. He who supposes that he is superior to his fellow men in wisdom will sooner or later reveal traits of character that are a dishonor to God. In the church to-day there are many of this stamp,—men and women in whom the loveliness of Christ is hidden by traits of character that unfit the possessor for membership in the Lord's family in the heavenly courts.

"There are many who are not Bible Christians. They follow a standard of their own devising. If they would see their defective, distorted characters as they are accurately reflected in the mirror of God's Word, they would be

so alarmed that they would fall upon their faces before God in contrition of soul, and tear away the rags of their self-righteousness." RH Dec 15, 1904

"Let church-members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not to be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ's directions. They are to abide in him, constantly exercising faith in him. Thus they will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ,—wholesome, cheerful, grateful Christians, led by God, step by step, into clearer and still clearer light.

"Those who do not gain this experience will be among the ones whose voices will one day be raised in the bitter lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved. Why did I not flee to the stronghold for refuge? Why have I trifled with my soul's salvation, and done despite to the Spirit of grace?"

"Among those to whom fearful disappointment will come at the day of final reckoning will be those who have been outwardly religious, who have apparently lived Christian lives, but who have woven self into all that they do. They have prided themselves on their morality, their influence, their ability to stand in a higher position than others, their knowledge of the truth. They think that these will win for them the commendation of Christ. "Lord," they say, "we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." "Have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

"But the Saviour says, "I never knew you: depart from me." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

"There is no discussion; the time for that is past. The irrevocable sentence has been pronounced. They are shut out from heaven by their own unfitness for its companionship.

Those who have bowed to the idols of the world will gain no comfort from them in that great day when every one will be rewarded or punished according to his works. But Omnipotence will deal justly. Those who have made Christ their refuge will find that he lives, and that he is conqueror. He will be their defense." RH Nov 24, 1904

Growth Failure and Spiritual Death

Whether early or late, growth failure is very prevalent among the people of God. The stony ground type of mind suffers *early* growth failure soon after initial conversion. The thorny ground type of mind makes good progress early on but when such a mind should be moving on to the stage of the **ear** its spiritual life and growth are choked. Both types of growth failure if not remedied promptly, result in spiritual death. Professed believers who, after initial conversion, suffer growth failure to the point of spiritual death need *reconversion*.

The early symptoms and signs of growth failure are as follows:

- i. There is a loss of first love and first zeal, followed by:
- ii. A decline in the believer's devotional life, i.e. less praying and less studying of the word, less interest in spiritual matters
- iii. Faith in God is gradually lost
- iv. Disobedience, secret or open, is the inevitable result

Some professed believers, upon sensing the loss of spirituality, switch from the obedience of faith to legalistic obedience. These may look good externally while their hearts are devoid of love and faith and they have not the righteousness of Christ. This high prevalence of growth failure and spiritual death, after initial conversion, is the reason why the church has not yet reached the stage of the ear.

Furthermore, growth failure to the point of spiritual death is the basic problem in Laodicean lukewarmness. There is no "gold" (faith and love); no white raiment (righteousness of Christ); no eyesalve (heavenly discernment); in fact there is no spiritual life!

"In many hearts there seems to be scarcely a breath of spiritual life. This makes me very sad. I fear that aggressive warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil has not been maintained" RH Feb 25, 1902

"God's people have lost their first love. They must now repent and make steady advancement in the path of holiness. God's purposes reach to every phase of life. They are immutable, eternal; and at the time appointed they will be executed. For a time it may seem that Satan has all the power in his hands; but our trust is in God. When we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us, and will work with mighty power to accomplish His gracious purposes." Ibid.

The Cure

Satan's power over God's people must be broken, but how?

"The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. If he can control minds, so that doubt and unbelief and darkness shall compose the experience of those who claim to be the children of God, he can overcome them with temptation. The simple faith that takes God at his word should be encouraged. God's people must have that faith which will lay hold of divine power; "for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Those who believe that God for Christ's sake has forgiven their sins should not, through temptation, fail to press on to fight the good fight of faith. Their faith should grow stronger until their Christian life, as well as their words, shall declare, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." RH Dec 24, 1908

"Behold Christ. Dwell upon his love and mercy. This will fill the soul with abhorrence for all that is sinful, and will inspire it with an intense desire for the righteousness of Christ. The more clearly we see the Saviour, the more clearly shall we discern our defects of character. Confess your sins to Christ, and with true contrition of soul co-operate with him by putting these sins away. Believe that they are pardoned. The promise is positive, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Be assured that the word of God will not fail. He who has promised is faithful. It is as much your duty to believe that God will fulfil his word and forgive you as it is to confess your sins." RH Feb 28, 1907

"The first symptoms of spiritual slumber are to be sternly overcome. The first inclinations to spiritual indolence are to be firmly resisted. "Be sober, be vigilant," is the apostle's exhortation. Every moment is to be faithfully employed. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." We are told to work out our own salvation, and the way in which we are to do this is plainly stated: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

"Those who would be ready to meet their Lord must keep their lamps filled with the oil of grace. It was a neglect to do this that distinguished the foolish virgins from the wise. They had lamps, but no oil; their characters could not stand the test. The wise virgins had not only an intelligent knowledge

of the truth, but through the grace of Christ their faith and patience and love constantly increased. Their lamps were replenished by their vital connection with the Light of the world. And while the foolish virgins awoke to find their lamps burning dimly or going out in the darkness, the wise virgins, their lamps burning brightly, entered the festal hall, and the doors were shut." RH Feb 3, 1903

"Every one whose name is on the church books should clearly understand what union with the church means. It means that you have pledged yourself to serve God. It means that you have fully surrendered self to him, in order that Christ may reign where self once reigned. It means that you have given up the selfish ideas and plans that you cherished for so long, and have yielded your mind to the mind of Christ. It means that your fixed purpose is to be one with God, one with his people; that you will exercise self-denial and self-sacrifice to advance the interests of his kingdom; that you will strive to overcome everything that hinders growth in grace." RH June 23, 1903

When, in 1888, God intervened to deliver His church from spiritual death, growth failure and Laodicean lukewarmness, He sent the message of the full, true gospel of *righteousness by faith*. The testimony of the true and faithful witness to the Laodicean church (Rev 3:14-22) is identical to the 1888 message of Christ our Righteousness.

There must be deep, thorough repentance. And, remember, repentance is a gift of Jesus which is received by seeing and appreciating His infinite love for us. There must be a tremendous increase in the quantity and quality of prayer.

"Shall this state of indifference continue from year to year? Are we looking forward to the latter rain, confidently hoping for a better day, when the church shall be endued with power from on high, and thus fitted for work? The latter rain will never refresh and invigorate the indolent, who do not use the powers God has given them. Is Christ always to be disappointed in the beings he has redeemed at an infinite cost?

"The power of a higher, purer, nobler life is our great need. God's people are to be filled with holy joy, that its radiance may shine forth from them, brightening the pathway of others. What power, what peace, what joy, the soul may have that is united with Christ. The divine splendor is revealed to those who commune with him who is the source of power.

“We know little of the peace and happiness and joy of heaven. We need more efficiency. We need to receive from Christ the water of life, that it may be in us a well of water, refreshing all who come within the sphere of our influence.

“It is not spiritual laziness that will bring us near to God, but Christian devotion, personal piety, intelligent advancement in the knowledge of Christ. We shall be filled with the fruits of righteousness. There is a higher standard for us to reach. The world has too much of our thought, and the kingdom of heaven too little.” RH May 17, 1906

“This is a time when every member of the church should be waiting, watching, and working. Through faith in Christ we should be alive to God; and every man, woman, and child who has a knowledge of the truth should be able to discern the signs of the times. The weakness and inefficiency of the church must pass away. Creative power from above must impart life to the human agents whom God would use, that they may be able to co-operate with divine intelligences. The church to whom God has imparted this endowment of heavenly truth must not remain dead in trespasses and sins.” RH Dec 3, 1908

“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Eph 5:14-16

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:7-10

Conclusion

For God’s people to be cured of spiritual growth failure and spiritual death, a revival and reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. The testimony of the True Witness, the message to the Laodicean church, must work deep repentance. All who truly receive it will obey it and be purified. The true remnant will experience lasting revival and reformation!

REVIVAL AND REFORMATION



Four generations have passed since Christ entered the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly sanctuary in October 1844. There has been a long period of growth failure, spiritual death and Laodicean lukewarmness.

Why Revival is Needed

“I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, “Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and ye are not ready. Rend the heart, and not the garment. A great work must be done for the remnant” EW 119

The Church’s Great Need

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow his blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us his blessing.

A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the word; but when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God's word, with the manifestation of his Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home will be prepared to exert a healthful influence.

"The old standard-bearers knew what it was to wrestle with God in prayer, and to enjoy the out-pouring of his Spirit. But these are passing off from the stage of action; and who are coming up to fill their places? How is it with the rising generation? are they converted to God? Are we awake to the work that is going on in the heavenly Sanctuary, or are we waiting for some compelling power to come upon the church before we shall arouse? Are we hoping to see the whole church revived? That time will never come.

"There are persons in the church who are not converted, and who will not unite in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. We must pray more, and talk less. Iniquity abounds, and the people must be taught not to be satisfied with a form of godliness without the spirit and power. If we are intent upon searching our own hearts, putting away our sins, and correcting our evil tendencies, our souls will not be lifted up unto vanity; we shall be distrustful of ourselves, having an abiding sense that our sufficiency is of God.

"We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will do more than any other class to promote and honor, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan's devices.

Opening the Door to the Adversary

"The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place

themselves in his power. If we would labor to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated; for he could not prepare his specious temptations to meet the case. But how often do professed Christians, by their lack of self-control, open the door to the adversary of souls! Divisions, and even bitter dissensions which would disgrace any worldly community, are common in the churches, because there is so little effort to control wrong feelings, and to repress every word that Satan can take advantage of. As soon as an alienation of feeling arises, the matter is spread before Satan for his inspection, and the opportunity given for him to use his serpent-like wisdom and skill in dividing and destroying the church. There is great loss in every dissension. Personal friends of both parties take sides with their respective favorites, and thus the breach is widened. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Criminations and recriminations are engendered and multiplied. Satan and his angels are actively at work to secure a harvest from seed thus sown. Worldlings look on, and jeeringly exclaim, "Behold how these Christians hate one another! If this is religion, we do not want it." And they look upon themselves and their irreligious characters with great satisfaction. Thus they are confirmed in their impenitence, and Satan exults at his success.

"The great deceiver has prepared his wiles for every soul that is not braced for trial and guarded by constant prayer and living faith. As ministers, as Christians, we must work to take the stumbling-blocks out of the way. We must remove every obstacle. Let us confess and forsake every sin, that the way of the Lord may be prepared, that he may come into our assemblies and impart his rich grace. The world, the flesh, and the Devil must be overcome. We cannot prepare the way by gaining the friendship of the world, which is enmity with God; but by his help we can break its seductive influence upon ourselves and upon others. We cannot individually or as a body secure ourselves from the constant temptations of a relentless and determined foe; but in the strength of Jesus we can resist them. From every member of the church a steady light may shine forth before the world, so that they shall not be led to inquire, What do these people more than others? There can be and must be a withdrawal from conformity to the world, a shunning of all appearance of evil, so that no occasion shall be given for gainsayers. We cannot escape reproach; it will come; but we should be very careful that we are not reproached for our own sins or follies, but for Christ's sake.

"There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hinderance, so that the Lord can pour out

his Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation. If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power. When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out his presence from the assemblies of his people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim his promises. Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech 4:6

The Anti-Typical Day of Atonement

"We are in the great day of atonement, when our sins are, by confession and repentance, to go beforehand to Judgment. God does not now accept a tame, spiritless testimony from his ministers. Such a testimony would not be present truth. The message for this time must be meat in due season to feed the church of God. But Satan has been seeking gradually to rob this message of its power, that the people may not be prepared to stand in the day of the Lord.

"In 1844 our great High Priest entered the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary, to begin the work of the investigative Judgment. The cases of the righteous dead have been passing in review before God. When that work shall be completed, judgment is to be pronounced upon the living. How precious, how important are these solemn moments! Each of us has a case pending in the court of heaven. We are individually to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. In the typical service, when the work of atonement was performed by the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the people were required to afflict their souls before God, and confess their sins, that they might be atoned for and blotted out. Will any less be required of us in this antitypical day of atonement, when Christ in the Sanctuary above is pleading in behalf of his people, and the final, irrevocable decision is to be pronounced upon every case?

"What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy! All these sins have clouded the mind, so that eternal things have not been discerned.

Shall we not search the Scripture, that we may know where we are in this world's history? Shall we not become intelligent in regard to the work that is being accomplished for us at this time, and the position that we as sinners should occupy while this work of atonement is going forward? If we have any regard for our souls' salvation, we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins, that they may be blotted out.

"We must no longer remain upon the enchanted ground. We are fast approaching the close of our probation. Let every soul inquire, How do I stand before God? We know not how soon our names may be taken into the lips of Christ, and our cases be finally decided. What, oh, what will these decisions be! Shall we be counted with the righteous, or shall we be numbered with the wicked?

The Church to Arise and Repent

"Let the church arise, and repent of her back-slidings before God. Let the watchmen awake, and give the trumpet a certain sound. It is a definite warning that we have to proclaim. God commands his servants, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. 58:1. The attention of the people must be gained; unless this can be done, all effort is useless; though an angel from heaven should come down and speak to them, his words would do no more good than if he were speaking into the cold ear of death. The church must arouse to action. The Spirit of God can never come in until she prepares the way. There should be earnest searching of heart. There should be united, persevering prayer, and through faith a claiming of the promises of God. There should be, not a clothing of the body with sackcloth, as in ancient times, but a deep humiliation of soul. We have not the first reason for self-congratulation and self exaltation. We should humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. He will appear to comfort and bless the true seekers.

"The work is before us; will we engage in it? We must work fast, we must go steadily forward. We must be preparing for the great day of the Lord. We have no time to lose, no time to be engaged in selfish purposes. The world is to be warned. What are we doing as individuals to bring the light before others? God has left to every man his work; every one has a part to act, and we cannot neglect this work except at the peril of our souls.

“O my brethren, will you grieve the Holy Spirit, and cause it to depart? Will you shut out the blessed Saviour, because you are unprepared for his presence? Will you leave souls to perish without the knowledge of the truth, because you love your ease too well to bear the burden that Jesus bore for you? Let us awake out of sleep. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Pet. 5:8. RH March 22, 1887

Re-Conversion Needed

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

“I am instructed to say that these words are applicable to Seventh-day Adventist churches in their present condition. The love of God has been lost, and this means the absence of love for one another. Self, self, self, is cherished, and is striving for the supremacy. How long is this to continue? Unless there is a reconversion, there will soon be such a lack of godliness that the Church will be represented by the barren fig tree. Great light has been given to her. She has had abundant opportunity for bearing much fruit. But selfishness has come in, and God says, “I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

“Jesus looked upon the pretentious, fruitless fig tree, and with mournful reluctance pronounced the words of doom. And under the curse of an offended God, the fig tree withered away. God help His people to make an application of this lesson while there is still time.

“Just before His ascension, Christ said to His disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” God’s people to-day are not fulfilling this commission as they should. Selfishness prevents them from receiving these words in their solemn significance.

“In many hearts there seems to be scarcely a breath of spiritual life. This makes me very sad. I fear that aggressive warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil has not been maintained. Shall we cheer on, by a half-dead Christianity, the selfish, covetous spirit of the world, sharing its

ungodliness and smiling on its falsehood?—Nay! By the grace of God let us be steadfast to the principles of truth, holding firm to the end the beginning of our confidence. We are to be “not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” Rom. 12:11. One is our Master, even Christ. To Him we are to look. From Him we are to receive our wisdom. By His grace we are to preserve our integrity, standing before God in meekness and contrition, and representing Him to the world.

“Sermons have been in great demand in our churches. The members have depended upon pulpit declamations instead of on the Holy Spirit. Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them have dwindled into feebleness. If the ministers would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and by use their capabilities would increase.

“God brings against ministers and people the heavy charge of spiritual feebleness, saying, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.

Reformation Accompanies Revival

“A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.

“Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” “Let your light so shine

before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Christ gave His life for a fallen race, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. To him who does this will be spoken the words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"The word of the Lord never represses activity. It increases man's usefulness by guiding his activities in the right direction. The Lord does not leave man without an object of pursuit. He places before him an immortal inheritance, and gives him ennobling truth, that he may advance in a safe and sure path, in pursuit of that which is worth the consecration of his highest capabilities,—a crown of everlasting life.

Following on to Know the LORD

"Man will increase in power as he follows on to know the Lord. As he endeavors to reach the highest standard, the Bible is as a light to guide his footsteps homeward. In that word he finds that he is a joint heir with Christ to an eternal treasure. The Guidebook points him to the unsearchable riches of heaven. By following on to know the Lord, he is securing never-ending happiness. Day by day the peace of God is his reward, and by faith he sees a home of everlasting sunshine, free from all sorrow and disappointment. God directs his footsteps, and keeps him from falling.

"God loves His Church. There are tares mingled with the wheat, but the Lord knows His own. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Rev. 3:1

"Shall not the counsel of Christ have an effect on the churches? Why halt, ye who know the truth, between two opinions? "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." Christ's followers have no right to stand on the ground of neutrality. There is more hope of an open enemy than of one who is neutral.

"Let the Church respond to the words of the prophet, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee."

“God’s people have lost their first love. They must now repent and make steady advancement in the path of holiness. God’s purposes reach to every phase of life. They are immutable, eternal; and at the time appointed they will be executed. For a time it may seem that Satan has all the power in his hands; but our trust is in God. When we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us, and will work with mighty power to accomplish His gracious purposes.

“God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love reviews in their hearts, His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them, and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. Then a multitude not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the Redeemer.” RH Feb 25, 1902

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

BY E.G. WHITE

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”
Romans 16:25-27

“Obedience or disobedience decides every man’s destiny. Those who obey God are counted worthy to share his throne, while those who disobey will be forever lost. But sin has weakened our powers of obedience, and in our own strength we can never obey God. Knowing this, God sent Jesus to our world to live His law. Only the mind that is trained to obedience to God can do justice to His divine claims, and God gave Christ up to humiliation and suffering, to be afflicted with all the temptations wherewith humanity is afflicted, **that in his strength we might be enabled to keep his law.** It was for the recovery of man that Christ came into the world, and it is to the will of man that he appeals. **The knowledge of God through Jesus Christ brings every thought into obedience to His will.** The heart that was defiled by disobedience to God’s requirements, and which in its fall dragged down the faculties of the whole being, is renewed by this knowledge.

The Two Adams (*Romans 5:12,18,19,21*)

“All may study with profit the experience of the **first** Adam in contrast with that of the **second** Adam. The first Adam possessed beautiful Eden, a gift

from God to the beings He had created. The sinless pair were very happy in their possession; for nothing that was needed to sustain them, or to please the senses, was withheld. Only one test was made,—they were not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and death was the penalty for the transgression of this command.

“But Satan came to them, and told them that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would immediately become as gods, knowing good and evil. **God wished them to know only good.** Will they listen to the strange voice, which charges God with selfishness and injustice for making such an arrangement? Will they disobey God by listening to the insinuations of the enemy, because addressed to them in flattering words? Can it be that they will do this terrible thing?

“They did do it. Adam fell from his loyalty because he did not obey the “Thou shalt not” of God’s word; and by his sin the flood-gates of woe were opened upon our world. If faithful to God’s requirements, he would have had perfect descendants, as pure and uncorrupted as he himself was when he came from the hand of God. As father of the human race, he could have imparted the pure higher education, which he himself had received direct from God. But by his disobedience he spoiled God’s plan for himself and for his posterity.

“**After Adam had sinned, the only means of salvation for the human race was for the Son of the infinite God to give His life that they might have another trial of obedience.** What love the Father manifested in behalf of man, erring and disobedient though he was! He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” **God was in the world, represented by Christ.**

“**Christ, the second Adam,** came to a world polluted and marred, to live a life of perfect obedience. The race, weakened in moral power, was unable to cope with Satan, who ruled his subjects with cruel authority. Christ came to stand on the field of battle in warfare against all the satanic forces. By representing in His life the character of God, He sought to win man back to His allegiance.

The Humility of The Son of God (*Hebrews 2:9-18*)

“**Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature.** Clothing His

divinity with humanity, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God. He pleased not Himself, but went about doing good. His whole history, for more than thirty years, was one of pure, disinterested benevolence. By His words, His influence, and His example, He made men feel that it was possible for them to return to their loyalty and be reinstated in God's favor. He led them to see that if they repented, if their characters were transformed after the divine similitude, they would win immortality.

"Can we wonder that men were astonished at his teaching? "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The teaching of the scribes and Pharisees was a continuous repetition of fables and childish traditions. Their opinions and ceremonies rested on ancient maxims and rabbinical sayings which were frivolous and worthless. With what astonishment did the people listen to the words that fell from the lips of the divine Teacher! Christ did not dwell on weak, insipid sayings and theories of men. As One possessing the highest authority, He addressed His hearers, presenting before them momentous subjects; and His appeals carried conviction to their hearts. The opinion of all, expressed by many who were not able to keep silent, was, "Never man spake like this Man."

Not Willing That Any Should Perish

"God desires that the beings made in his image shall render obedience to him. He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." For this He gave His only begotten Son to this world, **that in His strength men might have power to obey.** He has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Eph 1:3,4. In order that sinners may hear the message of salvation, He calls upon those who claim to be His servants to co-operate with the heavenly intelligences in carrying forward his work. He has plainly stated the way in which the ministry of his word is to be sustained. Each one is to act his part. No one is excused from cheerfully doing his part to keep the treasury of God supplied with means. These offerings are to be used in his work, drawn from the treasury as the cause demands, to extend his work in regions beyond. God waits to see if we, who have been purchased by the life of the Son of God, through whom all our temporal blessings flow, will render obedience to Him in this master. Shall we disobey God by withholding from Him our tithes and offerings? Other souls, as precious in His

sight as we are, must have the light of truth brought to them. Then shall we not follow the example of our Saviour, and work to save others?

The Importance of God's Word

"The Bible teaches the whole will of God concerning us. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim 3:16,17. The teaching of this word is exactly that needed in all circumstances in which we may be placed. It is a sufficient rule of faith and practise; for it is the voice of God speaking to the soul, giving the members of his family directions for keeping the heart with all diligence. If this word is studied,—not merely read, but studied,—it furnishes us with a storehouse of knowledge which enables us to improve every God-given endowment. It teaches us our obligation to use the faculties given us. **Guided by its precepts, we may render obedience to God's requirements.**

The Right Attitude

"All who will come to the word of God for guidance, with humble, inquiring minds, determined to know the terms of salvation, will understand what saith the Scriptures. **But those who bring to the investigation of the word a spirit which it does not approve, will take away from the search a spirit which it has not imparted.** The Lord will not speak to a mind that is unconcerned. He wastes not his instruction on one who is willingly irreverent or polluted. But the tempter educates every mind that yields itself to his suggestions, and is willing to make of none effect God's holy law.

The Importance of Humility (*Phil 2:5-16*)

"We need to humble our hearts, and with sincerity and reverence search the word of life; for that mind alone that is humble and contrite can see light. The heart, the mind, the soul, must be prepared to receive light. There must be silence in the soul. The thoughts must be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. The boastful self-knowledge and self-sufficiency must stand rebuked in the presence of the word of God.

"The Lord speaks to the heart that humbles itself before him. At the altar of prayer, as the throne of grace is touched by faith, we receive from the hand of God that celestial torch which enlightens our darkness, and convinces us of our spiritual necessity. The Holy Spirit takes of the things of God, and reveals them to the one who is sincerely seeking for the heavenly treasure. If

we yield to His guidance, He leads us into all light. **As we behold the glory of Christ, we become changed into His image. We have that faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. Our hearts are renewed, and we are made willing to obey God in all things.**

“Stirring times are before us, and it is fatal to be careless and indifferent.” “Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Heb 10:37. We cannot afford to be disobedient to God’s requirements. The wrath which the impenitent are now treasuring up against that day when the judgment shall sit, and every case shall be judged and awarded according to the things written in the books of heaven, will soon break upon them. Then the voice of mercy will no longer plead in behalf of the sinner. The word will be, “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.”

“But the voice of entreaty is still heard. Mercy lingers; it is not yet too late for wrongs to be repented of and righted. “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:16,17. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Now is the time to receive the word of truth and life and salvation. Now is the time for those who know the truth to say to those who are in darkness, “Come.” In the place of calling the messenger of God to your aid, to labor for you, for the sake of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who came to our world to call sinners to repentance, let all who claim to be Christians say by precept and example to those who are out of the fold, “Come; for all things are now ready.”

“I would call upon all to be wide-awake. The time in which we are now living is the only probation we shall have. The perils of the last days are upon us. Ere long the opportunity to gain eternal life by obedience to God’s commandments will be forever gone. If the invitations given now are refused, if we persist in disobedience, we shall have no second probation. “Choose you this day whom ye will serve,”— God or Mammon. Now, while it is called to- day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, lest it be the last invitation of mercy.” RH Dec 15, 1896

Ruling the Spirit

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” Prov. 16:32. He has conquered self, –the strongest foe man has to meet.

“The highest evidence of nobility in a Christian is self-control. He who can stand unmoved amid a storm of abuse is one of God’s heroes.

“To rule the spirit is to keep self under discipline; to resist evil; to regulate every word and deed by God’s great standard of righteousness. He who has learned to rule his spirit will rise above the slights, the rebuffs, the annoyances, to which we are daily exposed, and these will cease to cast a gloom over his spirit.

“It is God’s purpose that the kingly power of sanctified reason, controlled by divine grace, shall bear sway in the lives of human beings. He who rules his spirit is in possession of this power.

“In childhood and youth the character is most impressible. The power of self-control should then be acquired. By the fireside and at the family board influences are exerted the results of which are as enduring as eternity. More than any natural endowment, the habits established in early years will decide whether a man shall be victorious or vanquished in the battle of life.

“In the use of language, there is, perhaps, no error that old and young are more, ready to pass over lightly in themselves than hasty, impatient speech. They think it is a sufficient excuse to plead, “I was off my guard, and did not really mean what I said.” But God’s Word does not treat it lightly. The Scripture says: “Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.” Prov 29:20. “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.” Prov 25:78.

“The largest share of life’s annoyances, its heartaches, its irritations, is due to uncontrolled temper. In one moment, by hasty, passionate, careless words, may be wrought evil that a whole lifetime’s repentance can not undo. O, the hearts that are broken, the friends estranged, the lives wrecked, by the harsh, hasty words of those who might have brought help and healing!

“Overwork sometimes causes a loss of self-control. But the Lord never compels hurried, complicated movements. Many gather to themselves burdens that the merciful Heavenly Father did not place on them. Duties he never designed them to perform chase one another wildly. God desires us to realize that we do not glorify his name when we take so many burdens that we are

overtaxed and, becoming heart-weary and brain-weary, chafe and fret and scold. We are to bear only the responsibilities that the Lord gives us, trusting in him, **and thus keeping our hearts pure and sweet and sympathetic.**

“There is a wonderful power in silence. When impatient words are spoken to you, do not retaliate. Words spoken in reply to one who is angry, usually act as a whip, lashing the temper into greater fury. But anger met by silence quickly dies away. Let the Christian bridle his tongue, firmly resolving not to speak harsh, impatient words. With the tongue bridled, he may be victorious in every trial of patience through which he is called to pass.

“In his own strength man can not rule his spirit. **But through Christ he may gain self-control.** In His strength he may bring his thoughts and words into subjection to the will of God. The religion of Christ brings the emotions under the control of reason, and disciplines the tongue. Under its influence the hasty temper is subdued, and the heart is filled with patience and gentleness.

“Hold firmly to the One who has all power in heaven and in earth. Though you so often fail to reveal patience and calmness, do not give up the struggle. Resolve again, this time more firmly, to be patient under every provocation. And never take your eyes off your divine Example.

God’s Ideal For His Children

“God’s ideal for his children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” **This command is a promise.** The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil. **And He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul to keep him from sinning.**

“The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is attainable by every repenting, believing child of God.” RH OCT 31, 1907

Building On Christ

“We build on Christ by obeying his word. **It is not he who merely enjoys righteousness, that is righteous, but he who does righteousness.**

Holiness is not rapture; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is doing the will of our Heavenly Father. Religion consists in doing the words of Christ; **not doing to earn God's favor, but because, all undeserving, we have received the gift of his love.** Christ places the salvation of man, not upon profession merely, but upon faith that is made manifest in works of righteousness. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8:14. Not those whose hearts are touched by the Spirit, not those who now and then yield to its power, **but they that are led by the Spirit,** are the sons of God.

"To live by the word of God means the surrender to Him of the whole life. **There will be felt a continual sense of need and dependence, a drawing out of the heart after God.** Prayer is a necessity; for it is the life of the soul. Family prayer, public prayer, have their place; **but it is secret communion with God that sustains the soul-life.** It was in the mount with God that Moses beheld the pattern of that wonderful building that was to be the abiding-place of God's glory. It is in the mount with God,—in the secret place of communion,—that we are to contemplate his glorious ideal for humanity. Thus we shall be able so to fashion our character building that to us may be fulfilled his promise. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." RH Dec 31, 1908

Obedience Through The Merits of Christ

"Our righteousness is found in obedience to God's law through the merits of Jesus Christ. We cannot afford to offend in one point; for if we do, we are pronounced guilty of all; that is, we are recorded in heaven as transgressors, as disobedient children, unthankful, unholy, who choose the depravity of Satan rather than the purity of Christ. An infinite sacrifice has been made that the moral image of God may be restored to man, through willing obedience to all the commandments of God. **Exceeding great is our salvation, for ample provision has been made through the righteousness of Christ, that we may be pure, entire, wanting nothing.**" RH Feb 4 1890

A Work of Preparation

"There is an earnest work of preparation to be done by Seventh-day Adventists if they would stand firm in the trying experiences just before them. If they remain true to God in the confusion and temptation of the last days, they must seek the Lord in humility of heart for wisdom to resist the deceptions of the enemy. At this time every believer in present truth should stand identified as a laborer together with God.

“Ever are we to keep in mind the solemn thought of the Lord’s soon return, and in view of this to recognize the individual work to be done. Through the aid of the Holy Spirit we are to resist natural inclinations and tendencies to wrong, and weed out of the life every unchristlike element. Thus we shall prepare our hearts for the reception of God’s blessing, which will impart to us grace, and bring us into harmony with the faith of Jesus. For this work of preparation great advantages have been granted to this people, in light bestowed, in messages of warning and instruction, sent through the agency of the Spirit of God.

“Because of the increasing power of Satan’s temptations, the times in which we live are full of peril for the children of God, and we need to learn constantly of the Great Teacher, that we may take every step in surety and righteousness. Wonderful scenes are opening before us, and at this time a living testimony is to be borne in the lives of God’s professing people, so that the world may see that in this age when evil reigns on every side, there is yet a people who are laying aside their will and are seeking to do God’s will,—a people in whose hearts and lives the law of God is written. There are strong temptations before us, sharp tests. The commandment-keeping people of God are to prepare for this time of trial by obtaining a deeper experience in the things of God and a practical knowledge of the righteousness of Christ.”
RH Sept 28, 1911

Appeal

“By beholding we become changed. Through close study and earnest contemplation of the character of Christ, his image is reflected in our own lives, and a higher tone is imparted to the spirituality of the church. If the truth of God has not transformed our characters into the likeness of Christ, all our professed knowledge of him and the truth is but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.” RH April 24, 1913

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor 3:18

THE EAR AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE OF THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

The “midnight cry” or “seventh month” movement of the summer and autumn of 1844 was the nearest the church came to the stage of the **ear** since apostolic times.

“Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human imperfection and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844.” GC 401

In fact, the midnight cry was intended to prepare the faithful people of God for the second apartment ministry of our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary and also for the third angel’s message including the Sabbath truth.

It was heaven’s plan to bring them fully and quickly to the stage of the **ear** and then on to the **full corn in the ear** and to **harvest ripe maturity** very early in the first generation after October 1844. And had they followed on unitedly in the advancing light of the sanctuary truth, the Sabbath truth and the third angel’s message, the work would indeed have been finished within the first generation after October 1844!

The Lord had permitted the great disappointment to severely test the believers back then on October 22, 1844 and He had intended to use it to unite the faithful and propel them on into the third angel’s message. But Satan capitalized on the great disappointment and scattered the waiting believers through unbelief, division and confusion. And even the few

believers who moved forward into the advancing light of the sanctuary truth and the third angel's message were so undermined by the enemy that Laodicean lukewarmness developed very early in the 1850s!

But before we go any further, let us pay careful attention to the higher level of spirituality which characterized the "midnight cry" movement of the autumn of 1844. This is crucially important because it informs us of the level of spirituality required for a movement to reach the stage of the **ear**. We quote now from *The Great Controversy*, pages 400, 401:

"Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. Fanaticism disappeared before this proclamation, like early frost before the rising sun. Believers saw their doubt and perplexity removed, and hope and courage animated their hearts. The work was free from those extremes which are ever manifested when there is human excitement without the controlling influence of the Word and Spirit of God. It was similar in character to those seasons of humiliation and returning unto the Lord which among ancient Israel followed messages of reproof from his servants. It bore the characteristics that mark the work of God in every age. There was little ecstatic joy, but rather deep searching of heart, confession of sin, and forsaking of the world. A preparation to meet the Lord was the burden of agonizing spirits. There was persevering prayer, and unreserved consecration to God.

"Said Miller, in describing that work: "There is no great expression of joy; that is, as it were, suppressed for a future occasion, when all Heaven and earth will rejoice together with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There is no shouting; that, too, is reserved for the shout from Heaven. The singers are silent; they are waiting to join the angelic hosts, the choir from Heaven." "There is no clashing of sentiments; all are of one heart and of one mind." Another who participated in the movement testified: "It has produced everywhere the most deep searching of heart and humiliation of soul. . . . It caused a weaning of affections from the things of this world, a healing of controversies and animosities, a confession of wrongs, a breaking down before God, and penitent, broken-hearted supplications to him for pardon and acceptance. It caused self-abasement and prostration of soul, such as we never before witnessed. As the Lord commanded by the prophet Joel, when the great day of God should be at hand, it produced a rending of hearts and not of garments, and a turning unto the Lord with fasting, and

weeping, and mourning. As God said by Zechariah, a spirit of grace and of supplication was poured out upon his children; they looked to Him whom they had pierced, there was great mourning in the land, . . . and those who were looking for the Lord afflicted their souls before him.”

“Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human imperfection and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844. Even now, after the lapse of nearly half a century, all who shared in that movement and who have stood firm upon the platform of truth, still feel the holy influence of that blessed work, and bear witness that it was of God.” GC 400-401 (1884)

In The Most Holy Place

Our great High Priest, Saviour and Lord entered the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14. Those years ended on October 22, 1844. Thereafter (Oct 23 1844) Christ entered the Most High Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary where He is to be married to the New Jerusalem and receive His kingdom and then return, at His second coming, for His faithful followers. Jesus Himself said so in Luke 12:36:

“And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.”

The *Spirit of Prophecy* makes all of this clear in *The Great Controversy*, pages 426-428:

“The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Dan. 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Dan. 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to his temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25.

“In the summer and autumn of 1844, the proclamation, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,” was given. The two classes represented by the wise and foolish virgins were then developed,—one class who looked with joy to the Lord’s appearing, and who had been diligently preparing to meet him; another class that, influenced by fear, and acting from impulse, had been satisfied with a theory of the truth, but were destitute of the grace of God.

In the parable, when the bridegroom came, "they that were ready went in with him to the marriage." The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of his kingdom. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called "the bride, the Lamb's wife." Said the angel to John, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." "He carried me away in the spirit," says the prophet, "and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God." [Rev. 21:9, 10.] Clearly, then, the bride represents the holy city, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the church. In the Revelation the people of God are said to be the guests at the marriage supper. [Rev. 19:9.] If guests, they cannot be represented also as the bride. Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of days in Heaven, "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom," he will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of his kingdom, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." [Dan. 7:14; Rev. 21:2.] Having received the kingdom, he will come in his glory, as King of kings, and Lord of lords, for the redemption of his people, who are to "sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," at his table in his kingdom, [Matt. 8:11; Luke 22:30.] to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

"The proclamation, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the Bridegroom came, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of days in Heaven, to the marriage, the reception of his kingdom. "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in Heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to "wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding." [Luke 12:36.] But they are to understand his work, and to follow him by faith as he goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage.

"In the parable it was those that had oil in their vessels with their lamps that went in to the marriage. Those who, with a knowledge of the truth from the Scriptures, had also the Spirit and grace of God, and who, in the night of their bitter trial, had patiently waited, searching the Bible for clearer light,—these saw the truth concerning the sanctuary in Heaven and the Saviour's change of ministration, and by faith they followed him in his work in the sanctuary above. And all who through the testimony of the Scriptures accept the same

truths, following Christ by faith as he enters in before God to perform the last work of mediation, and at its close to receive his kingdom,—all these are represented as going in to the marriage.” GC 426-428

We come now to a critically important fact. Christ can neither marry the New Jerusalem *nor* receive His kingdom unless He first brings His living remnant-elect to the **full corn in the ear**, i.e. perfection of Christian character!

The cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven pre-requires the cleansing of the sanctuaries of His precious souls on earth!

“Says the prophet: “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.”[Mal. 3:2, 3.] Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative Judgment is going forward in Heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God’s people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.

“When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for his appearing. “Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.”[Mal. 3:4.] Then the church which our Lord at his coming is to receive to himself will be “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.”[Eph. 5:27.] Then she will look forth “as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” (Song of Solomon 6:10).” GC 425

The growth stages from the **ear** through to the **full corn in the ear** and then to **harvest-ripe grain** constitute the Most Holy or **latter rain** experience. As a matter of fact when the stage of the **full corn in the ear** is reached Christ will cease His Most Holy Place ministry. He will allow the universe to see His remnant living in the sight of a holy God

without a mediator and being further strengthened and ripened by the “hot sun” of the time of Jacob’s trouble into **harvest-ready grain** before He returns for them!

Spiritual Marriage – A Resumé

The plan of redemption presents three distinct, though inseparable, spiritual marriages. The *primary* spiritual marriage occurred in the incarnation when the eternal Son of God took on our corporate sinful, fallen, human nature and therefore established the marriage between fallen human nature and the Divine Nature in Christ. That primary marriage was and is the *ground* of our salvation. Jesus was really tempted in all points like as we are and overcame as one of us, for us, in our fallen nature as our example and as the guarantor of our overcoming! He paid the redemption price for every soul and exhausted the penalty of sin for every soul when He died on Calvary’s cross. At the cross our Saviour produced a perfect and complete sacrificial atonement which is the basis of the final atonement which is yet to be completed in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

The secondary spiritual marriage is the union between the believer’s soul and Christ in genuine conversion. This secondary marriage must be shown to be successful by the production of fruit i.e. an obedient church.

Lastly will come the *tertiary* spiritual marriage wherein the glorified Christ and His glorified church are united in the kingdom of glory.

Deepest Spiritual Intimacy In The Most Holy Place

In order for Jesus to qualify to marry the New Jerusalem (the tertiary marriage) He must give proof of the absolute success of His marriage to His church. He must impregnate her through such fantastically sweet love, and intimate spiritual intercourse that He reproduces Himself in and through her!

But for a long time, His wife has had the bedroom door shut and has denied her Husband the intimate spiritual intercourse and ecstasy He so desires in order to impregnate her with His own character! Yet Jesus pleads with Laodicea, He wants to *come in* to each believer in the most intimate spiritual relationship that is possible between Redeemer and redeemed! (Isaiah 54:5; 2 Cor 11:2; Hosea 2:19,20; Song of Solomon 2:1-4; 5; 6:10; Rev 3:20; Eph 5:25-27,32)

At last the true remnant will fully appreciate the absolute, eternal, unconditional, unselfish agapé love of the Father and His Son. That divine love which is an *all-for-the-other*, completely selfless love, which drove our Lord to condescend Himself and to come all the way down from glory to die the equivalent of the second death for us. To put it in practical terms, He loved us more than He loved Himself and was willing to be separated from His Father forever if it were necessary to save us. We read now from *Desire of Ages*, pp. 690-693:

“The awful moment had come—that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity. He might say, Let the transgressor receive the penalty of his sin, and I will go back to My Father. Will the Son of God drink the bitter cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, “O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.”

“Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world’s Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself.” DA 690

When this divine love is seen, appreciated and received it will produce that absolute surrender which is the hallmark of the stage of growth called the **ear!**

A Unique Plan

The Godhead had a unique plan to be carried out when the third angel’s movement was called into being soon after the Great Disappointment. The work begun in October 1844 is unequalled in all the universe because it is intended to bring Christ and His people into a previously unknown union. He with His people are to go into the Most Holy Place together! He actually in person, they by faith. There is the place where sin is to be blotted out. As Christ stands with His

people, He assures them that the cleansing of the sanctuary can be done. **He overcame our sinful nature, our world and Satan by His faith which worked by His love to receive and manifest the righteousness of God in perfect obedience and infinite sacrifice!** He conquered the human “self” and His victory is ours. Thus when the true believers by faith follow Christ into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary they will be uniting their humanity with His divinity, allowing Him to cleanse their souls of all defilement and to fully reproduce Himself in them. The *success* of the marriage will be manifest first of all by the **ear**, then the **full corn in the ear**, then **harvest ripe fruit!** This will be indeed the final at-one-ment, final atonement in the Most Holy Place!

Early rain experience is *completed* and latter rain experience is *commenced* at the **ear** stage of growth. Latter rain experience is “most holy place” experience, and the ear is where it starts. It is therefore very necessary for us to have a functional or working definition of the **ear stage**. Such a definition is found in the *Review and Herald*:

“May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out”

RH July 20, 1886.

There you have it!

At this stage, *the soul temple is cleansed from every defilement*. That is the first part of the definition. Also at this stage is what is described as “*a close connection with Christ*”. This *close connection* is the deep intimacy of spiritual marriage union with Christ, allowing Him to impregnate us with His character and to bring us into final, complete, experiential oneness with Himself — final atonement in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary!

The Primary Loud Cry Servants Must Be First to Reach the Ear

For many many years, the world of sports wondered if anyone would ever run a mile in four minutes. Many outstanding athletes had come close but always there was a failure of a few tenths of a second. However in 1954 Roger Bannister at Oxford, England, did the “impossible” and ran the mile in just under four minutes. There was world-wide acclamation of the feat. But since then, Bannister’s record has been broken many times by athletes of many different nationalities.

It is obvious that Roger Bannister and those who have since broken his record have passed judgement forever on all previous athletes. The question is settled; a mile can be run in four minutes!

Just so surely the last generation of God's people will pass judgement on the whole human race when that generation comes up to the standard that God has said is possible through the righteousness of Christ. The primary loud-cry messengers will lead the way in reaching the stage of the ear first, receiving the latter rain of the Holy Spirit and calling upon the other people of God **to come out of Babylon and come up to the ear then the full corn in the ear and then harvest ripe grain!**

Ready to Explode!

In 1905, Albert Einstein worked out his equation of the theory of special relativity: $E=MC^2$. Forty years later in 1945 as a direct result of that theory the first atomic bomb was exploded and the atomic age was born. In 1905 only a formula on paper existed but inherent in that formula was the power to shake the earth. It took forty years for Einstein's formula to be translated into explosive action.

In 1888 God gave to the Seventh Day Adventist movement a formula that has remained an equation on paper—**righteousness by faith!** God's end-time remnant must transfer this formula from paper to character. Faith working by love will purify the soul of every defilement and fill the soul with Christ's righteousness. The equation is: **faith equals righteousness equals obedience**. It will lighten the earth with His glory! Moreover, we can let Jesus do it in us and through us in the first watch of this first generation in this new cycle! Listen and rejoice in this description of the union between Christ and His remnant in the Most Holy Place.

"When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness."

COL 312

When the love of God is fully appreciated and received it will be the power for victory in the lives of His true remnant. The love which drove the Son of God to become one with us in order to elevate us to His throne will empty us of self and fill us with His fullness.

“It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour’s matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary’s cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice, and they follow Him.” DA 480

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1John 5:2,3

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness.” The sense of unworthiness will lead the heart to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and this desire will not be disappointed. Those who make room in their hearts for Jesus will realize His love. All who long to bear the likeness of the character of God shall be satisfied. The Holy Spirit never leaves unassisted the soul who is looking unto Jesus. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto him. **If the eye is kept fixed on Christ, the work of the Spirit ceases not until the soul is conformed to His image.** The pure element of love will expand the soul, giving it a capacity for higher attainments, for increased knowledge of heavenly things, so that it will not rest short of the fullness. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” DA 302

The above paragraph contains the formula for victory. We must read it again! **“If the eye is kept fixed on Christ the work of the spirit ceases not until the soul is conformed to his image. The pure element of love will expand the soul giving it a capacity for higher attainments, for increased knowledge of heavenly things, so that it will not rest short of the fullness.”**

It is love for Christ which will cause us to keep our eyes fixed on Him. Because if we really appreciate how far down Christ came to rescue us and how high up His love will carry us we will never take our eyes off Him! The following gem from the Spirit of Prophecy should afford us a fuller grasp of what the love of God has done for us in the plan of redemption.

“Christ’s true followers will represent Him in character. They will turn aside from worldly policy, and every day will train themselves for service in God’s

cause. In active service they find peace and hope, efficiency and power. They breathe the atmosphere of heaven, the only atmosphere in which the soul can truly live. By obedience they are made partakers of the divine nature. The doing of the living principles of God's law makes them one with Christ; and because He lives, they will live also. **At the last day He will raise them as a part of himself.** He declares, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." **Christ became one with us in order that we might become one with Him in divinity.**" RH June 18, 1901

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:1-3.

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Cor 15:45-49

12

A DEEPER ANALYSIS OF THE 'EAR'

*“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”
Mark 4:28,29*

This parable, like that of the sower, has not been valued as it should because of its simplicity. But beneath the apparent surface simplicity lies a profound depth of spiritual knowledge.

In this parable Jesus highlights 4 critical stages of growth: the **blade**, the **ear**, the **full corn in the ear** and the **harvest-ripe fruit**. It is of the utmost importance that we understand the meaning of each of these terms within the context of spiritual growth.

The **blade** means that *initial* conversion has taken place and the early phase of growth has *commenced*.

“The germination of the seed represents the beginning of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian growth.” COL 65

The period of time between the **blade** and the **ear** is the duration of spiritual growth in sanctification. We have already studied the spiritual maladies underlying growth failure in this period.

In order to reach the the **ear** there must be:

- (i) Deliverance from all the hindrances to growth;
- (ii) Deliverance from lukewarmness and
- (iii) Revival (or re-conversion) and reformation;
- (iv) Steady growth to the stage of the ear including active witnessing for our Lord.

Early Rain and Latter Rain Experiences

The **early rain** of the Holy Spirit produces *conversion* and *growth* from the **blade** to the **ear**. The latter rain fills out the **ears** and ripens the grain into, what is called, the **full corn (grain) in the ear**. The hot summer sun then turns the grain golden-yellow and **harvest-ready**.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and bath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”
James 5:7,8

“The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of Man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

“There is to be “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

“...While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, **lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain**, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work.” RH March 2, 1897

“The hot summer sun, that strengthens and ripens the hardy grain, destroys that which has no depth of root” COL 47

Notice that the wheat is *not* ready for harvest at the stage of the **ear**, it is *not* even ready at the **full grain in the ear**. It is ready when the **full**

grain in the ear has been further strengthened and ripened by the hot summer sun!

Chronology of Events in the Final Ripening

In the early messages in this series we established that those who will be employed by God to give the loud cry must have reached the stage of the **ear** in order to induce the passing of Sunday legislation and also in order to receive the latter rain of the Holy Spirit.

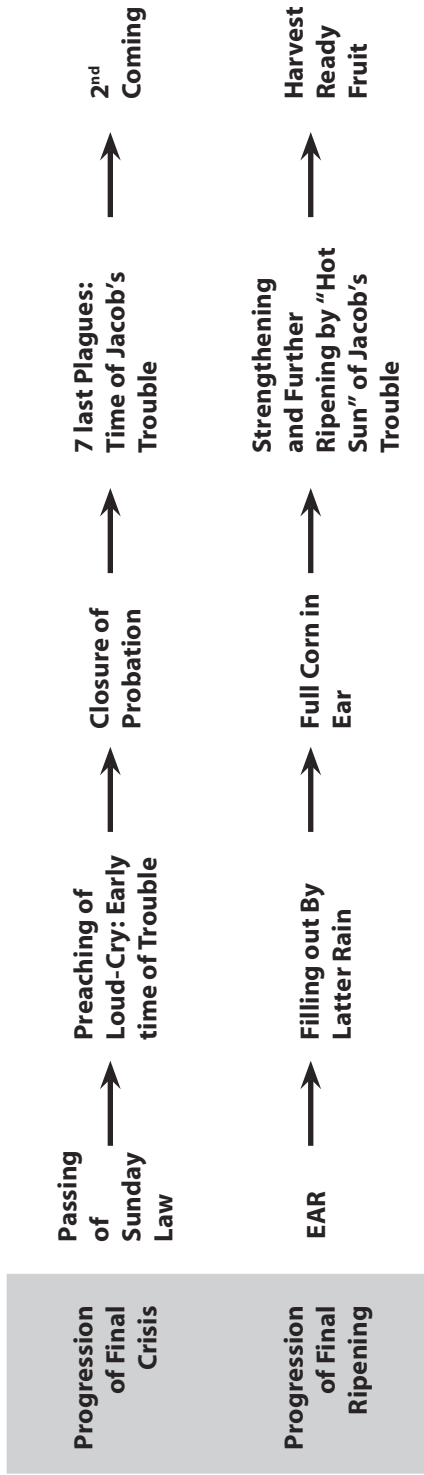
If you are not at the stage of the **ear** when the loud cry begins you will have no part in giving it. At the close of probation the true remnant will have reached the **full corn in the ear** and will be sealed with the *seal of the living of God* in their foreheads.

Between the passing of the Sunday law and the close of probation, the primary loud cry messengers will preach the third angel's message with latter rain power to call out all of God's people into one final remnant who will stand against the image and mark of the beast.

After the close of probation, *during* the time of Jacob's trouble, the remnant people of God (called the 144,000) will undergo further ripening until they are harvest-ripe. Commenting on the time of Jacob's trouble and the final harvest, the *Spirit of Prophecy* informs us as follows:

- (i) "The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time." GC 621
- (ii) "Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected." GC 621
- (iii) "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." COL 69

The diagram on the following page summarizes the chronology.



The Dire Consequences of Failure to Reach the Stage of the Ear

Those who profess to believe the third angel's message but who fail to grow spiritually to the stage of the **ear** by the time of the passing of the Sunday laws will be shaken out and be lost. They are described in two phases: In the first, they will abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition *before* the close of probation, as the mark-of-the-beast pressure intensifies.

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." GC 608

"The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. 4T 89 (1876).

"Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors Of rich wheat. 5T 81 (1882).

"Soon God's people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal. . ." 5T 136, (1882).

In the second phase, after the close of probation during the time of Jacob's trouble, they will scream out in desperation and anguish. Commenting on the time of Jacob's trouble, the Spirit of Prophecy describes this phase as follows:

"Those professed Christians who come up to that last fearful conflict unprepared will, in their despair, confess their sins in words of burning anguish, while the wicked exult over their distress. These confessions are of the same character as was that of Esau or of Judas. Those who make them, lament the result of transgression, but not its guilt. They feel no true contrition, no abhorrence of evil. They acknowledge their sin, through fear

of punishment; but, like Pharaoh of old, they would return to their defiance of Heaven should the judgments be removed." GC 620-621

The Critical Importance Of The Ear

In order to understand the critical importance and significance of the ear, we must first remind ourselves of the crucially important fact that at the stage of the **ear**, early rain experience must be completed. Pay careful attention to this statement from the Spirit of Prophecy:

"At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. **While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain**, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the warnings of Christ, "Watch unto prayer," "Watch and pray always." A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door." RH March 2 1897

Since the latter rain fills out the **ears** and ripens the grain, it means that latter rain experience begins at the stage of the **ear**.

Now read 3 other statements:

- (i) "Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection" RH March 2, 1897
- (ii) "We may be sure that when the Holy Spirit is poured out, those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain will not see or understand the value of the latter rain." TM 399 (1896)
- (iii) "Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations

of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it." TM 507 (1897)

It is clear then that the work of the early rain must be completed in order for the work of the latter rain to begin. And the stage at which both meet is the **ear**.

A Completed Early Rain Experience Means Victory Over Sin

"The third angel's message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall have swelled into the loud cry." RH Nov 19, 1908

We are told in COL 50 that:

"...if the attributes of Satan are not expelled from the soul, the wheat crop will be choked." COL 50

What we are to understand from all this is that the latter-rain ripening process which develops the **ear** into the **full corn in the ear** requires that the soul be *first* cleansed from *every* defilement!

The stage of the **ear** therefore signals that the believer is so intimately and absolutely surrendered to Christ in the abiding relationship with his Lord that ripening is guaranteed by the latter rain!

"It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost." 5T 214

"The third angel's message is swelling into a loud cry, and you must not feel at liberty to neglect the present duty, and still entertain the idea that at some future time you will be the recipients of great blessing, when without any effort on your part a wonderful revival will take place. To-day you are to give yourselves to God, that he may make of you vessels unto honor, and meet for his service. To-day you are to give yourself to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. **To-day you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement.** It is our work to-day to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of

refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” RH March 22, 1892

“The latter rain is to fall upon the people of God. A mighty angel is to come down from heaven, and the whole earth is to be lighted with his glory. Are we ready to take part in the glorious work of the third angel? **Are our vessels ready to receive the heavenly dew? Have we defilement and sin in the heart? If so, let us cleanse the soul temple, and prepare for the showers of the latter rain.** The refreshing from the presence of the Lord will never come to hearts filled with impurity. May God help us to die to self, that Christ, the hope of glory, may be formed within! I must have the Spirit of God in my heart. I can never go forward to do the great work of God, unless the Holy Spirit rests upon my soul. “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.” The day of judgment is upon us. O that we may wash our robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb!” RH April 21, 1891.

Appeal

“In the parable of the virgins, five were found wise, and five foolish. Can it be possible that half of us will be found without the oil of grace in our lamps? Shall we come to the marriage feast too late? We have slept too long; shall we sleep on, and be lost at last? Are there those here who have been sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, and will they continue to do so till Christ shall come? May God help us that we may be truly united to Christ, the living vine, and bear fruit to the glory of God! Many feel rich, and regard themselves as in need of nothing; but may such confess their sins, and let the Spirit of God into their hearts. O, let us fear to go on in our evil, unrepenting state, lest we become like Judas, and finally betray our blessed Lord!

“Shall we not break off our sins by righteousness, and have our conversation in heaven, whence we look for our Saviour? Shall we not talk of our Saviour until it becomes natural for us to do so? If we do not order our conversation aright, we shall not see the salvation of God. Satan will take possession of the heart, and we shall become low and sensual. Let us elevate the thoughts, and take hold upon things that are of real value, gaining an education here that will be of value in the world to come. Shall we not seek the Lord with earnestness, repent of our backslidings, mourn that we have neglected his word, that we do not know the truth better, and turn to him with all the heart, that he may heal us, and love us freely? To-day let us take a step toward heaven. Christian character is not achieved in an instant, but

day after day we are to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. It is in this way that we are to be made ready for the coming of Christ. If we do not advance in the light, we shall be among that company who sit in darkness, for whom no place is found in heaven." RH April 21, 1891

Closing Admonition

"A spirit of worldliness and selfishness has deprived the church of many a blessing. We have no right to suppose an arbitrary withholding from the church of the divine light and power, to account for its limited usefulness. The measure of success which in the past has followed well-directed effort contradicts such an idea. Success has ever been granted proportionate to the labor performed. It is the limitation of labors and sacrifices alone which has restricted the usefulness of the church. The missionary spirit is feeble; devotion is weak; selfishness and cupidity, covetousness and fraud, exist in its members.

"Does not God care for these things? Can He not read the intents and purposes of the heart? Earnest, fervent, contrite prayer would open to them the windows of heaven and bring down showers of grace. A clear, steady view of the cross of Christ would counteract their worldliness and fill their souls with humility, penitence, and gratitude. They would then feel that they are not their own, but that they are the purchase of Christ's blood.

"A deadly spiritual malady is upon the church. Its members are wounded by Satan; but they will not look to the cross of Christ, as the Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, that they may live. The world has so many claims upon them that they have not time to look to the cross of Calvary long enough to see its glory or to feel its power. When they now and then catch a glimpse of the self-denial and self-dedication which the truth demands, it is unwelcome, and they turn their attention in another direction, that they may the sooner forget it. The Lord cannot make His people useful and efficient while they are not careful to comply with the conditions He has laid down." 5T 202

THE SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 'EAR'

13

In the previous message, we began a deeper analysis of the stage of growth which Jesus calls the **ear** in Mark 4:28. It was clearly shown that early rain experience is completed at this stage. You will notice that we say *completed* and not *finished*. The reason is that the building blocks which are built in by the Holy Spirit during genuine conversion constitute the spiritual foundation which is necessary right through to the harvest and, in fact, to eternity!

"At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end." RH March 2, 1897

A completed early rain experience means that the soul has been cleansed of every defilement and is fixed in the abiding relationship in Christ through absolute surrender.

"The third angel's message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall have swelled into the loud cry." RH Nov 19, 1908

At the stage of the **ear** there is victory over sin but there is still need to grow on to maturity and perfection of character at two higher levels and these are:

- (i) The **full corn** in the ear by the time probation closes and
- (ii) Golden-yellow, harvest-ready grain by the end of the time of Jacob's trouble.

At the stage of the **ear** a completed early rain experience will have cleansed the soul of every defilement and will have built in not only the foundational building blocks mentioned earlier, but also the fruits of the Spirit. In other words all the components of the character of Agapé love (which is the character of God) must have been built in by the early rain so that they can be ripened by the latter rain!

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Gal 5:22-25

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” Gal 4:19

“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Eph 3:16-19

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:7,8

At the stage of the **ear** the *establishing* of the heart is completed and the latter-rain ripening process accelerates character maturity from the **ear** to the **full corn in the ear** by the grace of the Lord!

The primary loud cry messengers must, at least, have reached the stage called the **ear** in order to be empowered with the latter rain of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the final warning and to ripen their characters to the stage called the **full corn in the ear**. Therefore by a careful study of the qualifications of the primary loud cry messengers we should be able to determine with certainty the characteristics of the stage of the **ear**.

First of all the primary loud cry messengers (the initial remnant) will proclaim the righteousness of Christ which is the character of God! Listen to these Spirit of Prophecy quotations which describe the heart of God's last message.

The Heart of God's Last Message

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity." 1SM 372 (1890).

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders [E.J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

"Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. TM 91, 92 (1895).

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel. 6T 19 (1900).

"The last message of mercy to be given to the world is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them." COL 415, 416 (1900).

"Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; **they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will**

stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?" GC 593-594

We can correctly conclude from the above that at the stage called the **ear** there must be advanced growth, *intellectually* and *experientially*, in the *true* knowledge of the character of God and the *true* message of righteousness by faith. This is growth to the *point of being cleansed of every defilement* so that latter rain ripening can further accelerate this advanced growth from the **ear** to the **full corn in the ear** by the time probation closes.

"As the third message swells to a loud cry and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble." 7BC 984 (1862).

"As the third angel's message swells into a loud cry, great power and glory will attend its proclamation. The faces of God's people will shine with the light of heaven." 7T 17 (1902).

Other Characteristics of the Ear

Advanced Health Reform

Those faithful believers who reach the stage of the **ear** will be earnest, faithful health reformers living up to all the light God has given on health reform.

"God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view and endeavor to work steadily toward it." CH 450

"Vegetables, fruits, and grains should compose our diet. Not an ounce of flesh meat should enter our stomachs. The eating of flesh is unnatural. We are to return to God's original purpose in the creation of man.... Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it. I cannot

think that in the practice of flesh eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us. All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains, and vegetables. If we move from principle in these things, if we as Christian reformers educate our own taste, and bring our diet to God's plan, then we may exert an influence upon others in this matter, which will be pleasing to God." CD 380

Entire Wholehearted Consecration To The Service Of Christ

"Every truly converted soul will be intensely desirous to bring others from the darkness of error into the marvelous light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with his glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of his Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out his Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain,—"Am I my brother's keeper?" If the truth for this time, if the signs that are thickening on every hand, that testify that the end of all things is at hand, are not-sufficient to arouse the sleeping energy of those who profess to know the truth, then darkness proportionate to the light which has been shining will overtake these souls. There is not the semblance of an excuse for their indifference that they will be able to present to God in the great day of final reckoning. There will be no reason to offer as to why they did not live and walk and work in the light of the sacred truth of the word of God, and thus reveal to a sin-darkened world, through their conduct, their sympathy, and their zeal, that the power and reality of the gospel could not be controverted.

"It is not the ministers alone, but the laymen, who are not contributing all that they can to persuade men, by precept and example, to accept the saving grace of Christ. With skill and tact, with wisdom received from above, they should persuade men to behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. When the hearts of the believers are warm with the love for God, they will do a continual work for Jesus. They will manifest the meekness of Christ, and display a steadfast purpose that will not fail

nor be discouraged. God will use humble men to do his work; for there is a large vineyard calling for laborers. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" RH July 21, 1896

"When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested. Divine power will be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts." 9T 46

"I was shown God's people waiting for some change to take place,—a compelling power to take hold of them. But they will be disappointed, for they are wrong. They must act; they must take hold of the work themselves, and earnestly cry to God for a true knowledge of the work themselves. The scenes which are passing before us are of sufficient magnitude to cause us to arouse, and urge the truth home to the hearts of all who will listen. The harvest of the earth is nearly ripe." 1T 261.

"Everything in the universe calls upon those who know the truth to consecrate themselves unreservedly to the proclamation of the truth as it has been made known to them in the third angel's message. That which we see and hear calls us to our duty. The working of satanic agencies calls every Christian to stand in his lot." 9T. 25, 26.

"Idleness and religion do not go hand in hand; and the cause of our great deficiency in the Christian life and experience is inactivity in the work of God. The muscles of your body will become weak and useless if they are not kept in exercise, and it is so with the spiritual nature. If you would be strong, you must exercise your powers." RH March 13, 1888.

We are to be diligent workers; an idle man is a miserable creature. But what excuse can be offered for idleness in the great work which Christ gave His life to accomplish? The spiritual faculties cease to exist if they are not exercised, and it is Satan's design that they shall perish. All heaven is actively engaged in the work of preparing a people for the second coming of Christ to our world, and "we are laborers together with God." The end of all things is at hand. Now is our opportunity to work." RH Jan. 24, 1893.

"What is our position in the world? We are in the waiting time. But this period is not to be spent in abstract devotion. Waiting, watching, and vigilant working are to be combined. Our life should not be all bustle and drive and planning about the things of the world, to the neglect of personal piety and of the service that God requires. While we should not be slothful in business,

we should be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The lamp of the soul must be trimmed, and we must have the oil of grace in our vessels with our lamps. Every precaution must be used to prevent spiritual declension, lest the day of the Lord overtake us as a thief." 5T 276.

Faithful in Tithes and Offerings

"The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. . . . Read carefully the third chapter of Malachi and see what God says about the tithe. 9T 249 (1909)

"The Lord now calls upon Seventh-day Adventists in every locality to consecrate themselves to Him and to do their very best, according to their circumstances, to assist in His work. By their liberality in making gifts and offerings, He desires them to reveal their appreciation of His blessings and their gratitude for His mercy. 9T 132 (1909)

"We are placed on trial in this world, to determine our fitness for the future life. None can enter heaven whose characters are defiled by the foul blot of selfishness. Therefore, God tests us here, by committing to us temporal possessions, that our use of these may show whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches." CS 22 (1893). LDE 78, 79

Victory Over The Love Of The World

"I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." EW 71

Living Up To All The Light By Cheerful, Willing Obedience

"God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel: "God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people." Some are willing to receive one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back,

because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: "They are joined to their idols, let them alone," and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." 1T 187

Genuine Christian Unity

"When the laborers have an abiding Christ in their own souls, when all selfishness is dead, when there is no rivalry, no strife for the supremacy, when oneness exists, when they sanctify themselves, so that love for one another is seen and felt, then the showers of the grace of the Holy Spirit will just as surely come upon them as that God's promise will never fail in one jot or tittle. But when the work of others is discounted, that the workers may show their own superiority, they prove that their own work does not bear the signature it should. God cannot bless them. 1SM 175 (1896).

"If we stand in the great day of the Lord with Christ as our refuge, our high tower, we must put away all envy, all strife for the supremacy. We must utterly destroy the roots of these unholy things, that they may not again spring up into life. We must place ourselves wholly on the side of the Lord TDG 258 (1903).

"Let Christians put away all dissension and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. 8T 21 (1904)." LDE 190-191

A Consistent Ever-Deepening Prayer Life

"Prayer is needed in the home life, in the church life, in the missionary life. The efficiency of earnest prayer is but feebly understood. Were the church faithful in prayer, she would not be found remiss in so many things; for faithfulness in calling upon God will bring rich returns.

“When the church awakes to the sense of her holy calling, many more fervent and effective prayers will ascend to heaven for the Holy Spirit to point out the work and duty of God’s people regarding the salvation of souls. We have a standing promise that God will draw near to every seeking soul.

“Christ is our only hope. Come to God in the name of Him who gave His life for the world. Rely upon the efficacy of His sacrifice. Show that His love, His joy, is in your soul, and that because of this your joy is full. Cease to talk unbelief. In God is our strength. Pray much. Prayer is the life of soul. The prayer of faith is the weapon by which we may successfully resist every assault of the enemy. Manuscript 24, 1904.

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today.” 5T 158

Unwavering Faith in the Spirit of Prophecy

“Men may get up scheme after scheme and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, **but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White and has given her a message will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these last days.** 3SM 83, 84

“One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan’s banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God’s Spirit. 3SM 84

In Summary

The qualifications of the primary loud-cry messengers and therefore the key characteristics of the **ear** are succinctly described in this famous passage from *The Great Controversy*, pg. 606:

“Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred.” GC 606

Appeal

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev 12:17

“We must have a practical faith, a faith which works by love and purifies the soul. This genuine faith has a purifying, refining influence upon the Christian’s character. Those who have this faith will not be careless and rough in word or deportment. They will realize that they are of value in the sight of God, his sons and daughters, and they will be circumspect in deportment, careful in habits and dress. They will realize that they are a spectacle unto men and angels, and will feel the necessity of having a pure mind, of speaking choice words, of acting in a refined manner. They will keep before them the fact that they are preparing for the society of the heavenly angels.

“Brethren and sisters, do not let every one know your thoughts and emotions. Do not manifest impatience, keep yourself under control, master yourself. Satan will take advantage if you give him the least chance. You must fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. You may gain one victory, but this is not enough; you must gain victory after victory, going from strength to strength. We are to occupy some place in the Lord’s spiritual temple, and the important question is not as to whether you are a large or a small stone, but whether you have submitted yourself to God that he may polish you, and make you emit light for his glory. If you are in the Lord’s temple, we must emit light. Are we permitting the heavenly Builder to hew and square and polish us? Have we faith to rest in him?

“We must have a faith that is not dwarfed and sickly, but one in keeping with the great truth committed to us. O, let us come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty! We have truth that will sanctify the soul, if we will only allow it to work in us and make us holy. Shall we be sanctified through the truth? May God help us to let his grace and light into our souls.” RH May 19, 1891

TRANSFORMED BY GRACE

14

In order for the image of the beast to be set up and the latter rain poured out there is a certain critical level of sanctification (spiritual growth) which must be reached by the faithful remnant of the third angel's message. This level of sanctification is called the **ear** (Mark 4:28). To know where we must reach and how to reach it has been the burden of this series of messages.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we pause here to revise the principles involved in genuine sanctification. We turn now to chapter 55 in the book *The Acts Of The Apostles* by Ellen G. White.

"In the life of the disciple John true sanctification is exemplified. During the years of his close association with Christ, he was often warned and cautioned by the Saviour; and these reproofs he accepted. As the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, John saw his own deficiencies, and was humbled by the revelation. Day by day, in contrast with his own violent spirit, he beheld the tenderness and forbearance of Jesus, and heard His lessons of humility and patience. Day by day his heart was drawn out to Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. The power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, the strength and patience, that he saw in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration. He yielded his resentful, ambitious temper to the molding power of Christ, and divine love wrought in him a transformation of character.

"In striking contrast to the sanctification worked out in the life of John is the experience of his fellow disciple, Judas. Like his associate, Judas professed

to be a disciple of Christ, but he possessed only a form of godliness. He was not insensible to the beauty of the character of Christ; and often, as he listened to the Saviour's words, conviction came to him, but he would not humble his heart or confess his sins. By resisting the divine influence he dishonored the Master whom he professed to love. John warred earnestly against his faults; but Judas violated his conscience and yielded to temptation, fastening upon himself more securely his habits of evil. The practice of the truths that Christ taught was at variance with his desires and purposes, and he could not bring himself to yield his ideas in order to receive wisdom from heaven. Instead of walking in the light, he chose to walk in darkness. Evil desires, covetousness, revengeful passions, dark and sullen thoughts, were cherished until Satan gained full control of him.

"John and Judas are representatives of those who profess to be Christ's followers. Both these disciples had the same opportunities to study and follow the divine Pattern. Both were closely associated with Jesus and were privileged to listen to His teaching. Each possessed serious defects of character; and each had access to the divine grace that transforms character. But while one in humility was learning of Jesus, the other revealed that he was not a doer of the word, but a hearer only. One, daily dying to self and overcoming sin, was sanctified through the truth; the other, resisting the transforming power of grace and indulging selfish desires, was brought into bondage to Satan.

"Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores.

"John was a teacher of holiness, and in his letters to the church he laid down unerring rules for the conduct of Christians. "Every man that hath this hope in him," he wrote, "purifieth himself, even as He is pure." "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 3:3; 2:6. He taught that the Christian must be pure in heart and life. Never should he be satisfied with an empty profession. As God is holy in His sphere, so fallen man, through faith in Christ, is to be holy in his sphere.

"This is the will of God," the apostle Paul wrote, "even your sanctification." 1 Thessalonians 4:3. The sanctification of the church is God's object in all His dealings with His people. He has chosen them from eternity, that they

might be holy. He gave His Son to die for them, that they might be sanctified through obedience to the truth, divested of all the littleness of self. From them He requires a personal work, a personal surrender. God can be honored by those who profess to believe in Him, only as they are conformed to His image and controlled by His Spirit. Then, as witnesses for the Saviour, they may make known what divine grace has done for them.

“True sanctification comes through the working out of the principle of love. “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16. The life of him in whose heart Christ abides, will reveal practical godliness. The character will be purified, elevated, ennobled, and glorified. Pure doctrine will blend with works of righteousness; heavenly precepts will mingle with holy practices.

“Those who would gain the blessing of sanctification must first learn the meaning of self-sacrifice. The cross of Christ is the central pillar on which hangs the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” “If any man will come after Me,” Christ says, “let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” 2 Corinthians 4:17; Matthew 16:24. It is the fragrance of our love for our fellow men that reveals our love for God. It is patience in service that brings rest to the soul. It is through humble, diligent, faithful toil that the welfare of Israel is promoted. God upholds and strengthens the one who is willing to follow in Christ’s way.

“Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.

“None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.

“So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle’s confession our own: “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.” “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Romans 7:18; Galatian 6:14.

“Let the recording angels write the history of the holy struggles and conflicts of the people of God; let them record their prayers and tears; but let not God be dishonored by the declaration from human lips, “I am sinless; I am holy.” Sanctified lips will never give utterance to such presumptuous words.

“The apostle Paul had been caught up to the third heaven and had seen and heard things that could not be uttered, and yet his unassuming statement is: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after.” Philippians 3:12. Let the angels of heaven write of Paul’s victories in fighting the good fight of faith. Let heaven rejoice in his steadfast tread heavenward, and that, keeping the prize in view, he counts every other consideration dross. Angels rejoice to tell his triumphs, but Paul makes no boast of his attainments. The attitude of Paul is the attitude that every follower of Christ should take as he urges his way onward in the strife for the immortal crown.

“Let those who feel inclined to make a high profession of holiness look into the mirror of God’s law. As they see its far-reaching claims, and understand its work as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, they will not boast of sinlessness. “If we,” says John, not separating himself from his brethren, “say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:8, 10, 9.

“There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord’s, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in

obedience to all His commandments. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth, to make a profession of faith in Christ, to believe that Jesus is no impostor, and that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments," John wrote, "is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him." 1 John 2:4, 5; 3:24.

"John did not teach that salvation was to be earned by obedience; but that obedience was the fruit of faith and love. "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins," he said, "and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." 1 John 3:5, 6. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law.

"There are many who, though striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk as it were in a salt land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much; for there is no limit to the promises of God. Such ones do not correctly represent the sanctification that comes through obedience to the truth. The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. **Through the exercise of faith the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.**

"Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive."

"It was in the mount with God that Moses beheld the pattern of that wonderful building that was to be the abiding place of His glory. It is in the mount with God—in the secret place of communion—that we are to contemplate His glorious ideal for humanity. In all ages, through the medium of communion with heaven, God has worked out His purpose for His children, by unfolding gradually to their minds the doctrines of grace. His manner of imparting truth is illustrated in the words, "His going forth is prepared as

the morning." Hosea 6:3. He who places himself where God can enlighten him, advances, as it were, from the partial obscurity of dawn to the full radiance of noonday.

"True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all.

"The reason many in this age of the world make no greater advancement in the divine life is that they interpret the will of God to be just what they will to do. While following their own desires, they flatter themselves that they are conforming to God's will. These have no conflicts with self. There are others who for a time are successful in the struggle against their selfish desire for pleasure and ease. They are sincere and earnest, but grow weary of protracted effort, of daily death, of ceaseless turmoil. Indolence seems inviting, death to self repulsive; and they close their drowsy eyes and fall under the power of temptation instead of resisting it.

"The directions laid down in the word of God leave no room for compromise with evil. The Son of God was manifested that He might draw all men unto Himself. He came not to lull the world to sleep, but to point out the narrow path in which all must travel who reach at last the gates of the City of God. His children must follow where He has led the way; at whatever sacrifice of ease or selfish indulgence, at whatever cost of labor or suffering, they must maintain a constant battle with self.

"The greatest praise that men can bring to God is to become consecrated channels through whom He can work. Time is rapidly passing into eternity. Let us not keep back from God that which is His own. **Let us not refuse Him that which, though it cannot be given with merit, cannot be denied without ruin. He asks for a whole heart; give it to Him; it is His, both by creation and by redemption. He asks for your intellect; give it to Him; it is His. He asks for your money; give it to Him; it is His. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. God requires the homage of a sanctified soul, which has prepared itself, by the exercise of the faith that works by love, to serve Him. He holds up before us the highest ideal, even perfection. He asks us to be absolutely and completely for Him in this world as He is for us in the presence of God.**

"This is the will of God" concerning you, "even your sanctification." 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Is it your will also? Your sins may be as mountains before you; but if you humble your heart and confess your sins, trusting in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, He will forgive and will cleanse you from all unrighteousness. God demands of you entire conformity to His law. This law is the echo of His voice saying to you, Holier, yes, holier still. Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ. Let your heart be filled with an intense longing for His righteousness, the work of which God's word declares is peace, and its effect quietness and assurance forever.

"As your soul yearns after God, you will find more and still more of the unsearchable riches of His grace. As you contemplate these riches you will come into possession of them and will reveal the merits of the Saviour's sacrifice, the protection of His righteousness, the fullness of His wisdom, and His power to present you before the Father "without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14." AA 557-567.

How to Gain Spiritual Strength

"Many are spiritually weak because they look at themselves instead of at Christ. Looking at themselves, and seeing only discouragement and unworthiness, they forget that God is waiting to make them agencies for the blessing of the world, and that angels are waiting to be collaborators with them.

"Christ is the great storehouse from which on every occasion we may draw strength and happiness. Why, then, do we withdraw our eyes from his sufficiency to look on and bemoan our weakness? Why do we forget that he is ready to help us in every time of need? We dishonor him by talking of our inefficiency. **Instead of looking at ourselves, let us constantly behold Jesus, daily becoming more and more like him, more and more able to talk of him, better prepared to avail ourselves of his kindness and helpfulness, and to receive the blessings offered us. As we thus live in communion with him, we grow strong in his strength, a help and a blessing to those around us.**

"Christ has made every provision for us to be strong. He has given us his Holy Spirit, whose office is to bring to our remembrance all the promises that Christ has made, that we may have peace and a sweet sense of forgiveness. If we will but keep our eyes fixed on the Saviour, and trust in his power, we shall be filled with a sense of security; for the righteousness of Christ will become our righteousness.

“If we would only do as the Lord desires us to, our hearts would become as sacred harps, every chord of which would sound forth praise and gratitude to the Redeemer sent by God to take away the sin of the world. With joy we would be able to say, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”

“When temptations assail you, as they surely will, when care and perplexity surround you, when, distressed and discouraged, you are almost ready to yield to despair, look, O look, to where with the eye of faith you last saw the light; and the darkness that encompasseth you will be dispelled by the bright shining of his glory. When sin struggles for the mastery in your soul, and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, go to the Saviour. His grace is sufficient to subdue sin. He will pardon us, making us joyful in God.

“Looking at self, we see only weakness, and we forget God’s purpose for us. We forget that he placed on us so high a value that he gave Christ to die for us. O, after all that has been done for us, how can we disappoint Christ by failing to live the life that he has made it possible for us to live? Let us no longer talk of our inefficiency and lack of power. Forgetting the things that are behind, let us press forward in the heavenward way. Let us neglect no opportunity that, if improved, will make us more useful in God’s service. Then like threads of gold, holiness will run through our lives, and the angels, beholding our consecration, will repeat the promise, “I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.” All heaven rejoices when weak, faulty human beings give themselves to Jesus, to live his life.” RH Oct 1, 1908

15

THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT

At the stage of spiritual growth signified by the **ear**, early rain experience is completed. The Holy Spirit carries forward the process of spiritual growth from *initial conversion* or *re-conversion* to the stage of the **ear**. At that stage the soul is cleansed of every defilement and the basic tenets of the fruits of the spirit are all built into the character to be ripened by the latter rain. The Holy Spirit builds into the character the victorious righteousness of Christ and at the same time it cleanses out all deep seated defects until early rain experience is completed at the stage of the **ear**. Thereafter latter rain ripening will carry forward the advanced growth from the **ear** to the **full corn in the ear**.

John 16:7-14

The faithful remnant must constantly appreciate the work of the Holy Spirit and pray earnestly for more and more of the Holy Spirit.

“Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take His place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,—the soul of His life, the efficacy of His church, the light and life of the world. With His Spirit Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin. (John 14:16,17)

“In the gift of the Spirit, Jesus gave to man the highest good that heaven could bestow. The Saviour looked on humanity, and saw that it was under the power of the prince of darkness; but He saw also that there was hope for

human beings because there was power in the divine nature successfully to contend with evil agencies. With glad assurance He said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

John 3:5; Romans 8:9,14

"The Spirit was given as a regenerating agency, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of man to this satanic captivity was amazing. **Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, Who would come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress his own character upon the church.**

"Christ said of the Spirit, "He shall glorify me." As Christ glorified the Father by the demonstration of His love, so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing to the world the riches of his grace. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. **The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people.**

Titus 3:3-7

"At the cost of infinite sacrifice and suffering, Christ has provided for us every essential to success in the Christian warfare. **The Holy Spirit brings power that enables man to overcome.** It is through the agency of the Spirit that the government of Satan is to be subdued. **It is the Spirit that convinces of sin, and, with the consent of the human being, expels sin from the heart.** The mind is then brought under a new law,—the royal law of liberty.

"The Spirit works in us by bringing to mind, vividly and often, the precious truths of the plan of redemption. We should forget these truths, and for us God's rich promises would lose their efficiency, were it not for the Spirit, who takes of the things of God, and shows them to us. Our hearts are warmed by the contemplation of Jesus and his love, and we long to speak to others the comforting assurances that have been brought to our minds.

"It is the privilege of every son and daughter of God to have the indwelling of the Spirit. If those who know the truth would love and fear the Lord

always, if they would abide in Christ, they would have moral and spiritual power. The grace of Christ would be in them as a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life, and would flow from them as streams of living water. (Eph 5:18; John 4:13,14)

“The Spirit illuminates our darkness, informs our ignorance, and helps us in our manifold necessities. But the mind must be constantly going out after God. **If worldliness is allowed to come in, if we have no desire to pray, no desire to commune with him who is the source of strength and wisdom, the Spirit will not abide with us.** Those who are unbelieving do not receive the rich endowment of grace that would make them wise unto salvation, patient, forbearing, quick to perceive and appreciate heavenly ministrations, quick to discern Satan’s devices, and strong to resist sin. God can not do His mighty work for them because of their unbelief.

“Christ has promised the gift of the Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe, and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We can not use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in his people “to will and to do of His good pleasure.” But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for his guidance and grace, is the Spirit given.

“Christ declared that the divine influence was to be with his followers to the end. But the promise is not accepted and believed by God’s people; therefore its fulfilment is not seen. The promise of the Spirit is a matter little thought of; and the result is only what might be expected,—spiritual drought, spiritual weakness, spiritual declension and death. Minor matters occupy the attention, and the divine power that is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in its infinite plentitude.

“Just so long as the church is satisfied with small things will it fail of receiving the great things of God. Why do we not hunger and thirst after the gift of the Spirit, since this is the means by which we are to receive power? Talk of it, pray for it, preach concerning it. The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than parents are to give good gifts to their children.

"If our workers realized the responsibility resting upon them, would they enter the work without cherishing a deep sense of its sacredness? Should we not see the deep movings of the Spirit of God upon the men who present themselves for the ministry? For the baptism of the Holy Spirit, every worker should be offering his prayer to God. **Companies should be gathered together to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to devise and execute.** Especially should men pray that God will baptize his missionaries with the Holy Spirit.

"There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, putting aside self, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God. If men will endure the necessary discipline, without complaining or fainting by the way, God will teach them hour by hour, and day by day. He longs to reveal His grace. If his people will remove the obstructions, He will pour forth the waters of salvation in abundant streams through human channels. If men in humble life were encouraged to do all the good they could do, if restraining hands were not laid upon them to repress the zeal, there would be one hundred workers for Christ where now there is one.

"God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, will quicken all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual **devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like Him in mind and character.** Through a connection with Christ he will have clearer and broader views. His discernment will be more penetrative, his judgment better balanced.

"The presence of the Holy Spirit with God's workers will give the presentation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amid the unfriendliness of relatives, the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own imperfections and mistakes.

"A union of divine and human endeavor, a close connection first, last, and ever, with God, the source of all strength,—this is absolutely necessary in our work." RH May 19, 1904

An Impressive Dream

“During the night of the first Sabbath of the Newcastle meeting, I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor,—the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. On one occasion Christ told His disciples, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now.” Their limited comprehension put a restraint on Him. He could not open to them the truths He longed to unfold; for while their hearts were closed to them, His unfolding of these truths would be labor lost. They must receive the Spirit before they could fully understand Christ’s lessons. “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,” Christ said, “whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

“In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost?” A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building. “Your size as a human being is nothing,” he said. “But if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and through the eternal ages, you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you.

“You may be tall and well-proportioned in self, but you can not enter here. None can enter who are grown-up children, carrying with them the disposition, the habits, and the characteristics which pertain to children. If you have nurtured suspicions, criticism, temper, self-dignity, you can not be admitted; for you would spoil the feast. All who go in through this door have on the wedding garment, woven in the loom of heaven. Those who educate themselves to pick flaws in the characters of others, reveal a deformity that makes families unhappy, that turns souls from the truth to choose fables. Your leaven of distrust, your want of confidence, your power of accusing, closes against you the door of admittance. Within this door nothing can enter that could possibly mar the happiness of the dwellers by marring their perfect trust in one another. You can not join the happy family in the heavenly courts; for I have wiped all tears from their eyes. You can never see the King in his beauty if you are not yourself a representative of his character.

“When you give up your own will, your own wisdom, and learn of Christ, you will find admittance into the kingdom of God. He requires entire, unreserved

surrender. Give up your life for him to order, mold, and fashion. Take upon your neck his yoke. Submit to be led and taught by him. Learn that unless you become as a little child, you can never enter the kingdom of heaven."

"Abiding in Christ is choosing only the disposition of Christ, so that his interests are identified with yours. Abide in him, to be and to do only what he wills. These are the conditions of discipleship, and unless they are complied with, you can never find rest. Rest is in Christ; it can not be as something apart from him.

"The moment his yoke is adjusted to your neck, that moment it is found easy; then the heaviest spiritual labor can be performed, the heaviest burdens borne, because the Lord gives the strength and the power, and he gives gladness in doing the work. Mark the points: 'Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.' Who is it that speaks thus?—The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory. He desires that your conception of spiritual things shall be purified from the dross of selfishness, the defilement of a crooked, coarse, unsympathetic nature. You must have an inward, higher experience. You must obtain a growth in grace by abiding in Christ. When you are converted, you will not be a hindrance, but will strengthen your brethren."

As these words were spoken, I saw that some turned sadly away and mingled with the scoffers. Others, with tears, all broken in heart, made confession to those whom they had bruised and wounded. They did not think of maintaining their own dignity, but asked at every step. "What must I do to be saved?" The answer was, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may go beforehand to judgment, and be blotted out." Acts 3:19. Words were spoken which rebuked spiritual pride. This God will not tolerate. It is inconsistent with his word and with our profession of faith. Seek the Lord, all ye who are ministers of His. Seek Him while he may be found, call upon Him while He is near. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55: 7.

As I presented these principles to the people in the Sabbath meeting, all seemed to feel that the Lord had spoken through the feeble instrument. We called upon those who wished to consecrate themselves to the Lord, and several responded. After these had borne their testimony, the rain came down in torrents. It seemed as if the windows of heaven were opened. I made this a symbol of what the Lord will do for his people in letting the latter rain of his rich blessing in truth and righteousness fall upon them. We devoted some time to singing "The Evergreen Shore," "Is My Name Written

There?" "When the Mists Have Rolled Away," and similar songs. As soon as the storm abated, we had a season of prayer, and Elders Daniells and Robinson prayed in the Spirit, as I had never heard them pray before. The meeting then closed." RH April 11, 1899

Conclusion

"Christ rejoiced that He could do more for His followers than they could ask or think. He spoke with assurance, knowing that an almighty decree had been given before the world was made. **He knew that truth, armed with the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, would conquer in the contest with evil; and that the bloodstained banner would wave triumphantly over His followers.** He knew that the life of His trusting disciples would be like His, a series of uninterrupted victories, not seen to be such here, but recognized as such in the great hereafter.

"These things I have spoken unto you," He said, "that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Christ did not fail, neither was He discouraged, and His followers are to manifest a faith of the same enduring nature. They are to live as He lived, and work as He worked, because they depend on Him as the great Master Worker. Courage, energy, and perseverance they must possess. Though apparent impossibilities obstruct their way, by His grace they are to go forward. Instead of deploring difficulties, they are called upon to surmount them. They are to despair of nothing, and to hope for everything. With the golden chain of His matchless love Christ has bound them to the throne of God. It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the source of all power, shall be theirs. **They are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master, power that will enable them to overcome as Christ overcame.**

"Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth. Thus in His people He is glorified. Through them the Sun of Righteousness will shine in undimmed luster to the world. Christ has given to His church ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. He has bestowed upon His people capabilities and blessings that they may represent His own sufficiency. The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depositary, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display. Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His

humiliation, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory.” DA 679-680

“All heaven has been looking on with interest, ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. God will work for his children, but not without their co-operation. **They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be. They should seek to cultivate their powers and develop characters that will be meet for a holy heaven. Then and then only will the servants of God be bright and shining lights in the world. Then they will bring energy into their Christian life, for they will put all their powers to the task, and respond to the efforts that have been made to uplift, refine, and purify them, that they may shine in the courts above. They will bring all their powers under the control of the Spirit of God; they will study his word, and listen for his voice, to direct, encourage, strengthen, and advance them in their religious experience. They will not be childish and be turned aside by the temptations of Satan. They will deny themselves, not appealing to their own sympathies, for they will be of a heroic spirit. They will hoard up the great and precious truths of God’s word; they will feed upon them, and grow into strong, well-developed men and women in Christ, sons and daughters of God.** The greatness of the truth which they contemplate will expand the mind and elevate the character. They will not be novices in the understanding of God’s word, nor dwarfs in religious experience. Conflict with the enemies of truth will not shatter them nor weaken their energies; it will only serve to drive them nearer to Him who is mighty to save. They will receive the discipline that will give efficiency to all their faculties. Heaven will be brought near to them in sympathy and co-operation, and they will be indeed a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men; for they will be marked characters on account of their purity, their strength of purpose, their firmness, their usefulness in the world.” RH April 8, 1890

CHRIST — THE CENTER OF THE MESSAGE

16

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12

The third angel’s message calls for the presentation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and this truth must be brought before the world; but the great center of attraction, Jesus Christ, must not be left out of the third angel’s message. By many who have been engaged in the work for this time, Christ has been made secondary and theories and arguments have had the first place. The glory of God that was revealed to Moses in regard to the divine character has not been made prominent. The Lord said to Moses, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee.” (Ex 33:19) “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” (Ex 34:6,7)

Look Toward Calvary

“A veil has seemed to be before the eyes of many who have labored in the cause, **so that when they presented the law, they have not had views of Jesus, and have not proclaimed the fact that, where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.** (Rom. 5:20,21) It is at the cross of Calvary that mercy and truth meet together, where righteousness and peace kiss

each other. **The sinner must ever look toward Calvary; and with the simple faith of a little child, he must rest in the merits of Christ, accepting His righteousness and believing in His mercy.** Laborers in the cause of truth should present the righteousness of Christ, not as new light, but as precious light that has for a time been lost sight of by the people. **We are to accept Christ as our personal Saviour, and He imputes unto us the righteousness of God in Christ.** Let us repeat and make prominent the truth that John has portrayed: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

The Love of God Must Melt Our Hearts

"In the love of God has been opened the most marvelous vein of precious truth, and the treasures of the grace of Christ are laid open before the church and the world. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) What love is this,—what marvelous, unfathomable love!—that would lead Christ to die for us while we were yet sinners. (Rom. 5:8) What a loss it is to the soul who understands the strong claims of the law, and who yet fails to understand the grace of Christ which doth much more abound! It is true that the law of God reveals the love of God when it is preached as the truth in Jesus; for the gift of Christ to this guilty world must be largely dwelt upon in every discourse. **It is no wonder that hearts have not been melted by the truth, when it has been presented in a cold and lifeless manner. No wonder faith has staggered at the promises of God, when ministers and workers have failed to present Jesus in his relation to the law of God. How often should they have assured the people that "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"** (Rom 8:32)

"Satan is determined that men shall not see the love of God, which led him to give his only begotten Son to save the lost race; for it is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance. (Rom. 2:4) O, how shall we succeed in setting forth before the world the deep, precious love of God? In no other way can we compass it than by exclaiming, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" (1John 3:1) Let us say to sinners, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) By presenting Jesus as the representative of the Father, we shall be able to dispel the shadow that

Satan has cast upon our pathway, in order that we shall not see the mercy and love of God's inexpressible love as manifested in Jesus Christ.

Look At The Cross

“Look at the cross of Calvary. It is a standing pledge of the boundless love, the measureless mercy, of the heavenly Father. O that all might repent and do their first works. When the churches do this, they will love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not vex Ephraim. Divisions will then be healed, the harsh sounds of strife will no more be heard in the borders of Israel. Through the grace freely given them of God, all will seek to answer the prayer of Christ, that His disciples should be one, even as He and the Father are one. Peace, love, mercy, and benevolence will be the abiding principles of the soul. The love of Christ will be the theme of every tongue, and it will no more be said by the true Witness, “I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” (Rev 2:4) **The people of God will be abiding in Christ, the love of Jesus will be revealed, and one Spirit will animate all hearts, regenerating and renewing all in the image of Christ, fashioning all hearts alike. As living branches of the true Vine, all will be united to Christ, the living head. Christ will abide in every heart, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, and presenting to the world the unity of the followers of Jesus, thus bearing testimony that the heavenly credentials are supplied to the remnant church. In the oneness of Christ's church it will be proved that God sent his only begotten Son into the world.**

The Unity of the Spirit

“When God's people are one in the unity of the Spirit, all of Phariseeism, all of self-righteousness, which was the sin of the Jewish nation, will be expelled from all hearts. The mold of Christ will be upon each individual member of His body, and His people will be new bottles into which He can pour His new wine, and the new wine will not break the bottles. God will make known the mystery which hath been hidden for ages. He will make known what are the “riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” (Col 1:27-29)

Spiritual Life Eliminates Ceremonialism

“Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; but it is impossible to endow men with the Holy Spirit, who are set in their ideas, whose doctrines are all stereotyped and unchangeable, who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men, as were the Jews in the time of Christ. They were very punctilious in the observances of the church, very rigorous in following their forms, but they were destitute of vitality and religious devotion. They were represented by Christ as like the dry skins which were then used as bottles. The gospel of Christ could not be placed in their hearts; for there was no room to contain it. They could not be the new bottles into which He could pour His new wine. Christ was obliged to seek elsewhere than among the scribes and the Pharisees for bottles for His doctrine of truth and life. **He must find men who were willing to have regeneration of heart. He came to give to men new hearts. He said, “A new heart also will I give you.” But the self-righteous of that day and of this day feel no need of having a new heart. Jesus passed by the scribes and the Pharisees, for they felt no need of a Saviour.** They were wedded to forms and ceremonies. These services had been instituted by Christ; they had been full of vitality and spiritual beauty; but the Jews had lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to the dead forms after spiritual life was extinct among them. When they departed from the requirements and commandments of God, they sought to supply the place of that which they had lost, by multiplying their own requirements, and making more rigorous demands than had God; and the more rigid they grew, the less of the love and Spirit of God they manifested. Christ said to the people: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do ye not after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. . . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Matt 23:2-7, 23)

Repentance Necessary

“The remnant church is called to go through an experience similar to that of the Jews; and the true Witness, who walks up and down in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, has a solemn message to bear to His people. He says: “I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, and except thou repent.” (Rev 2:4,5) The love of God has been waning in the church, and as a result, the love of self has sprung up into new activity. With the loss of love for God there has come the loss of love for the brethren. The church may meet all the description that is given of the Ephesian church, and yet fail in vital godliness. Of them Jesus said, “I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. **Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love.**” (Rev. 2:2-4)

A Legal Religion is Futile

“A legal religion has been thought quite the correct religion for this time. But it is a mistake. The rebuke of Christ to the Pharisees is applicable to those who have lost from the heart their first love. **A cold, legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion.** When fastings and prayers are practiced in a self-justifying spirit, they are abominable to God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposed sacrifice,—all proclaim to the world the testimony that the doer of these things considers himself righteous. These things call attention to the observer of rigorous duties, saying, This man is entitled to heaven. But it is all a deception. **Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great Offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. He who drinks from the water of the fountain of life, will be filled with the new wine of the kingdom. Faith in Christ will be the means whereby the right spirit and motive will actuate the believer, and all goodness and heavenly-mindedness will proceed from him who looks unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith.** Look up to God, look not to men. God is your heavenly Father who is willing patiently to bear with your infirmities, and to forgive and heal

them. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." **By beholding Christ, you will become changed, until you will hate your former pride, your former vanity and self-esteem, your self-righteousness and unbelief. You will cast these sins aside as a worthless burden, and walk humbly, meekly, trustfully, before God. You will practice love, patience, gentleness, goodness, mercy, and every grace that dwells in the child of God, and will at last find a place among the sanctified and holy.**" RH March 20, 1894

Christ — the Center of the Sabbath

In the beginning it was the Son of God, the Eternal Word who created our planet and its solar system in six days and rested upon the seventh. John 1:1-3; Gen 2:1-3. That creation Sabbath-rest was a celebration of the *oneness* or *at-one-ment* between the Creator and His creation. The number seven represents the fact that whenever the Creator does a work it is a complete and perfect work!

Sin produced a *fracture* in that original oneness and Adam's race and his world became separated from the Creator and sold out to Satan. But it is the purpose of the plan of redemption to restore all that was "written off" by sin.

The Creator, the eternal Son of God, became a man and through His eternal love for the lost race, He, by His perfect faith, perfect obedience and perfect sacrifice, reconciled all things to Himself and to His Father.

When He cried out "*It is finished,*" He had won the victory and He died in triumph. In His death He rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day. John 19:30; Luke 23:52-56.

Both in *creation* and in *redemption* the seventh day Sabbath is the day of rest to celebrate a *complete* and *perfect* work. Indeed redemptive power is creative power. 2 Cor 5:17. For sinful man, rest can be found only in Christ and it was restored to the lost race only by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Therefore, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath. Mark 2:27,28

The Seventh Day Sabbath and the cross of Christ are inseparably and indissolubly linked together. The cross crucifies human self-centeredness which is the cause of unrest. The love of God shining in the face of Jesus reveals the meekness and lowliness of heart which He

invites us to learn and receive in order that we may have rest to our souls. Matt 11:28-30; Luke 9:23,62; 2Cor 4:6; Gal 2:20.

And it is by faith in His finished work of redemption that we enter into His rest and celebrate both His creative and redemptive work each Seventh-day Sabbath! Heb 4:9,10,4; Rom. 4:4,5.

The Bible is emphatically clear that it is the obedience of Christ which makes the believer righteous. Rom 5:19.

He had to perfectly obey every requirement of righteousness for us. If we are required by God to keep holy the first day of the week then Christ would have had to keep that day holy before He died. *But He did no such thing.* He kept His Father's commandments and His Father's seventh Day Sabbath perfectly for us. Since Christ is our righteousness, then the day He kept holy must be the day His believers will keep holy. John 15:10; 1 Cor 1:30, 31

Those who argue that the new covenant changed the day are totally wrong. The New Testament, in Hebrews 9:15-17 and Galatians 3:15, states clearly that after a covenant has been ratified or confirmed, nothing can be added to it. Therefore, Sunday-sacredness could not have been added after the death of Christ because it was His death that sealed the new covenant! In the New Covenant God's law is written in the believer's heart and mind. Heb 10:16; James 2:8-10

The remnant people of God will have Jesus and therefore they will have eternal life, eternal righteousness, and eternal rest which will be celebrated every seventh-day Sabbath! 1John 5:11,12; Rev 14:12.

In contrast, those who receive the mark of the beast will have *no rest* day or night. Rev 14:11.

The Sign of Sanctification

In the process of sanctification, God in Christ by the Holy Spirit works in the believer causing him or her to will and to do of God's good pleasure. Phil 2:12,13

What God works in, through Christ by His Spirit, the believer is to work out by faith which works by love. The result is the good works which God ordained that the believer should walk in. And these good works were finished from the foundation of the world. Eph 2:8-10; Heb 4:3

Everyday of the week the believer must surrender in full faith to let God work into his character the righteousness of Christ which includes the principle of the cross. There is progressive and even deepening death to self and sin.

Each Seventh-day Sabbath should be a celebration of God's sanctifying work done during the week, which results in the spiritual rest of victory over sin.

*"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them."
Ezek 20:12*

The Work of Providing Salvation was entirely God's Work

"The love of the Father toward a fallen race is unfathomable, indescribable, without a parallel. This love led Him to consent to give His only begotten Son to die, that rebellious man might be brought into harmony with the government of Heaven, and be saved from the penalty of his transgression. The Son of God stepped down from His royal throne, and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He became "a Man of sorrows," that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. "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" God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory to a world marred and blighted with sin, shadowed with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. And Jesus bore all this untold sorrow, that we might be changed to his divine image, and become the sons of God. John exclaims, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Is there not a response of gratitude in your hearts? Are you not lost in wonder and adoration as you contemplate the theme of redemption?

"When Adam fell and lost the liberty of a son of God, and brought himself into captivity to Satan, infinite pity filled the heart of Jesus. He took the field of conflict to fight in man's behalf, that all who desired to leave the cruel bondage of the "god of this world," might be set free, to serve the living God. Through all the lowly experiences of life, the exalted Son of God, consented to pass, step by step, from the manger to the cross; for "He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham."

(Heb 2:16) And "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15) In the wilderness He fasted forty days, and was tried by every subtle temptation that the prince of darkness could devise. Weak and emaciated from hunger, worn and haggard with mental agony, He suffered the depth of temptation and sorrow, and "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." (Heb. 7:25) The nature of man had become so weakened by transgression, that it was an impossibility for him to overcome in his own strength; for he was led captive at the will of Satan; **but, through the strength of Christ, every one may be an overcomer. We may be more than conquerors through Him who has "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."**

"The Prince of heaven has placed man in an exalted position. His life has been valued at the cost of Calvary's cross. The penalty of his transgression has been paid by the precious blood of the Son of God. He may, through repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, have remission of sins that are past, have another trial and test his loyalty to God by obedience to his law, that he may win an eternal inheritance. From the depths of sin's degradation, we may be exalted to become heirs with Christ, the sons of God, and kings and priests unto the Most High. **Every repentant, obedient soul may stand as did Adam, free from the condemnation of the law.** He may "come boldly unto the throne of grace," and "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16

"When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan, after his baptism, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove, like burnished gold, and encircled Him with its glory; and the voice of God from the highest heaven was heard, saying. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The prayer of Christ in man's behalf opened the gates of heaven, and the Father had responded, accepting the petition for the fallen race. Jesus prayed as our substitute and surety, and now the human family may find access to the Father through the merits of His well-beloved Son. This earth because of transgression had been struck off from the continent of heaven. Communication had ceased between man and his Maker; but the way has been opened, so that he may return to the Father's house. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life." The gate of heaven has been left ajar, and the radiance from the throne of God shines into the hearts of those who love him, even though they dwell in the sin-cursed earth. The light that encircled the divine Son of God will fall upon the pathway of all those who

follow in his footsteps. There is no reason for discouragement. The promises of God are sure and steadfast." RH Feb 28, 1888

In Order to Receive Salvation We Must Follow God's Instructions

"Living faith makes itself manifest by exhibiting a spirit of sacrifice and devotion toward the cause of God. Those who possess it stand under the banner of Prince Emmanuel, and wage a successful warfare against the powers of darkness. They stand ready to do whatsoever their Captain commands. Each one is exhorted to be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;" (1Tim. 4:12) for we are to "live soberly, righteously, and godly" (Titus 2:12) in this present evil world, representing the character of Christ, and manifesting His Spirit. We are to follow in His footsteps, as dear children. By beholding Him, we are to be changed into the same image, reflecting the light of heaven into the moral darkness of the world.

"Genuine faith in Jesus leads to denial of self; but however high the profession may be, if self is exalted and indulged, the faith of Jesus is not in the heart. The true Christian manifests by a life of daily consecration that he is bought with a price, and is not his own. He realizes that an infinite sacrifice has been made for him, and that his life is of inestimable value, through the merits of Jesus' blood, intercession, and righteousness. But while he comprehends the exalted privileges of the sons of God, his soul is filled with humility. There is no boasting of holiness from the lips of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and their comeliness is turned to corruption. **Those who live nearest to Jesus, feel most deeply their own unworthiness, and their only hope is in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Like Moses, they have had a view of the awful majesty of holiness, and they see their own insufficiency in contrast with the purity and exalted loveliness of Jesus.**

"Is there not occasion for humility? Is there not need of feeling our utter dependence upon Christ every day and hour? Have we not walked in the ways of our own choosing, and have we not found in this path only failure? We have "sinned, and come short of the glory of God," (Rom. 3:23) and in order to save man, Jesus made an infinite sacrifice. Nothing less than the life of God's beloved Son would suffice to pay the heavy debt that we had incurred by breaking the law of God. He took on Him our nature, and became sin for us, (2Cor 5:21) that we might have "remission of sins that are

past," (Rom. 3:25) and through His divine strength and grace, might fulfill the righteous requirements of the law. **Whoever takes the position that it makes no difference whether or not we keep the commandments of God, is not acquainted with Christ. Jesus says, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love;" (John 15:10) and those who follow Jesus will do as He has done.** The beloved disciple writes, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (1 John 2:6) We cannot abide in the love of our Saviour, if we trample under foot any part of that law which he came to "magnify" and make "honorable," even to the cost of suffering the humiliation and death of the cross.

"It is a fatal mistake to think that there is nothing for you to do in obtaining salvation. You are to cooperate with the agencies of heaven. We are exhorted to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor 7:1) You want to take hold of the work intelligently; and when you discern spiritual things, you will see that there is a warfare before you. There is a cross to be lifted in the pathway, a wall to be scaled before you enter the eternal city, a ladder to be climbed before the gate of pearl is reached; and as you realize your inability and weakness, and cry for help, a divine voice will come to you from the battlements of heaven, saying, "Take hold of my strength." (Isa. 27:5) "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20

"Satan will seek to entice you to enter into the paths of sin, promising that some wonderful good will result from the transgression of God's law; but he is a deceiver. He would only work your ruin, and the dishonor of the name and cause of God; for every step away from the commandments of Jehovah lessens your power to resist evil, and makes you more and more inefficient to fulfill your obligations to God and man. Christ came to break the rule of the evil one, to let the oppressed go free, to undo the heavy burden, and to bring liberty to the captive. Man was so weakened through transgression that he did not possess sufficient moral power to turn from the service of Satan to the service of the only true God; but Jesus, the Prince of life, to whom is committed "all power in heaven and earth," **will impart to every soul who desires salvation the strength necessary to overcome the enemy of all righteousness.**" RH March 6, 1888



THE CHARACTER OF GOD REVEALED IN CHRIST

BY E.G. WHITE

“Said the Saviour: “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) And God declared by the prophet: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” (Jeremiah 9:23, 24)

“No man, without divine aid, can attain to this knowledge of God. The apostle says that “the world by wisdom knew not God.” (1 Cor. 1:21) Christ “was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” (John 1:10) Jesus declared to His disciples: “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” (Matt. 11:27) In that last prayer for His followers, before entering the shadows of Gethsemane, the Saviour lifted His eyes to heaven, and in pity for the ignorance of fallen men He said: “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee.” “I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world.” (John 17:25,6)

“From the beginning it has been Satan’s studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. **Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed**

with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving,—that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would put God out of their knowledge. Then he would obliterate the divine image in man and impress his own likeness upon the soul; he would imbue men with his own spirit and make them captives according to his will.

“It was by falsifying the character of God and exciting distrust of Him that Satan tempted Eve to transgress. By sin the minds of our first parents were darkened, their natures were degraded, and their conceptions of God were molded by their own narrowness and selfishness. **And as men became bolder in sin, the knowledge and the love of God faded from their minds and hearts.** “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God,” they “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” (Rom. 1:21)

“At times Satan’s contest for the control of the human family appeared to be crowned with success. During the ages preceding the first advent of Christ the world seemed almost wholly under the sway of the prince of darkness, and he ruled with a terrible power as though through the sin of our first parents the kingdoms of the world had become his by right. **Even the covenant people, whom God had chosen to preserve in the world the knowledge of Himself, had so far departed from Him that they had lost all true conception of His character.**

“Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, full of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. The thick darkness with which Satan had endeavored to enshroud the throne of Deity was swept away by the world’s Redeemer, and the Father was again manifest to men as the light of life.

“When Philip came to Jesus with the request, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,” the Saviour answered him: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” (John 14: 9) Christ declares Himself to be sent into the world as a representative of the Father. **In His nobility of character, in His mercy and tender pity, in His love and goodness, He stands before us as the embodiment of divine perfection, the image of the invisible God.**

"Says the apostle: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." **Only as we contemplate the great plan of redemption can we have a just appreciation of the character of God. The work of creation was a manifestation of His love; but the gift of God to save the guilty and ruined race, alone reveals the infinite depths of divine tenderness and compassion.** "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) While the law of God is maintained, and its justice vindicated, the sinner can be pardoned. The dearest gift that heaven itself had to bestow has been poured out that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom 3: 26) By that gift men are uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin to become children of God. Says Paul: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom 8:15)

"Brethren, with the beloved John I call upon you to "behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1John 3:1) What love, what matchless love, that, sinners and aliens as we are, we may be brought back to God and adopted into His family! We may address Him by the endearing name, "Our Father," which is a sign of our affection for Him and a pledge of His tender regard and relationship to us. And the Son of God, beholding the heirs of grace, "is not ashamed to call them brethren." They have even a more sacred relationship to God than have the angels who have never fallen.

"All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding more and more. And it will be ours to realize the blessing which Paul desired for the Ephesian church when he prayed

“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe.”

“It is Satan’s constant study to keep the minds of men occupied with those things which will prevent them from obtaining the knowledge of God. He seeks to keep them dwelling upon what will darken the understanding and discourage the soul. We are in a world of sin and corruption, surrounded by influences that tend to allure or dishearten the followers of Christ. The Saviour said: “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” (Matt. 24:12) Many fix their eyes upon the terrible wickedness existing around them, the apostasy and weakness on every side, and they talk of these things until their hearts are filled with sadness and doubt. They keep uppermost before the mind the masterly working of the archdeceiver and dwell upon the discouraging features of their experience, while they seem to lose sight of the heavenly Father’s power and His matchless love. All this is as Satan would have it. It is a mistake to think of the enemy of righteousness as clothed with so great power, when we dwell so little upon the love of God and His might. We must talk of the mightiness of Christ. We are utterly powerless to rescue ourselves from the grasp of Satan; but God has appointed a way of escape. The Son of the Highest has strength to fight the battle for us, and “through Him that loved us” we may come off “more than conquerors.”

“There is no spiritual strength for us in constantly brooding over our weakness and backslidings, and bemoaning the power of Satan. **This great truth must be established as a living principle in our minds and hearts—the efficacy of the offering made for us; that God can and does save to the utter most all who come unto Him complying with the conditions specified in His word. Our work is to place our will on the side of God’s will. Then, through the blood of the atonement, we become partakers of the divine nature; through Christ we are children of God, and we have the assurance that God loves us even as He loved His Son. We are one with Jesus. We walk where Christ leads the way; He has power to dispel the dark shadows which Satan casts across our path; and, in place of darkness and discouragement, the sunlight of His glory shines into our hearts.**

“Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness. Let our faith rest upon this foundation, for it will stand fast forever. Instead of dwelling upon the darkness of Satan and fearing his power, we should open our hearts to receive light from Christ and to let it shine forth to the world, declaring that He is above all the power of Satan, that His sustaining arm will support all who trust in Him.

“Said Jesus: “The Father Himself loveth you.” If our faith is fixed upon God, through Christ, it will prove “as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered.” (Heb.6:19, 20) It is true that disappointments will come; tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household and encircles every individual; He is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out His purposes of love toward us, “that we might be partakers of His holiness” and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in His presence.

““The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2Cor. 4:4) But the Bible in strongest terms sets before us the importance of obtaining a knowledge of God. Says Peter: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” 2 Pet. 1:2,3) And the Scripture bids us: “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.” (Job 22:21)

“God has commanded us, “Be ye holy; for I am holy;” and an inspired apostle declares that without holiness “no man shall see the Lord.” **Holiness is agreement with God.** By sin the image of God in man has been marred and well-nigh obliterated; it is the work of the gospel to restore that which has been lost; and we are to cooperate with the divine agency in this work. And how can we come into harmony with God, how shall we receive His likeness, unless we obtain a knowledge of Him? It is this knowledge that Christ came into the world to reveal unto us.

“The meager views which so many have had of the exalted character and office of Christ have narrowed their religious experience and have greatly hindered their progress in the divine life. Personal religion among us as a people is at a low ebb. There is much form, much machinery, much tongue religion; but something deeper and more solid must be brought into our religious experience. With all our facilities, our publishing houses, our schools, our sanitariums, and many, many other advantages, we ought to be far in advance of our present position. It is the work of the Christian in this life to represent Christ to the world, in life and character unfolding the blessed Jesus. If God has given us light, it is that we may reveal it to others. But in comparison with the light we have received, and the opportunities and privileges granted us to reach the hearts of the people, the results of our work thus far have been far too small. God designs that the truth which He has brought to our understanding shall produce more fruit than has yet been revealed. But when our minds are filled with gloom and sadness, dwelling upon the darkness and evil around us, how can we represent Christ to the world? How can our testimony have power to win souls? **What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. We must search the Scriptures diligently, prayerfully; our understanding must be quickened by the Holy Spirit, and our hearts must be uplifted to God in faith and hope and continual praise.**

“Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. Our daily and hourly work is set forth in the words of the apostle: “Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) While doing this our minds become clearer and our faith stronger, and our hope is confirmed; we are so engrossed with the view of His purity and loveliness, and the sacrifice He has made to bring us into agreement with God, that we have no disposition to speak of doubts and discouragements.

“The manifestation of God’s love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits we appropriate the blessings of light, of peace, of joy in the Holy Ghost. And in view of the great things which Christ has done for us, we are ready to exclaim: “Behold, what

manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John 3:1)

"Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image.

Then let us not gather together all the unpleasant pictures—the iniquities and corruptions and disappointments, the evidences of Satan's power—to hang in the halls of our memory, to talk over and mourn over until our souls are filled with discouragement. A discouraged soul is a body of darkness, not only failing himself to receive the light of God, but shutting it away from others. Satan loves to see the effect of the pictures of his triumphs, making human beings faithless and disheartened.

"There are, thank God, brighter and more cheering pictures which the Lord has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of His love as precious treasures, that we may look upon them continually. The Son of God leaving His Father's throne, clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might rescue man from the power of Satan; His triumph in our behalf, opening heaven to man, revealing to human vision the presence chamber where Deity unveils His glory; the fallen race uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had plunged them, and brought again into connection with the infinite God, and, having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, clothed in the righteousness of Christ and exalted to His throne—these are the pictures with which God bids us gladden the chambers of the soul. And "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," we shall prove it true that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

"In heaven God is all in all. There holiness reigns supreme; there is nothing to mar the perfect harmony with God. If we are indeed journeying thither, the spirit of heaven will dwell in our hearts here. But if we find no pleasure now in the contemplation of heavenly things; if we have no interest in seeking the knowledge of God, no delight in beholding the character of Christ; if holiness has no attractions for us— then we may be sure that our hope of heaven is vain. Perfect conformity to the will of God is the high aim to be constantly before the Christian. He will love to talk of God, of Jesus, of the home of bliss and purity which Christ has prepared for them that love

Him. The contemplation of these themes, when the soul feasts upon the blessed assurances of God, the apostle represents as tasting the powers of the world to come.”

“Just before us is the closing struggle of the great controversy when, with “all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” Satan is to work to misrepresent the character of God, that he may “seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.” If there was ever a people in need of constantly increasing light from heaven, it is the people that, in this time of peril, God has called to be the depositaries of His holy law and to vindicate His character before the world. Those to whom has been committed a trust so sacred must be spiritualized, elevated, vitalized, by the truths they profess to believe. Never did the church more sorely need, and never was God more solicitous that she should enjoy, the experience described in Paul’s letter to the Colossians when he wrote: We “do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Col 1:9,10) 5T737-746

Lessons from the Destruction of Jerusalem

“The Jews had forged their own fetters; they had filled for themselves the cup of vengeance. In the utter destruction that befell them as a nation, and in all the woes that followed them in their dispersion, they were but reaping the harvest which their own hands had sown. Says the prophet, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;” “for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.” [HOS. 13:9; 14:1.] Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan’s vindictive power over those who yield to his control.

“We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God’s mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed.

God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but he leaves the rejecters of his mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown, which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan. The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are trifling with the offers of divine grace, and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy. Never was there given a more decisive testimony to God's hatred of sin, and to the certain punishment that will fall upon the guilty.

"The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon his law. Dark are the records of human misery that earth has witnessed during its long centuries of crime. The heart sickens and the mind grows faint in contemplation. Terrible have been the results of rejecting the authority of Heaven. But a scene yet darker is presented in the revelations of the future. The records of the past,—the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the "battle of the warrior, with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," [Isa. 9:5.]—what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and Satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule.

"But in that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, God's people will be delivered, "every one that shall be found written among the living." Christ has declared that he will come the second time, to gather his faithful ones to himself: "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." [Matt. 24:30, 31.] Then shall they that obey not the gospel be consumed with the spirit of his mouth, and be destroyed with the brightness of his coming. [2 Thess. 2:8.] Like Israel of old, the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their iniquity. By a life of sin, they have placed themselves

so out of harmony with God, their natures have become so debased with evil, that the manifestation of his glory is to them a consuming fire.

“Let men beware lest they neglect the lesson conveyed to them in the words of Christ. As he warned his disciples of Jerusalem’s destruction, giving them a sign of the approaching ruin, that they might make their escape, so he has warned the world of the day of final destruction, and has given them tokens of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come. Jesus declares, “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations.”[Luke 21:25; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24-26; Rev. 6:12-17.] Those who behold these harbingers of his coming are to “know that it is near, even at the doors.”[MATT 24:33.] “Watch ye therefore,”[Mark 13:35.] are his words of admonition. They that heed the warning shall not be left in darkness, that that day should overtake them unawares. But to them that will not watch, “the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”[1 Thess. 5:2-5.]

“The world is no more ready to credit the message for this time than were the Jews to receive the Saviour’s warning concerning Jerusalem. Come when it may, the day of God will come unawares to the ungodly. When life is going on in its unvarying round; when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business, in traffic, in money-making; when religious leaders are magnifying the world’s progress and enlightenment, and the people are lulled in a false security,—then, as the midnight thief steals within the unguarded dwelling, so shall sudden destruction come upon the careless and ungodly, “and they shall not escape.”[1 Thess. 5:2-5.] GC 35-38

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.” John 16:1-3

THE SEAL OF GOD

18

BY E.G. WHITE

"To The apostle John on the isle of Patmos were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. Subjects of intense interest and vast importance were presented to him in figures and symbols, **that the people of God might become intelligent concerning the perils and conflicts before them.** The history of the Christian world to the very close of time was revealed to John. With great clearness he saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing message which is to ripen the harvest of earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner, or as fagots for the fires of the last day.

"In vision John beheld the trials which God's people would endure for the truth's sake. He saw their unyielding firmness in obeying the commandments of God, in the face of the oppressive powers that sought to force them into disobedience, and he saw their final triumph over the beast and his image.

"Under the symbols of a **great red dragon**, a **leopard-like beast**, and a **beast with lamblike horns**, the earthly governments which would especially engage in trampling upon God's law and persecuting His people, were presented to John. The war is carried on till the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a **holy woman and her children**, were represented as greatly in the minority. **In the last days only a remnant still existed. Of these John speaks as they "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."** (Rev. 12:17)

“Through paganism, and then through the Papacy, Satan exerted his power for many centuries in an effort to blot from the earth God’s faithful witnesses. Pagans and papists were actuated by the same dragon spirit. They differed only in that the Papacy, making a pretense of serving God, was the more dangerous and cruel foe. Through the agency of Romanism, Satan took the world captive. The professed church of God was swept into the ranks of this delusion, and for more than a thousand years the people of God suffered under the dragon’s ire. And when the Papacy, robbed of its strength, was forced to desist from persecution, John beheld a new power coming up to echo the dragon’s voice, and carry forward the same cruel and blasphemous work. This power, the last that is to wage war against the church and the law of God, was symbolized by a **beast with lamblike horns**. The beasts preceding it had risen from the sea, but this came up out of the earth, representing the peaceful rise of the nation which is symbolized. The **“two horns like a lamb”** well represent the character of the United States Government, as expressed in its two fundamental principles, **Republicanism** and **Protestantism**. These principles are the secret of our (USA) power and prosperity as a nation. Those who first found an asylum on the shores of America rejoiced that they had reached a country free from the arrogant claims of popery and the tyranny of kingly rule. They determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.

“But the stern tracing of the prophetic pencil reveals a change in this peaceful scene. The beast with lamblike horns speaks with the voice of a dragon, and “exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him” Prophecy declares that he will say to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast, and that “he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” (Rev 13:12-17) **Thus Protestantism follows in the steps of the Papacy.**

“It is at this time that the third angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.” “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” (Rev 14:9-12) **In marked contrast to the world stands the little company** who will not swerve from their allegiance to God. These are

they of whom Isaiah speaks as repairing the breach which had been made in the law of God, they who are building the old waste places, raising up the foundation of many generations. (Isa. 58:12)

“The most solemn warning and the most awful threatening ever addressed to mortals is that contained in the third angel’s message. The sin that calls down the wrath of God unmixed with mercy must be of the most heinous character. Is the world to be left in darkness as to the nature of this sin?—Most assuredly not. God does not deal thus with His creatures. His wrath is never visited upon sins of ignorance. Before His judgments are brought upon the earth, the light in regard to this sin must be presented to the world, that man may know why these judgments are to be inflicted, and may have opportunity to escape them.”

The Seal — The Mark.

“The message containing this warning is the last to be proclaimed before the revelation of the Son of man. The signs which He Himself has given declare His coming to be near at hand. For well-nigh **forty years** has the message of the third angel been sounding. In the issue of the great contest two parties are developed, those who “worship the beast and his image,” and receive his mark, and those who receive “the seal of the living God,” who have the Father’s name written in their foreheads. This is not a visible mark. The time has come when all who have an interest in their soul’s salvation should earnestly and solemnly inquire, What is the seal of God? and what is the mark of the beast? How can we avoid receiving it?

“The seal of God, the token or sign of His authority, is found in the fourth commandment. This is the only precept of the Decalogue that points to God as the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and clearly distinguishes the true God from all false gods. Throughout the Scriptures the fact of God’s creative power is cited as proof that He is above all heathen deities.

“The Sabbath enjoined by the fourth commandment was instituted to commemorate the work of creation, thus to keep the minds of men ever directed to the true and living God. Had the Sabbath always been kept, there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The sacred observance of God’s holy day would have led the minds of men to their Creator. The things of nature would have brought Him to their remembrance, and they would have borne witness to His power and His love. The Sabbath of the

fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. It points to God as the Creator, and is the sign of His rightful authority over the beings He has made.

“What, then, is the mark of the beast, if it is not the spurious sabbath which the world has accepted in the place of the true?”

“The prophetic declaration that the Papacy was to exalt itself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, (2Thes 2:4) has been strikingly fulfilled in the changing of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. Wherever the papal Sabbath is honored in preference to the Sabbath of God, there the man of sin is exalted above the Creator of heaven and earth.

“Those who assert that Christ changed the Sabbath are directly contradicting His own words. In His Sermon on the Mount He declared: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5:17,18)

“Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change in the Sabbath was made by their church, and they cite this very change as evidence of the supreme authority of this church. They declare that by observing the first day of the week as the Sabbath, Protestants are recognizing her power to legislate in divine things. The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to infallibility, and when the world and the Protestant churches accept the spurious sabbath of her creating, they virtually acknowledge her claim. They may cite the authority of the apostles and fathers in defense of this change, but the fallacy of their reasoning is easily discerned. The papist is sharp enough to see that Protestants are deceiving themselves, willingly closing their eyes to the facts in the case. As the Sunday institution gains favor, he rejoices, feeling assured that it will eventually bring the whole Protestant world under the banner of Rome.” ST NOV 1, 1899

“The change of the Sabbath is a sign or mark of the authority of the Romish Church. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false sabbath in the place of the true, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. The mark of

the beast is the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God's appointment.

"There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. None are condemned until they have had the light and have seen the obligation of the fourth commandment. **But when the decree shall go forth enforcing the counterfeit sabbath, and the loud cry of "the third angel" shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true. Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast.**

"With rapid steps we are approaching this period. When Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power in sustaining a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution, then will the papal Sabbath be enforced by the combined authority of church and State. There will be a national apostasy, which will end only in national ruin.

"Marvelous in her shrewdness and cunning is the Roman Catholic Church. She presents a fair front to the world, covering with apologies her record of horrible cruelties, and declaring that her spirit of persecution no longer exists. But she is the same as in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up at the peril of their lives to expose her iniquity; the same as when she assumed the power to control kings and princes, and claimed the prerogatives of God. She may clothe herself in Christlike garments, the better to carry forward her purposes; but she still retains the venom of the serpent, and her principles are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in churches, and in the hearts of men. Her spirit is no less cruel and despotic now than when it crushed out human liberty, and slew the saints of the Most High.

"By compromises and concessions, Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery, giving her vantage-ground which papists themselves are surprised to see and fail to understand. The Protestant world needs to be aroused to resist the advances of this **most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty.**

"When the State shall enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Papacy. Then the true church will be assailed by persecution as were God's people in ancient times. Almost every century furnishes instances of what human

hearts, controlled by rage and malice, can do under a plea of serving God by protecting the rights of the church and State. The Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliances with worldly powers have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. How many non-conformist ministers have suffered under the power of the Church of England! Persecution always follows a restriction of religious liberty on the part of secular governments.

Rejection of Great Light

“It is urged by many that the intellectual and moral darkness prevailing during the middle ages favored the spread of dogma, superstition, and the oppression of popery, and that the general diffusion of knowledge, and the well-nigh universal acceptance of the principles of religious liberty, forbid a revival of superstition and tyranny. It is true that great light, intellectual, moral, and religious, is shining upon this generation. Since 1844 light from the heaven of heavens has beamed from the open door of the temple of God. But it is to be remembered that the greater the light bestowed, the greater the delusion and darkness of those who reject the Word of God and accept fables, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. (Matt. 15:19)

“Satan will excite the indignation of apostate Christendom against the humble remnant who conscientiously refuse to accept false customs and traditions. Blinded by the prince of darkness, popular religionists will see only as he sees, and feel as he feels. They will determine as he determines, and oppress as he has oppressed. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. The church and the world will unite, and the world will lend to the church power to crush out the right of the people to worship God according to His Word.

The Book of Esther – A Type of the Final Crisis

“The decree which is to go forth against the people of God in the near future is in some respects similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther. The Persian edict sprang from the malice of Haman against Mordecai. Not that Mordecai had done Haman harm, but he had refused to flatter his vanity by showing him the reverence which is due only to God. The king’s decision against the Jews was secured under false pretenses. Satan instigated this scheme in order to rid the earth of those who preserved a knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a

counter-power that reigns among the children of men. Angels who excel in strength were commissioned to protect the people of God, and the plots of their adversaries returned upon their own heads.

“History repeats itself. The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is now at work to gain control of the Protestant churches, that through them he may condemn and put to death all who will not worship the idol sabbath. We have not to battle with man, as it may appear. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. But if the people of God will put their trust in Him, and by faith rely upon His power, the devices of Satan will be defeated in our time as signally as in the days of Mordecai.

“The decree is to go forth that all who will not receive the mark of the beast shall neither buy nor sell, and, finally, that they shall be put to death. But the saints of God do not receive this mark. The prophet of Patmos beheld those that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. (Rev. 15:1-3)

“To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Satan is putting forth his utmost efforts in the rage of a last despairing struggle against Christ and His followers. False teachers are employing every device possible to stimulate the hardened sinner in his rebellious daring, to confirm the questioning, the doubting, the unbelieving, and, by misrepresentation and falsehood, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. Who are prepared to stand firmly under the banner on which is inscribed, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”?

“Christ never purchased peace and friendship by compromise with evil. Though His heart overflowed with love toward the human race, He could not be indulgent to their sins. Because He loved men and women, He was a stern reprover of their vices. His life of suffering, the humiliation to which He was subjected by a perverse nation, show His followers that there must be no sacrifice of principle. God’s tried people must maintain watchfulness, with fervent prayer, lest, in their eagerness to prevent discord, they surrender truth, and thus dishonor the God of truth. **Peace is too dearly obtained**

if purchased by the smallest concession to Satan's agencies. The least surrender of principle entangles us in the snare of the enemy.

"Paul writes to the Romans, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Rom 12:18) But there is a point beyond which it is impossible to maintain union and harmony without the sacrifice of principle. Separation then becomes an absolute duty. The laws of nations should be respected when they do not conflict with the laws of God. But when there is collision between them, every true disciple of Christ will say, as did the apostle Peter when commanded to speak no more in the name of Jesus, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) ST NOV 1, 1899

OUR IMMEDIATE PRIORITY—GROWTH TO THE STAGE OF THE ‘EAR’

19

The special event which must occur in order for the Sunday law to be passed and the latter rain to be poured out is the reaching of the stage called the **ear** by God’s faithful remnant in the third angel’s message.

Since reaching the stage of the **ear** is a largely invisible event, each faithful believer must keep the eye fixed on Christ so that the Holy Spirit ceases not His work of conforming the soul to the image of Christ. As we have already learned, the three last or most advanced growth stages are the **ear**, the **full corn in the ear** and **harvest-ready grain**.

When the faithful remnant in the third angel’s message reach the stage of the **ear** the image and mark of the beast will be set up and the latter rain poured out. The faithful third angel remnant will give the loud cry (the last final warning) and thereby call God’s other faithful people out of Babylon (the fallen churches) to form the total final remnant which will all reach the stage of the **full corn in the ear** and be sealed by the closure of probation. They will then go through the time of Jacob’s trouble to be further strengthened and ripened and to be made **harvest-ready** for the second coming of Christ. They are called *the 144,000* and will be translated without seeing death.

The early rain produces steady growth and develops the remnant to the stage of the **ear**. The latter rain ripens them to the **full corn in the ear** and *seals* them by the time probation closes. Thereafter the “hot sun”

of the time of Jacob’s trouble further strengthens and *ripens them into harvest-ready*, i.e. translation ready, saints.

Final Events	Final Growth Stages
Passing Of Sunday Law	Ear: Soul Temple Cleansed Of Every Defilement And Kept In Close Connection With Christ
Closure Of Probation	Full Corn In The Ear: Sealing Completed. Character Of Christ Fully <i>Imparted</i>
End Of Time Of Jacob’s Trouble	Harvest-ready Grain: Image Of Christ Fully Reflected
Second Coming Of Christ	Harvested Without Dying: Translation

Top Priority

Our main aim—our overwhelming desire, our number one priority— must be to allow the Holy Spirit to complete our early rain experience and bring us to the stage of the ear so that we can receive the latter rain, give the loud cry, finish the work and simultaneously be ripened and sealed for “Jacob’s trouble” and for translation!

The Completion of Early Rain Experience

The completion of early rain experience means that the soul-temple is *cleansed from every defilement* and the basic spiritual “kernels” of the fruits of the Spirit are set in the soul to be ripened by the latter rain.

“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.” 2 Cor 7:1

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” 1 Pet 4:1,2

“For he that is dead is freed from sin.” Rom 6:7

The completion of early rain experience therefore means victory over temptations and such a close connection with our Lord Jesus Christ that He has full control at all times of our beings; spirit, soul and body!

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:7-10

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” James 5:7

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” John 17:17-23

Know and Appropriate

“That which Satan has led men to do in the past, he will if possible lead them to do again. The early church was deceived by the enemy of God and man, and apostasy was brought into the ranks of those who professed to love God; and to-day, unless the people of God awake out of sleep, they will be taken unawares by the devices of Satan. Among those who claim to believe in the near coming of the Savior, how many are back-slidden, how many have lost their first love, and come under the description written of the Laodicean church, denominating them as neither cold nor hot. Satan will do his utmost to keep them in a state of indifference and stupor. **May the Lord reveal to the people the perils that are before them, that they may**

arouse from their spiritual slumber, and trim their lamps, and be found watching for the Bridegroom when he shall return from the wedding.

“The days in which we live are eventful and full of peril. The signs of the coming of the end are thickening around us, **and events are to come to pass that will be of a more terrible character than any the world has yet witnessed.** “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” But to those who have the light of truth, it has been written, “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” (1Thes 5:3-6) “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” (Rom. 13:11,12) “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.” (Mark 13:35,36)

“There is great need that our weakening faith should be quickened, and that we should ever keep before the mind the evidences that our Lord is soon coming, that we may ever be found not only waiting, but watching and working. We are **not** to be found in idle expectancy; for this leads to carelessness of life, and deficiency of character. We are to realize that the judgments of God are about to fall upon the earth, and we should most earnestly present before the people the warning that the Lord has commissioned us to give: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Mat 24:21) “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:26-28)

“If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of his righteousness, which he imputes to the repentant sinner. Human wisdom will not avail to devise a plan of salvation. Human philosophy is vain, the fruits of the loftiest powers of man are worthless, aside from the great plan of the divine Teacher. No glory is to redound to man; all human help and glory lies in the dust; for the truth as

it is in Jesus is the only available agent by which man may be saved. Man is privileged to connect with Christ, and then the divine and the human combine; and in this union the hope of man must rest alone; for it is as the Spirit of God touches the soul that the powers of the soul are quickened, and man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. He was manifested to bring life and immortality to light. He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The psalmist declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (John 6:63; Ps 119:130)

"Then let us study the word of God, that we may know him in whom there is no darkness at all. Jesus says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) **The theme that attracts the heart of the sinner is Christ, and Him crucified. On the cross of Calvary, Jesus stands revealed to the world in unparalleled love. Present him thus to the hungering multitudes, and the light of his love will win men from darkness to light, from transgression to obedience and true holiness.** Beholding Jesus upon the cross of Calvary arouses the conscience to the heinous character of sin as nothing else can do. It was sin that caused the death of God's dear Son, and sin is the transgression of the law. On him was laid the iniquities of us all. The sinner then consents unto the law that it is good; for he realizes that it condemns his evil deeds, while he magnifies the matchless love of God in providing for him salvation through the imputed righteousness of Him who knew no sin, in whose mouth there was found no guile." RH Nov 22, 1892

If you would stand through the time of trouble you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness which He imputes to the repentant sinner.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," Gal 4:19

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."
Rom 16:25-27

To *appropriate* something means to *make it your own*. We must make Christ's righteousness our own!

"It is through the truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we are to be sanctified,—transformed into the likeness of Christ. And in order for this change to be wrought in us, there must be an unconditional, whole-hearted acceptance of the truth, an unreserved surrender of the soul to its transforming power.

"John says, "The light"—Christ—"shineth in darkness," that is, in the world, "and the darkness comprehended it not. . . . But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12,13) The reason why the unbelieving world are not saved is that they do not choose to be enlightened. The old nature, born of blood and the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices, they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. When men who claim to be Christians retain all their natural defects of character and disposition, in what does their position differ from that of the worldling? They do not appreciate the truth as a sanctifier, a refiner. They have not been born again.

"The command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," would never have been given, if every provision had not been made whereby we may become as perfect in our sphere as God is in his. We are to be ever advancing from light to a greater light, holding fast what we have already received, and praying for more. Thus we shall never be left in darkness.

"Let none feel that their way needs no changing. Those who decide thus are not fitted to engage in the work of God, for they will not feel the necessity of pressing constantly toward a higher standard, making continual improvement. None can walk safely unless they are distrustful of self, and are constantly looking to the word of God, studying it with willing heart to see their own errors, and to learn the will of Christ, and praying that it may be done in and by and through them. They show that their confidence is not in themselves, but in Christ. They hold the truth

as a sacred treasure, able to sanctify and refine, and they are constantly seeking to bring their words and ways into harmony with its principles. **They fear and tremble lest something savoring of self shall be idolized, and thus their defects be reproduced in others who confide in them. They are always seeking to subdue self, to put away everything that savors of it, and to supply the place with the meekness and lowliness of Christ. They are looking unto Jesus, growing up into him, gathering from him light and grace, that they may diffuse the same to others.**"
RH April 12, 1892

"Many are spiritually weak because they look at themselves instead of at Christ. Looking at themselves, and seeing only discouragement and unworthiness, they forget that God is waiting to make them agencies for the blessing of the world, and that angels are waiting to be co-laborers with them.

"Christ is the great storehouse from which on every occasion we may draw strength and happiness. Why, then, do we withdraw our eyes from his sufficiency to look on and bemoan our weakness? Why do we forget that he is ready to help us in every time of need? We dishonor him by talking of our inefficiency. Instead of looking at ourselves, let us constantly behold Jesus, daily becoming more and more like him, more and more able to talk of him, better prepared to avail ourselves of his kindness and helpfulness, and to receive the blessings offered us. As we thus live in communion with him, we grow strong in his strength, a help and a blessing to those around us.

"Christ has made every provision for us to be strong. He has given us his Holy Spirit, whose office is to bring to our remembrance all the promises that Christ has made, that we may have peace and a sweet sense of forgiveness. If we will but keep our eyes fixed on the Saviour, and trust in his power, we shall be filled with a sense of security; for the righteousness of Christ will become our righteousness." RH Oct 1, 1908

How the Power of the Evil One Is Broken

"Those who do not walk in all faith and purity, find the thought of coming into the presence of God a thought of terror. They do not love to think or speak of God. They say in heart and by their actions, "Depart from us, O God; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." But through faith in Christ, the true Christian knows the mind and will of God. He understands by a

living experience something of the length and depth and breadth and height of the love of God that passeth knowledge. The soul that loves God, loves to draw strength from Him by constant communion with Him. When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken; for Satan cannot abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God. If Christ is your companion, you will not cherish vain and impure thoughts; you will not indulge in trifling words that will grieve Him who has come to be the sanctifier of your soul. Let every ambassador of Christ cherish pure thoughts, speak refined words, and manifest a courteous behavior toward all with whom he comes in contact. The truth of God never degrades the receiver. The influence of the truth upon him who accepts it, will tend constantly to his elevation. It will not make him coarse and rough in thought, in word, in dress or deportment. Those who are sanctified through the truth, are living recommendation of its power, and representatives of their risen Lord. The religion of Christ will refine the taste, sanctify the judgment, elevate, purify, and ennoble the soul, making the Christian more and more fit for the society of the heavenly angels.

“Christians are to be God’s noblemen, who will never grovel in bondage to the great adversary of souls, but will bind themselves to God, catching inspiration from him whom they love, who is high and lifted up. The soul that loves God, rises above the fog of doubt; he gains a bright, broad, deep, living experience, and becomes meek and Christ-like. His soul is committed to God, hid with Christ in God. He will be able to stand the test of neglect, of abuse and contempt, because his Saviour has suffered all this. He will not become fretful and discouraged when difficulties press him, because Jesus did not fail or become discouraged. **Every true Christian will be strong, not in the strength and merit of his good works, but in the righteousness of Christ, which through faith is imputed unto him. It is a great thing to be meek and lowly heart, to be pure and undefiled, as was the Prince of heaven when he walked among men.**

“Those who teach the truth must have a more thorough knowledge of the height and depth and breadth and length of the perfect love of God. Throughout the Christian’s experience there will be battles to fight with self; but in all these conflicts the soul may rise in the triumph of victory, and be more than conqueror over the world, the flesh, and the Devil, through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must have a deeper, higher sense of the consecration which God requires of men whom he has chosen as the

depositories of his holy word. They are not to be careless in any of their ways. A most solemn responsibility rests upon them to be examples to the flock of God, and to the world, in faith, in word, in life and character, that they may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour. **They are to be strictly pure, to be much in prayer, to be diligent students of the Bible.** God has given them mind and reasoning powers, that they may search diligently for the jewels of his truth, that are to be presented in all their attraction to the imperiled souls of men. You should lay your souls open before God, that you may be filled with heavenly inspiration. You should keep the fountain of the soul pure, that the streams coming forth from it may be untainted with evil. The whole mind and soul should become imbued with the truth, that you may be a living representation of Christ. My brethren, God would have you filled with his Holy Spirit, endowed with power from on high. **Labor not to become great men; labor rather to become good and perfect men, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. God calls for Calebs and Joshuas, fearless, single-hearted men, who will work with faith and courage.**" RH Dec 3, 1889

Resisting Temptation in the Strength of Christ

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal 5:24

"The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words "flesh" or "fleshly" or "carnal lusts" embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; **but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness.**" AH 127,128

"The sin of evilspeaking begins with the cherishing of evil thoughts. Guile includes impurity in all its forms. An impure thought tolerated, an unholy desire cherished, and the soul is contaminated, its integrity compromised. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:15) **If we would not commit sin, we**

must shun its very beginnings. Every emotion and desire must be held in subjection to reason and conscience. Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices.

“By faith and prayer all may meet the requirements of the gospel. No man can be forced to transgress. His own consent must be first gained; the soul must purpose the sinful act before passion can dominate over reason or iniquity triumph over conscience. Temptation, however strong, is never an excuse for sin. “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers.” (1Pet 3:12) Cry unto the Lord, tempted soul. Cast yourself, helpless, unworthy, upon Jesus, and claim His very promise. The Lord will hear. **He knows how strong are the inclinations of the natural heart, and He will help in every time of temptation.**

“Have you fallen into sin? Then without delay seek God for mercy and pardon. When David was convicted of his sin, he poured out his soul in penitence and humiliation before God. He felt that he could endure the loss of his crown, but he could not be deprived of the favor of God. Mercy is still extended to the sinner. The Lord is calling to us in all our wanderings: “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.” The blessing of God may be ours if we will heed the pleading voice of His Spirit. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” 5T 177

“You should keep off from Satan’s enchanted ground and not allow your minds to be swayed from allegiance to God. Through Christ you may and should be happy and should acquire habits of self-control. Even your thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. **Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.** When you decide that as Christians you are not required to restrain your thoughts and feelings you are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control. If you yield to your impressions and allow your thoughts to run in a channel of suspicion, doubt, and repining you will be among the most unhappy of mortals, and your lives will prove a failure.” 5T 310

“In every plan we make, we must act with entire dependence upon God, else we shall be deceived by a semblance instead of the reality. As stewards of the grace of Christ, we are to inquire at every step, “Is this the way of the Lord?” The word of God is a character-detector, a motive-tester. We are to read this word with heart and mind open to receive the impressions that God will give. We must not think that the reading of the word can accomplish that which only He whom the word reveals, who stands behind the word, can accomplish. Some are in danger of hastening to the conclusion that because they hold firmly to the doctrines of the truth, they are actually in possession of the blessings which these doctrines declare shall come to the receiver of truth. Many keep the truth in the outer court. Its sacred principles have not a controlling influence over the words, the thoughts, the actions. They do not possess the faith which works by love and purifies the soul. An assent to the truth may quiet the conscience, but let every believer inquire, “Does my faith make me a daily, hourly follower of Christ? Has it a sanctifying influence on my soul? Can I say, The gentleness of Christ has made me great? A faultless creed and a carnal life are too often found together in professed believers. To be a means to a saving end, the word of God must be intelligently and practically understood and obeyed.” RH Oct 1, 1901

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

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BY E.G. WHITE

“Prayer is the breath of the soul, the channel of all blessings. As, with a realization of the needs of humanity, with a feeling of self-loathing, the repentant soul offers its prayer, God sees its struggles, watches its conflicts, and marks its sincerity. He has his finger upon its pulse, and he takes note of every throb. Not a feeling thrills it, not an emotion agitates it, not a sorrow shades it, not a sin stains it, not a thought or purpose moves it, of which he is not cognizant. **That soul was purchased at an infinite cost, and is loved with a devotion that is unalterable.**

“Prayer to the Great Physician for the healing of the soul brings the blessing of God. Prayer unites us one to another and to God. Prayer brings Jesus to our side, and gives new strength and fresh grace to the fainting, perplexed soul. By prayer the sick have been encouraged to believe that God will look with compassion upon them. A ray of light penetrates to the hopeless soul, and becomes a savor of life unto life. Prayer has “subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire,”—we shall know what this means when we hear the reports of the martyrs who died for their faith,—“turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” (Heb. 11:33,34)

“We shall hear about these victories when the Captain of our salvation, the glorious King of heaven, opens the record before those of whom John writes, “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." (Rom 7:14-17)

Christ Our Example (*Hebrews 5:7-10*)

"Christ our Saviour was tempted in all points like as we are, yet he was without sin. (Heb 4:14-16) He took human nature, being made in fashion as a man, and his necessities were the necessities of a man. He had bodily wants to be supplied, bodily weariness to be relieved. It was by prayer to his Father that he was braced for duty and for trial. Day by day he followed his round of duty, seeking to save souls. His heart went out in tender sympathy for the weary and heavy laden. And he spent whole nights in prayer in behalf of the tempted ones.

"Christ has given his disciples assurance that special seasons for devotion are necessary. Prayer went before and sanctified every act of his ministry. He communed with his Father till the close of his life; and when he hung upon the cross, there arose from his lips the bitter cry, "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" Then, in a voice which has reached to the very ends of the earth, he exclaimed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Strength for the performance of daily duties is derived from worshiping God in the beauty of holiness. The night seasons of prayer which the Saviour spent in the mountain or in the desert were essential to prepare him for the trials He must meet in the days to follow. He felt the need of the refreshing and invigorating of soul and body, that He might meet the temptations of Satan; and those who are striving to live His life will feel this same need.

God Invites Us To Pray (*Luke 18:1*)

"The Christian is given the invitation to carry his burdens to God in prayer, and to fasten himself closely to Christ by the cords of living faith. The Lord authorizes us to pray, declaring that he will hear the prayers of those who trust in his infinite power. He will be honored by those who draw nigh to him, who faithfully do his service. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." The arm of Omnipotence is outstretched to guide us and lead us onward and still onward. Go forward, the Lord says; I understand the case, and I will send you help. Continue to pray. Have

faith in me. It is for my name's glory that you ask, and you shall receive. I will be honored before those who are watching critically for your failure. They shall see the truth triumph gloriously. "All things, whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

"The believer in Christ is consecrated to high and holy purpose. Before the service of the royal priesthood the glory of the Aaronic priesthood is eclipsed. Called according to God's purpose, set apart by grace divine, invested with Christ's righteousness, imbued with the Holy Spirit, offering up the sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart, the true believer is indeed a representative of the Redeemer. Upon such a worshiper, God looks with delight. He will let his light shine into the chambers of the mind and into the soul-temple if men, when they lack wisdom, will go to their closets in prayer, and ask wisdom from Him who gives to all men liberally and upbraids not. The promise is, "It shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (James 1:6) Christ has pledged himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. **There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from his obedience. In heaven his merits, his self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured up as incense to be offered up with the prayers of his people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of his life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears his Son. Pray then; pray without ceasing; an answer is sure to come.**

"But let me speak in warning: "If any man regard iniquity in his heart, the Lord will not hear him." (Ps. 66:18)

"Show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Be ever true to principle. Waver not; speak decidedly that which you know to be truth, and leave the consequences with God. Bear in mind that God tests the genuineness of your desire. Believe the word of God, and never cease to press your petitions to His throne with sanctified, holy boldness. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." By precept and example keep the standard uplifted. Your testimony, in its genuineness and reality, God will make powerful in the power of the life to come. The word of the Lord will be in your mouth as truth and righteousness.

"Let all remember that the mysteries of God's kingdom can not be learned by reasoning. True faith, true prayer—how strong they are! The prayer of

the Pharisee had no value, but the prayer of the publican was heard in the courts above, because it showed dependence reaching forth to lay hold of Omnipotence. Self was to the publican nothing but shame. Thus it must be with all who seek God. **Faith and prayer are the two arms which the needy suppliant lays upon the neck of infinite Love.**

“We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. . . . What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? . . . I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, not things present, not things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:24-28,31,32-39)

“Why do you not cease from Sin? You may overcome if you will co-operate with God. Christ’s promise is sure. He pledges himself to fill the office of personal Intercessor, saying, “I will pray the Father.” He who could not see human beings exposed to eternal ruin without pouring out His soul unto death in their behalf, will look with pity and compassion upon every one who realizes that he can not save himself. He will look upon no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through his own atonement provided for man an infinite fund of moral power will not fail to employ this power in their behalf. We may take life’s controversies and troubles to His feet; for He loves us. His every word and look invite our confidence. **He will shape and mold our characters according to His will, and every day we shall be found asking, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”**

“Let us commit the needs of the soul to Him who has loved us, and given His precious life that He might make it possible for us to learn of Him. While lifting the cross, He says to us, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) Christ alone

can make us capable of responding when he says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt 11:29) This means that every day self must be denied. Christ can give us the noble resolve, the will to suffer, and to fight the battles of the Lord with persevering energy. **The weakest, aided by divine grace, may have strength to be more than conqueror.**

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" These gifts are freely given to us by God. Oh, how weak is our faith, that we do not avail ourselves of the rich, glorious promises of God! It is His nature to bestow his gifts upon us. All-wise and all-powerful, He will give liberally to all who ask in faith. He is more merciful, more tender, more patient and loving than any earthly parent. He draws us to him by endearing language, that we may have courage and confidence. We are won to Him by the disclosure of the tender sympathy that flows from His heart of love. No human parent could plead as earnestly with an erring child as God pleads with us.

"All things are possible to those that believe. No one coming to the Lord in sincerity of heart will be disappointed. How wonderful it is that we can pray effectually, that unworthy, erring mortals possess the power of offering their requests to God! What higher power can man require than this,—to be linked with the infinite God? Feeble, sinful man has the privilege of speaking to his Maker. We utter words that reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets. Then we go forth to walk with God as did Enoch.

"We speak with Jesus Christ as we walk by the way, and he says, "I am at thy right hand." We may walk in daily companionship with Christ. When we breathe out our desire, it may be inaudible to any human ear, but that word can not die away into silence, nor can it be lost, though the activities of business are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and the prayer is heard. Ask then; "ask, and it shall be given you." RH Oct 30, 1900

"We should be often in prayer. The outpouring of the Spirit of God came in answer to earnest prayer. But mark this fact concerning the disciples. The record says, "They were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all

the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:1-4) They were not assembled to relate tidbits of scandal. They were not seeking to expose every stain they could find on a brother's character. They felt their spiritual need, and cried to the Lord for the holy unction to help them in overcoming their own infirmities, and to fit them for the work of saving others. They prayed with intense earnestness that the love of Christ might be shed abroad in their hearts. This is our great need to-day in every church in our land. For "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2Cor. 5:17) That which was objectionable in the character is purified from the soul by the love of Jesus. All selfishness is expelled, all envy, all evil-speaking, is rooted out, and a radical transformation is wrought in the heart. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. 5:22,23) "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." RH Jul 22, 1890

Praise Ye The Lord

"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." Have any of us duly considered how much we have to be thankful for? Do we remember that the mercies of the Lord are new every morning and that His faithfulness faileth not? Do we acknowledge our dependence upon Him and express gratitude for all His favors? On the contrary, we too often forget that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17)

"How often those who are in health forget the wonderful mercies that are continued to them day by day, year after year. They render no tribute of praise to God for all His benefits. But when sickness comes, God is remembered. The strong desire for recovery leads to earnest prayer, and this is right. God is our refuge in sickness as in health. But many do not leave their cases with Him; they encourage weakness and disease by worrying about themselves. If they would cease repining and rise above depression and gloom, their recovery would be more sure. They should remember with gratitude how long they enjoyed the blessing of health; and should this precious boon be restored to them, they should not forget that they are under renewed obligations to their Creator. When the ten lepers were healed, only

one returned to find Jesus and give Him glory. Let us not be like the unthinking nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God.

“God is love. He has a care for the creatures He has formed. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” What a precious privilege is this, that we may be sons and daughters of the Most High, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Then let us not mourn and grieve because in this life we are not free from disappointments and afflictions. If in the providence of God we are called upon to endure trials, let us accept the cross and drink the bitter cup, remembering that it is a Father’s hand that holds it to our lips. Let us trust Him in the darkness as well as in the day. Can we not believe that He will give us everything that is for our good? “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32) Even in the night of affliction how can we refuse to lift heart and voice in grateful praise, when we remember the love to us expressed by the cross of Calvary?

“What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners! “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.” (Isaiah 53:5) How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death? Had He not by His death and resurrection opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up.

“We may rejoice in hope. Our Advocate is in the heavenly sanctuary, pleading in our behalf. Through His merits we have pardon and peace. He died that He might wash away our sins, clothe us with His righteousness, and fit us for the society of heaven, where we may dwell in light forever. Dear brother, dear sister, when Satan would fill your mind with despondency,

gloom, and doubt, resist his suggestions. Tell him of the blood of Jesus, that cleanses from all sin. You cannot save yourself from the tempter's power, but he trembles and flees when the merits of that precious blood are urged. Then will you not gratefully accept the blessings Jesus bestows? Will you not take the cup of salvation that He presents, and call on the name of the Lord? **Do not show distrust of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Do not for a moment pain the heart of the pitying Saviour by your unbelief. He watches with the most intense interest your progress in the heavenly way; He sees your earnest efforts; He notes your declensions and your recoveries, your hopes and your fears, your conflicts and your victories.**

"Shall all our devotional exercises consist in asking and receiving? Shall we be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive? Shall we be recipients of His mercies and never express our gratitude to God, never praise Him for what He has done for us? We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. **If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change your present order and mingle praise with your petitions. When you consider His goodness and mercies you will find that He will consider your wants.**

"Pray, pray earnestly and without ceasing, but do not forget to praise. It becomes every child of God to vindicate His character. You can magnify the Lord; you can show the power of sustaining grace. There are multitudes who do not appreciate the great love of God nor the divine compassion of Jesus. Thousands even regard with disdain the matchless grace shown in the plan of redemption. All who are partakers of this great salvation are not clear in this matter. They do not cultivate grateful hearts. But the theme of redemption is one that the angels desire to look into; it will be the science and the song of the ransomed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Is it not worthy of careful thought and study now? Should we not praise God with heart and soul and voice "for His wonderful works to the children of men"?

"Praise the Lord in the congregation of His people. When the word of the Lord was spoken to the Hebrews anciently, the command was: "And let all the people say, Amen." When the ark of the covenant was brought into the

city of David, and a psalm of joy and triumph was chanted, "all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord." This fervent response was an evidence that they understood the word spoken and joined in the worship of God.

"There is too much formality in our religious services. The Lord would have His ministers who preach the word energized by His Holy Spirit; and the people who hear should not sit in drowsy indifference, or stare vacantly about, making no responses to what is said. The impression that is thus given to the unbeliever is anything but favorable for the religion of Christ. These dull, careless professed Christians are not destitute of ambition and zeal when engaged in worldly business; but things of eternal importance do not move them deeply. The voice of God through His messengers may be a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. The spirit of the world has paralyzed them. The truths of God's word are spoken to leaden ears and hard, unimpressible hearts. There should be wide-awake, active churches to encourage and uphold the ministers of Christ and to aid them in the work of saving souls. **Where the church is walking in the light, there will ever be cheerful, hearty responses and words of joyful praise.**

"Our God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, declares: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." All heaven unite in praising God. Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist: "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." (Ps 146:2) "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee." 5T 315-319

"No man can serve two masters. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." We are but living, human agents, dependent upon God for every breath we draw, and we are not to be anxious about food and raiment, and to be distrustful of God. The Lord has his thoughts of love toward us, and will care for the future. **It is God's will that we are to be anxious to know and to do his requirements at all hazards; but we are to trust God implicitly not only for the little things, the temporal things of life, but for the redemption of our souls.** Having faith, and confidence, and trust in God, we have everything, and God will never betray our confidence. He is ever loving, and patiently bears with our weaknesses and infirmities, and is ever willing to forgive our perversities. Then let us walk meekly, trustingly, and humbly before him. Commit your way to him. **Cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**

“The world’s Redeemer was treated as we deserve to be treated, in order that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins upon his own divine soul, that we might receive His imputed righteousness. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. The world’s Redeemer gave Himself for us. Who was He?—The Majesty of heaven, pouring out His blood upon the altar of justice for the sins of guilty man. We should know our relationship to Christ and his relationship to us. We are to trust God fully, and ask Him to supply the least as well as the greatest want. **The Lord encourages our confidence; and the great proof of our union with Christ, and the best manifestation of our love to Him, is in yielding obedience to his claims. If you have love to Jesus Christ, which is an expression of the life of Christ in the soul, then you will do what he commands you. This is practical religion. Redeemed by the ransom money paid for your souls, you will go forth and show how much you love Jesus by obedience to his commandments. You are to bring forth fruit by doing His commandments, because you are branches of the living Vine. It is His prayer that His joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.**

“What was Christ’s joy?—It was the joy of saving the lost. The prophet says, “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame. His suffering, His agony, His death, were counted by Him nothing that souls might be rescued from sin. Whenever there is a soul converted and brought to Jesus Christ, a thrill of joy is felt in heaven. A soul is saved, a precious soul snatched from Satan’s grasp and given as a precious token to Jesus Christ that He has not suffered and died in vain, and then there is joy and rejoicing in heaven. The lost is found, the dead in trespasses and sins is alive; and Christ prays that this joy may be ours,—a joy that is rich, deep, full, and abiding,—a joy springing from the triumphs of the cross of Christ.

“Christ calls for those who have turned from Him. He says, Return unto me, and I will return unto you, and heal all thy backslidings. He calls for those who are standing apart from him to be laborers together with God. He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” O how true are these words. We did not make the first movement toward Christ; but He made the first movement toward us. He drew us by the cords of his love. He touched our hearts by his grace. Our approach to him was but a response to his drawing. No

longer cherish doubt and walk in darkness. Jesus has purchased us with His own blood We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and our time, our intrusted capabilities, belong to God. He has given his only begotten Son to a life of humiliation and shameful death for us, and in return He has asked us to give ourselves to Him. And through the grace of God, let us do this. The Lord help us to plant our feet on the solid Rock.” RH March 21, 1893

“The work of the holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul. He who looks to Christ in simple, childlike faith, is made a partaker of the divine nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. When led by the Spirit of God, the Christian may know that he is made complete in Him who is the head of all things. **As Christ was glorified on the day of Pentecost, so will He again be glorified in the closing work of the gospel, when he shall prepare a people to stand the final test, in the closing conflict of the great controversy.”** RH Nov 29, 1892

Appeal

“If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.” How many a sin-burdened soul has echoed that prayer. And to all, the pitying Saviour’s answer is, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” (Mark 9:23) It is faith that connects us with heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. **In Christ, God has provided means for subduing every sinful trait, and resisting every temptation, however strong.** But many feel that they lack faith, and therefore they remain away from Christ. Let these souls, in their helpless unworthiness, cast themselves upon the mercy of their compassionate Saviour. **Look not to self, but to Christ.** He who healed the sick and cast out demons when He walked among men is the same mighty Redeemer today. Faith comes by the word of God. Then grasp His promise, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37. **Cast yourself at His feet with the cry, “Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.” You can never perish while you do this—never.”** DA 429

WHICH WATCH SHALL IT BE?

21

In ancient times the night of twelve hours was divided into four watches of three hours each: the first or *evening watch*, 6pm to 9pm; the second or *midnight watch*, 9pm to 12 midnight; the third or *cockcrowning watch*, 12 midnight to 3am and the fourth or *morning watch*, 3am to 6am. The Bible proof is found in the following texts of scripture.

“I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” John 9:4

“Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.” John 11:9,10

“Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” Mark 13:35,36,37

Applying The Four Watches To The Generation Concept

Similarly each *generation*, or 40 year period, after 1844 represents a long night of waiting. There are four decades in 40 years, (4x10=40). Each decade is a *watch*. In other words, there are four watches in each generation. The Bible evidence for this is found in Luke 12:35-40.

Writing in 1868, Sister E.G. White saw a company of faithful waiting believers:

“They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: ‘The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the master’s return” 2T 192.

Follow carefully the counting of the decades in that first generation:

1. First decade = 1844-1854 = First watch
2. Second decade = 1854-1864 = Second watch
3. Third decade = 1864-1874 = Third watch
4. Fourth decade = 1874-1884 = Fourth watch

Notice that in 1868 the waiting ones were saying that the first and second watches were past and they were *in the third watch*. The year 1868 was near the middle of the third decade of that first generation!

Moreover, writing also in 1868 the servant of the Lord, Sister E.G. White, penned these words:

“I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing watchfulness, for now the moments are fewer than before the passing of the **first watch**. Now the period of waiting is necessarily shorter than at first. If we watched with unabated vigilance then, how much more need of double watchfulness in the **second watch**. **The passing of the second watch has brought us to the third**, and now it is inexcusable to abate our watchfulness. **The third watch calls for threefold earnestness**. To become impatient now would be to lose all our earnest, persevering watching heretofore. The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready.” 2T 193

Here again we see that 1868 was in the *third* watch, but 1868 was in the third decade and two watches had already passed. Therefore the only logical conclusion is that *each decade in a generation is a watch*.

Waiting For The Lord’s Return From The Wedding

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open

unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” Luke 12:35-40

First of all let us find out what is meant by our Lord's *return from the wedding*. Let us read from Testimonies Volume 2, page 190, 191.

“Jesus has left us word: “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. **What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”** (Rev 22:11) 2T 190

Careful reading of Luke 12:35-40 gives us some critically important information. In verse 38 Jesus says that if He shall come in the *second or third watch* and find His servants ready, blessed are those servants. This means that in verses 36 and 37, where He first speaks of His return from the wedding, He is describing the ideal situation where His servants are ready in the *first* watch! (This is similar to the angels in Rev 14:6-12 where because the word *third* is used in verse 9 we know that verse 8 must be the *second* and verse 6 must be the *first*!)

In other words the mention of the *second* and *third* watches in verse 38 must mean that the watch implied in verse 37 is the *first* watch!

Obviously the Lord would have wished that His servants would have been ready in the first watch of that first generation but they were not.

And by the time *Testimonies Volume 2* was being written, (Feb 1868 to May 1871) God's people were in the third watch of that first generation. The rest is history. He did not return from the wedding in that first generation.

The Second Generation (1884-1924)

Early in the second generation, autumn of 1888 to be exact, Christ sent the light to bring God's people to the **ear** and to ripen them to the **full corn in the ear**. If they had accepted the light they would have been ripened to the **full corn in the ear** and thereby and therefore would have allowed their Lord to return from the wedding. But in knocking to obtain entrance to their leadership He was denied. The message was rejected. The Lord could not return from the wedding in that **first** watch (1884-1894) of the **second** generation; but He could have done so in the second or third watches; (1894-1904) or (1904-1914). Throughout the period 1889 to 1895 and even afterwards there were strong agitations for a national Sunday law in the USA. But as the watches passed and God's people were not ready, the Sunday law threat faded away. Although, even as late as 1907, i.e. in the **third** watch of that second generation, the Lord's servant was still hoping to be ready for translation. In a letter to F.M Wilcox, dated October 23, 1907, she wrote:

"Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people. But my strength is yet spared, and I hope to continue to do much useful work. **I may live until the coming of the Lord**; but if I should not, I trust it may be said of me, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13)" 1SM 55,56

The year 1907 was in the third decade or watch of the second generation since 1844! God's people were not prepared and so Jesus did not return from the wedding at that time. That third decade passed in 1914. The prophet died in 1915. The second generation period ended in 1924. Since then the third and fourth generations have also passed. Now we are in the **first** generation of a *new* cycle and we are in the **first** watch of this new generation! With all the lessons from the mistakes that were made

by God's people in the past four generations since 1844, especially the first and second generations, we in this new generation find ourselves in the wonderful and exciting position of having the opportunity to reach the stage of the **ear** and to usher in the final events.

First, Second or Third?

In Luke 12:35-40 there is no mention of a return in the **fourth** watch. This is highly significant. It means that if God's people are not ready in the first watch of any given generation, they are less likely to be ready in the second watch—although they can be, with greater effort. Likewise, if they are not ready in the second watch it is even *less* likely for them to ready in the third watch—although they can be with *even greater* effort. But if God's people are not ready in the first three watches they cannot be ready in the fourth watch!

We have entered the first generation of a new cycle. Before us are the first three watches. Which one shall it be? Ideally, the Bridegroom would love to return from the wedding in the **first** watch of this **new** first generation!

We can, if we really wish to, rise to the challenge and reach the stage of the **ear** and then the **full corn in the ear**. Remember that God is eager to "...Finish the work and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" Rom 9:28.

Lesson From Isaiah (Isaiah 21:6-9)

In Isaiah chapter 21 there is an account of a vision of the fall of Babylon. Let us read verses 6 to 9 from *Today's English Version*:

Then the Lord said to me, "Go and post a sentry (a watchman), and tell him to report what he sees. If he sees men coming on horseback, two by two, and men riding on donkeys and camels, he is to observe them carefully." The sentry (watchman) calls out, "Sir, I have been standing guard at my post day and night." Suddenly, here they come! Men on horseback, two by two. The sentry gives the news. Babylon has fallen! All the idols they worship lie scattered on the ground."

Similarly, in the end-time, God's faithful commandment keeping remnant believers are to be as watchmen on the walls of Zion. They are watching for Babylon's fall and they must announce that fall in their final warning "loud cry" message. But in order for Babylon to fall the

remnant must reach the growth stage of the **ear**, hence their need to watch and pray. The only way they can have their loins girded about and their lamps burning is by claiming God's promises through prayer.

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.... Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Isaiah 62:6,7,10-12

Lessons From Generation One

"Jesus has left us word: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

"When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ's intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping. They became weary of waiting and watching; they became indifferent in regard to the coming of their Master. They longed not for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching. They had been disappointed in

their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was time enough yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all anxiety and interest in the appearing of the Master. They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared.

“If such had only known that the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary would close so soon, how differently would they have conducted themselves, how earnestly would they have watched! The Master, anticipating all this, gives them timely warning in the command to watch. He distinctly states the suddenness of His coming. He does not measure the time, lest we shall neglect a momentary preparation, and in our indolence look ahead to the time when we think He will come, and defer the preparation. “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not.” Yet this foretold uncertainty, and suddenness at last, fails to rouse us from stupidity to earnest wakefulness, and to quicken our watchfulness for our expected Master. Those not found waiting and watching are finally surprised in their unfaithfulness. The Master comes, and instead of their being ready to open unto Him immediately, they are locked in worldly slumber, and are lost at last.

“A company was presented before me in contrast to the one described. They were waiting and watching. Their eyes were directed heavenward, and the words of their Master were upon their lips: “What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.” The Lord intimates a delay before the morning finally dawns. But He would not have them give way to weariness, nor relax their earnest watchfulness, because the morning does not open upon them as soon as they expected. The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: “The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master’s return. There remains but a little period of watching now.” I saw some becoming weary; their eyes were directed downward, and they were engrossed with earthly things, and were unfaithful in watching. They were saying: “In the first watch we expected our Master, but were disappointed. We thought surely He would come in the second watch, but that passed, and He came not. We may be

again disappointed. We need not be so particular. He may not come in the following watch. We are in the third watch, and now we think it best to lay up our treasure on the earth, that we may be secure against want." Many were sleeping, stupefied with the cares of this life and allured by the deceitfulness of riches from their waiting, watching position.

"Angels were represented to me as looking on with intense interest to mark the appearance of the weary yet faithful watchers, lest they be too sorely tried, and sink under the toil and hardships made doubly severe because their brethren had been diverted from their watch, and become drunk with worldly cares and beguiled by worldly prosperity. These heavenly angels grieved that those who were once watching should, by their indolence and unfaithfulness, increase the trial and burdens of those who were earnestly and perseveringly endeavoring to maintain their waiting, watching position.

"I saw that it was impossible to have the affections and interests engrossed in worldly cares, to be increasing earthly possessions, and yet be in a waiting, watching position, as our Saviour has commanded. Said the angel: "They can secure but one world. In order to acquire the heavenly treasure, they must sacrifice the earthly. They cannot have both worlds." I saw how necessary a continuance of faithfulness in watching was in order to escape the delusive snares of Satan. He leads those who should be waiting and watching, to take an advance step toward the world; they have no intention of going further, but that one step removed them that much further from Jesus, and made it easier to take the next; and thus step after step is taken toward the world, until all the difference between them and the world is a profession, a name only. They have lost their peculiar, holy character, and there is nothing except their profession to distinguish them from the lovers of the world around them.

"I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing watchfulness, for now the moments are fewer than before the passing of the first watch. Now the period of waiting is necessarily shorter than at first. If we watched with unabated vigilance then, how much more need of double watchfulness in the second watch. The passing of the second watch has brought us to the third, and now it is inexcusable to abate our watchfulness. The third watch calls for threefold earnestness. To become impatient now would be to lose all our earnest, persevering watching heretofore. The

long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay. But the coming of the morning to the faithful, and of the night to the unfaithful, is right upon us. By waiting and watching, God's people are to manifest their peculiar character, their separation from the world. By our watching position we are to show that we are truly strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. The difference between those who love the world and those who love Christ is so plain as to be unmistakable. While worldlings are all earnestness and ambition to secure earthly treasure, God's people are not conformed to the world, but show by their earnest, watching, waiting position that they are transformed; that their home is not in this world, but that they are seeking a better country, even a heavenly.

"I hope, my dear brethren and sisters, that you will not pass your eye over these words without thoroughly considering their import. As the men of Galilee stood looking steadfastly toward heaven, to catch, if possible, a glimpse of their ascending Saviour, two men in white apparel, heavenly angels commissioned to comfort them for the loss of the presence of their Saviour, stood by them and inquired: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

"God designs that His people shall fix their eyes heavenward, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. While the attention of worldlings is turned to various enterprises, ours should be to the heavens; our faith should reach further and further into the glorious mysteries of the heavenly treasure, drawing the precious, divine rays of light from the heavenly sanctuary to shine in our hearts, as they shine upon the face of Jesus. The scoffers mock the waiting, watching ones, and inquire: "Where is the promise of His coming? You have been disappointed. Engage now with us, and you will prosper in worldly things. Get gain, get money, and be honored of the world." The waiting ones look upward and answer: "We are watching." And by turning from earthly pleasure and worldly fame, and from the deceitfulness of riches, they show themselves to be in that position. By watching they become strong; they overcome sloth and selfishness and love of ease. Affliction's fire kindles upon them, and the waiting time seems long. They sometimes grieve, and faith falters; but they rally again, overcome their fears and doubts, and while their eyes are

directed heavenward, say to their adversaries: "I am watching, I am waiting the return of my Lord. I will glory in tribulation, in affliction, in necessities."

"The desire of our Lord is that we should be watching, so that when He cometh and knocketh we may open to Him immediately. A blessing is pronounced upon those servants whom He finds watching. "He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Who among us in these last days will be thus specially honored by the Master of assemblies? Are we prepared without delay to open to Him immediately and welcome Him in? Watch, watch, watch. Nearly all have ceased their watching and waiting; we are not ready to open to Him immediately. The love of the world has so occupied our thoughts that our eyes are not turned upward, but downward to the earth. We are hurrying about, engaging with zeal and earnestness in different enterprises, but God is forgotten, and the heavenly treasure is not valued. We are not in a waiting, watching position. The love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches eclipse our faith, and we do not long for, and love, the appearing of our Saviour. We try too hard to take care of self ourselves. We are uneasy and greatly lack a firm trust in God. Many worry and work, contrive and plan, fearing they may suffer need. They cannot afford time to pray or to attend religious meetings and, in their care for themselves, leave no chance for God to care for them. And the Lord does not do much for them, for they give Him no opportunity. They do too much for themselves, and believe and trust in God too little.

"The love of the world has a terrible hold upon the people whom the Lord has commanded to watch and pray always, lest coming suddenly He find them sleeping. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

"I have been shown that God's people who profess to believe present truth are not in a waiting, watching position. They are increasing in riches and are laying up their treasures upon the earth. They are becoming rich in worldly things, but not rich toward God. They do not believe in the shortness of time; they do not believe that the end of all things is at hand, that Christ is at the door. They may profess much faith; but they deceive their own souls, for they will act out all the faith that they really possess. Their works show the character of their faith and testify to those around them that the

coming of Christ is not to be in this generation. According to their faith will be their works. Their preparations are being made to remain in this world. They are adding house to house, and land to land, and are citizens of this world." 2T 190-197

Closing Words From Jesus

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Luke 12:35-37

22

GROWTH IN GRACE

BY E.G. WHITE

"Jesus had given the lesson concerning the sower and the seed. He had said, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places," and made a pretentious show of life, but "because they had no root, they withered away." And some fell among thorns and briers, and the rank growth of the thorns choked out the seed, and it yielded no fruit; but some fell upon soil prepared for its reception, and it sprang up and increased, and bore fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. (Matt. 13:3-8)

"When the soil has been prepared for the reception of the seed, the sower casts it in, and by processes which men cannot control or understand, the seed begins to grow, and advances to maturity. Jesus compared the growth of the kingdom of God to the sowing of seed, and to its development into the full measure of maturity. The seed is the word of God, and the soul who receives it, is said to be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, which liveth and abideth forever. (1Pet. 1:23) "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." (Mark 4:26-28)

"This parable of the kingdom was designed to illustrate to the disciples the growth and progress of Christian character. The good seed of the word falls into the heart, and at once the first development of

Christian experience is made manifest. This experience is likened to the tender blade, and to the young child. The blade is beautiful, and the child is attractive, but should there be no further development, we would look upon the plant as stunted, and the child as dwarfed. The young convert is to advance in knowledge, to grow in grace. Christ looks upon his children, and he is not ignorant as to how the seed is developing. Temptations will come, and it will be only through constant trust in his Redeemer that perfection of Christian character can be attained. The convert is to look to the mighty Helper, lest he be surprised off guard, and seduced by the enemy. He is not to be ignorant of Satan's devices, nor rest satisfied with the knowledge he has attained; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

"The experience of the Christian in his earliest love is full of simplicity and freshness; but as his opportunities multiply, his experience should enlarge, and his knowledge increase. He should become strong to bear responsibility, and his maturity should be in proportion to his privileges. **But the young convert is not to worry or perplex his mind with questioning as regards his advancement and growth. He is to trust himself wholly to Jesus, and with fear and trembling work out that which God works in; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil 2:13) Advancement in Christian experience can be accomplished only through cooperation with heavenly agencies, for it is a result of growth in grace. Feeling his helplessness, the young Christian is to place himself in the channel of light, and improve all the opportunities that are graciously bestowed upon him, that he may gain a deeper experience, and take deep root in Christ, as the plant roots in the soil. His faith must increase, his consecration be maintained, his love be made perfect, as is represented by the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear.** His zeal should be ardent and tireless; and with unwavering trust in Christ, his growth may be unmarred; for a genuine experience will result in the development of a Christlike character.

"But unless there is an hourly dependence upon Christ, increasing knowledge and privileges will result in self-trust and self-righteousness. The young Christian is in danger of forgetting that it is Christ that has begun the good work in him, and that it is Christ that must finish it. The soul must renounce all merit, and trust wholly in the merit of Him who is too wise to err. Man of himself can do no good thing. Said Jesus,

“Without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:4,5) The soul is to stay itself upon God. In the gift of Christ all Heaven was poured out, and through Christ the Holy Spirit is promised to the believer. Jesus said to his disciples, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26) **Christ not only offers pardon to the believing, repenting soul, but he promises him the constant aid of the Holy Spirit.**

“In the growth of the seed in the soil, man cannot see the working of unseen agencies that develop the plant to perfection, bringing up first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But though young in the faith, you may know that you have passed from death unto life, if the fruits of the Spirit are made manifest in your life. If you are growing in faith and hope and love, you may know that your spiritual vision has been cleared. If you delight to dwell upon the plan of salvation, upon the glorious manifestations of the divine character, if your heart, in contemplation of the love of God, glows with thankfulness and joy, you may be sure that you have been illuminated by the beams of the Holy Spirit, and heavenly agencies are bringing your character up to maturity of Christian life. You may not realize that you are growing up into Christ, your living Head. Your part is simply to submit your ways and your will to God. **You are to trust yourself fully to God, knowing you cannot make yourself grow. A Paul may plant, and an Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase.**

“Through vital connection with Christ, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven will be unfolded, and according to your capacity to receive, the Lord will bless you, if you are willing and obedient. But the young Christian may often be brought into strait places, and into trying circumstances, as were the children of Israel. Of old the Lord brought his people into these trying places that He might finally bring them blessing. He says: “And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.” God knew what was in the hearts of His people before He brought trial upon them; but they were ignorant of the condition of their own hearts. Under trial and test their deficiencies were made manifest, and they felt indeed that they had not understood themselves. But the fierce flames of trial and temptation did not consume them, but rather worked for their purification and refinement, and aided them in the development of Christlike character.

“Let the young Christian seek to fulfill all the responsibilities that devolve upon him, and meet obstacles and difficulties with courage, keeping an eye single to the glory of God, that his profiting may appear unto all. In whatever circumstances you may be placed, the Lord designs that you shall find his grace sufficient, that your love may abound more and more, that you may approve things that are excellent, and be filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God. But unless the Christian continues to grow, he will retrograde, and his experience will become sickly and be fruitless of good. Jesus says, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.” (John 15:8)

“In order to bear much fruit, we must make the most of our privileges and opportunities, becoming more and more spiritually minded. We must put away all commonness, all pride, all worldliness, and daily receive divine aid. If you grow spiritually, you must employ all the means which the gospel provides, and be prepared to gain in piety by the influence of the Holy Spirit; for the seed is developed from blade to full corn by unseen and supernatural agencies. The promise with which Jesus consoled his disciples just before his betrayal and crucifixion was that of the Holy Spirit; and in the doctrine of divine influence and agency, what riches were revealed to them; for this blessing would bring in its train all other blessings. The Holy Spirit breathes upon the soul who humbly rests on Christ, as the author and finisher of his faith; and from such a believer fruit will come forth unto life eternal. His influence will be fragrant, and the name of Jesus will be music in his ears, and melody in his heart.

“The Christian will be a savor of life unto life to others, although he may not be able to explain the mysteries of his experience. But he will know that when clouds and darkness compassed him about, and he cried unto the Lord, the darkness was dispersed, and peace and joy were in the temple of the soul. He will know what it is to have the pardoning love of God revealed to the heart, to experience the peace that passeth all understanding, to have praise and thanksgiving and adoration welling up in the soul unto him who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. He has peace through Jesus Christ, and joy in the Holy Ghost. One with Christ, his soul is filled with submission to His will, and heaven is enshrined in his heart while he is enfolded in the bosom of infinite love. Christians of this order will bear much fruit to the glory of God. **They will rightly interpret the character of God, and manifest his attributes unto the world.**

“Jesus illustrated the compassionate mercy and tender love of God in many of the parables that He uttered, and in His own life and character He gave us an exhibition of infinite love. He represents Himself as the life of the world. He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” (John 6:47) **There is no growth where there is no life. Where there is no life, there is no fruit.**

“But how shall we know that we are in Christ?—We may know it by the character of our fruit. The fruit borne on the Christian tree is holiness of heart,—wholeness to Christ. God will be in the thoughts of the Christian, and he will love those for whom Christ has died. He will follow in the path of self-denial, and his life will be fragrant with the love of Jesus. He will delight more in contemplation of the love of God than in anything earth can offer. He will prefer his plain, homely duties rather than romantic novelties, and will be satisfied with the place God has appointed him. When the heart is renewed by the Spirit of God, when consecration to God is maintained, there can be only love and thankfulness and praise in the heart, because Jesus is within, the hope of glory, and they live as seeing him who is invisible. Christ is in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and the true follower of Christ strengthens the good purposes of everyone with whom he comes in contact. Such believers are living, growing Christians. They carry with them the fragrance of holiness, and are reaching on to the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.” ST Mar 27 & April 3, 1893

“We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. We must bear the perfect image of Christ. Every thought must be brought into subjection to the will of Christ. As expressed by the great apostle, we must “come into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” We shall never attain to this condition without earnest effort. We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the perfection of Christian character.

“Those who engage in this work will see so much to correct in themselves, and will devote so much time to prayer and to comparing their characters with God’s great standard, the divine law, that they will have no time to comment and gossip over the faults or dissect the characters of others. A

sense of our own imperfections should lead us to humility and earnest solicitude lest we fail of everlasting life. The words of inspiration should come home to every soul: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" If the professed people of God would divest themselves of their self-complacency and their false ideas of what constitutes a Christian, many who now think they are in the path to Heaven would find themselves in the way of perdition. Many a proud-hearted professor would tremble like an aspen leaf in the tempest, could his eyes be opened to see what spiritual life really is. Would that those now reposing in false security could be aroused to see the contradiction between their profession of faith and their every-day demeanor.

"To be living Christians, we must have a vital connection with Christ. The true believer can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." This intimate communion with our Saviour will take away the desire for earthly and sensual gratifications. All our powers of body, soul, and spirit should be devoted to God. When the affections are sanctified, our obligations to God are made primary, everything else secondary. To have a steady and ever-growing love for God, and a clear perception of his character and attributes, we must keep the eye of faith fixed constantly on him. Christ is the life of the soul. We must be in him and he in us, else we are sapless branches.

"God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him who has given his life a ransom for me? Thus may we walk with God, as did Enoch of old; and ours may be the testimony which he received, that he pleased God.

"To comprehend and enjoy God, is the highest exercise of the powers of man. This may be attained only when our affections are sanctified and ennobled by the grace of Christ: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." In Christ was "God manifested in the flesh, reconciling the world unto himself." In Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person. Said our Saviour, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." In Christ is the life of the soul. In the outgoings of our hearts to him, in our earnest, affectionate yearnings for his excellence, in our eager searching into his glory, we find life. In communion with him we eat the bread of life.

“When we allow objects of minor importance to absorb our attention, to the forgetfulness of Christ, turning away from him to accept other companionship, we set our feet in a path which leads away from God and from Heaven. Christ must be the central object of our affections, and then we shall live in him, then we shall have his spirit, and follow his example.

“If we would walk in the light, we must follow Jesus, the light of life. What constitutes the brightness of Heaven? In what will consist the happiness of the redeemed? Christ is all in all. They will gaze with rapture unutterable upon the Lamb of God. They will pour out their songs of grateful praise and adoration to Him whom they loved and worshiped here. That song they learned and began to sing on earth. They learned to put their trust in Jesus while they were forming characters for Heaven. Their hearts were attuned to his will here. Their joy in Christ will be proportioned to the love and trust which they learned to repose in him here.

“A living Christian will cultivate gratitude of heart. He will seriously, earnestly recount the blessings of his life and the precious results of all his afflictions. He will recall every occasion upon which the hand of Christ has lifted up a standard for him against the enemy. The great love of Jesus, the infinite sacrifice made for man’s redemption, will be an unending theme for grateful, humble praise.

“Those who are learning at the feet of Jesus will surely exemplify by their deportment and conversation the character of Christ. Their spiritual life is sustained in the closet, by secret communion with God. Their experience is marked less with bustle and excitement, than with a subdued and reverent joy. Their love for Christ is a quiet, peaceful, yet all-controlling power. The light and love of an indwelling Saviour are revealed in every word and every act. Outward troubles cannot reach that life which we live by faith on the Son of God. Its richest, purest joys are felt when Christ is the theme of thought and conversation.

“The life of the soul cannot be sustained, except by the right exercise of the affections Heavenward, Christward, Godward. Repentance and faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins are essential, but not all that is required. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” “This is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ”—to know him by faith, to receive him into the affections. To accept Christ as our Saviour, we must see him in his work of atonement, and believe that he is able and willing to do what he has promised. The Christian’s life is now but just begun. He must, as exhorted by

the apostle, "go on unto perfection." He must bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. If we believe in Jesus, we will love to think of him, love to talk of him, love to pray to him. He is supreme in our affections. We love that which Christ loves, and hate that which Christ hates.

"I have deep anguish of soul as I think that many who have great light and great knowledge of Bible truths, and some even who have taken the responsibility of presenting these truths to others, have yet so little of the love of Jesus in their own hearts. Like the religious teachers whom Christ reproved, they say and do not. They are fruitless branches. A mere profession of godliness is of but little account. A nominal, theoretical belief of the truth is of but little value. The devils also believe, and tremble. We must have that faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Our experience in spiritual things must deepen and widen. We need more strength daily, and we may obtain it by constant communion with God.

"The Christian life is never at a standstill. It is, it must be, progressive. Our love for Christ should become stronger and stronger. If the heart is devoted to Jesus, its love for earthly friends and worldly treasure becomes subordinate rather than supreme. As we by faith drink from the fountain of life, so will our joy and peace increase. Oh that we were more trustful, and firm, and true, that Christ might not be ashamed to call us brethren!

"My brother, my sister, is your soul in the love of God? Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ's excellence, and your soul thrills with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour's love. You long to entwine your affections about him more closely. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart's best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings. Make haste to obtain a fitness for the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for all that love him. The day is far spent, the night is at hand. Make haste to ripen for Heaven.

"It is a great, a solemn work to obtain a moral fitness for the society of the pure and the blest. God's word presents the standard to which we are to conform our life and character. We may choose to follow some other standard, which is more in harmony with our own hearts, but we can never thus gain the divine approval. Only by conforming to the word of God, can we hope to come to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." But we must do this, or we shall never enter Heaven. Without purity and holiness of heart, we cannot win the crown of immortal glory.

“Many who ought to be teachers, have hardly learned the alphabet of the Christian life. They need constantly that one teach them. They do not grow in holiness, in faith, in hope, in joy, in gratitude. Christ opened the way, at an infinite cost, that we might live a Christian life. He has told us just what that life must be,—consistent, uniform, Christlike,—that at its close we may say with Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith.” It was by faith in Christ that the great apostle maintained the consistency and beauty of his course. He suffered opposition, insult, persecution, imprisonment, with a firmness and meekness which none but Christ could impart. Our obligations are no less than were his. Our privileges are great, our opportunities abundant. Great light is shining upon us, but it will become darkness to those who refuse to follow its guidance.

“Measuring ourselves by the Bible standard will give us no exalted view of our own goodness or greatness. The truths of the gospel and the teachings of the Holy Spirit, will produce in us brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, and an understanding of self. But wishing for holiness of heart and purity of life will not bring us into possession of these blessings. Mourning over religious delinquencies will never make one acquisition. There are thousands of sluggish hypocritical tears, of sighs and groans, that never bring to the soul one cheering beam of light, one manifestation of Christ’s approval.

“It will cost us something to obtain a Christian experience, and to develop a true and noble character. It requires sacrifice and earnest effort, and this is why so little advancement is made by professing Christians. They do not go to the great source of wisdom, because they shrink from the toil, the cost, the inconvenience. They wish to have righteousness put upon them as a garment. But the white-robed throng of the redeemed ones, are those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ has presented the matter as it is: “Agonize to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”

“We have each a daily work to do, to correct our natural defects of character, and to cultivate the Christian graces. Only by the accomplishment of this work, can we hope to share in the reward of the righteous. Said Christ, “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”
RH May 30th, 1882

WORDS TO THE YOUTH

23

"We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. We must bear the perfect image of Christ. Every thought must be brought into subjection to the will of Christ. As expressed by the great apostle, we must "come into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4:13) We shall never attain to this condition without earnest effort. We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the perfection of Christian character.

"Those who engage in this work will see so much to correct in themselves, and will devote so much time to prayer and to comparing their characters with God's great standard, the divine law, that they will have no time to comment and gossip over the faults or dissect the characters of others. A sense of our own imperfections should lead us to humility and earnest solicitude lest we fail of everlasting life. The words of inspiration should come home to every soul: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2Cor 13:5) If the professed people of God would divest themselves of their self-complacency and their false ideas of what constitutes a Christian, many who now think they are in the path to Heaven would find themselves in the way of perdition. Many a proud-hearted professor would tremble like an aspen leaf in the tempest, could his eyes be opened to see what spiritual life really is. Would that those now reposing in false security could be aroused to see the contradiction between their profession of faith and their every-day demeanor.

“To be living Christians, we must have a vital connection with Christ. The true believer can say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” **This intimate communion with our Saviour will take away the desire for earthly and sensual gratifications.** All our powers of body, soul, and spirit should be devoted to God. When the affections are sanctified, our obligations to God are made primary, everything else secondary. **To have a steady and ever-growing love for God, and a clear perception of his character and attributes, we must keep the eye of faith fixed constantly on him. Christ is the life of the soul. We must be in Him and He in us, else we are sapless branches.**

“God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with Him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him who has given His life a ransom for me? Thus may we walk with God, as did Enoch of old; and ours may be the testimony which he received, that he pleased God.

“To comprehend and enjoy God, is the highest exercise of the powers of man. This may be attained only when our affections are sanctified and ennobled by the grace of Christ: “No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.” (Mat 11:27) In Christ was “God manifested in the flesh, reconciling the world unto himself.” In Christ was the brightness of his Father’s glory, the express image of his person. Said our Saviour, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” (John 14:9) In Christ is the life of the soul. In the outgoings of our hearts to him, in our earnest, affectionate yearnings for his excellence, in our eager searching into his glory, we find life. In communion with him we eat the bread of life.

“When we allow objects of minor importance to absorb our attention, to the forgetfulness of Christ, turning away from Him to accept other companionship, we set out feet in a path which leads away from God and from Heaven. Christ must be the central object of our affections, and then we shall live in Him, then we shall have His Spirit, and follow His example.

“If we would walk in the light, we must follow Jesus, the light of life. What constitutes the brightness of Heaven? In what will consist the happiness of the redeemed? Christ is all in all. They will gaze with rapture unutterable upon the Lamb of God. They will pour out their songs of grateful praise and adoration to Him whom they loved and worshiped here. That song they learned and began to sing on earth. They learned to put their trust in Jesus

while they were forming characters for Heaven. Their hearts were attuned to his will here. Their joy in Christ will be proportioned to the love and trust which they learned to repose in Him here.

“A living Christian will cultivate gratitude of heart. He will seriously, earnestly recount the blessings of his life and the precious results of all his afflictions. He will recall every occasion upon which the hand of Christ has lifted up a standard for him against the enemy. The great love of Jesus, the infinite sacrifice made for man’s redemption, will be an unfailing theme for grateful, humble praise.

“Those who are learning at the feet of Jesus will surely exemplify by their deportment and conversation the character of Christ. **Their spiritual life is sustained in the closet, by secret communion with God. Their experience is marked less with bustle and excitement, than with a subdued and reverent joy. Their love for Christ is a quiet, peaceful, yet all-controlling power. The light and love of an indwelling Saviour are revealed in every word and every act. Outward troubles cannot reach that life which we live by faith on the Son of God. Its richest, purest joys are felt when Christ is the theme of thought and conversation.**

“The life of the soul cannot be sustained, except by the right exercise of the affections Heavenward, Christward, Godward. Repentance and faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins are essential, but not all that is required. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” “This is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ” (John 17:3) -to know him by faith, to receive him into the affections. To accept Christ as our Saviour, we must see him in his work of atonement, and believe that he is able and willing to do what he has promised. The Christian’s life is now but just begun. He must, as exhorted by the apostle, “go on unto perfection.” **He must bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. If we believe in Jesus, we will love to think of him, love to talk of him, love to pray to him. He is supreme in our affections. We love that which Christ loves, and hate that which Christ hates.**

“I have deep anguish of soul as I think that many who have great light and great knowledge of Bible truths, and some even who have taken the responsibility of presenting these truths to others, have yet so little of the love of Jesus in their own hearts. Like the religious teachers whom Christ reproveth, they say and do not. They are fruitless branches. A mere profession of godliness is of but little account. A nominal, theoretical belief of the truth is of but

little value. The devils also believe, and tremble. **We must have that faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Our experience in spiritual things must deepen and widen. We need more strength daily, and we may obtain it by constant communion with God.**

“The Christian life is never at a standstill. It is, it must be, progressive. Our love for Christ should become stronger and stronger. If the heart is devoted to Jesus, its love for earthly friends and worldly treasure becomes subordinate rather than supreme. **As we by faith drink from the fountain of life, so will our joy and peace increase.** Oh that we were more trustful, and firm, and true, that Christ might not be ashamed to call us brethren!

“My brother, my sister, is your soul in the love of God? Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ’s excellence, and your soul thrills with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour’s love. You long to entwine your affections about him more closely. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart’s best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. **Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings.** Make haste to obtain a fitness for the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for all that love him. The day is far spent, the night is at hand. **Make haste to ripen for Heaven.**

“It is a great, a solemn work to obtain a moral fitness for the society of the pure and the blest. God’s word presents the standard to which we are to conform our life and character. We may choose to follow some other standard, which is more in harmony with our own hearts, but we can never thus gain the divine approval. Only by conforming to the word of God, can we hope to come to “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” But we must do this, or we shall never enter Heaven. **Without purity and holiness of heart, we cannot win the crown of immortal glory.**

“Many who ought to be teachers, have hardly learned the alphabet of the Christian life. They need constantly that one teach them. They do not grow in holiness, in faith, in hope, in joy, in gratitude. Christ opened the way, at an infinite cost, that we might live a Christian life. He has told us just what that life must be,—consistent, uniform, Christlike,—that at its close we may say with Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith.” It was by faith in Christ that the great apostle maintained the consistency and beauty of his course. He suffered opposition, insult, persecution, imprisonment, with a firmness and meekness which none but Christ could impart.

Our obligations are no less than were his. Our privileges are great, our opportunities abundant. Great light is shining upon us, but it will become darkness to those who refuse to follow its guidance.

“Measuring ourselves by the Bible standard will give us no exalted view of our own goodness or greatness. The truths of the gospel and the teachings of the Holy Spirit, will produce in us brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, and an understanding of self. But wishing for holiness of heart and purity of life will not bring us into possession of these blessings. Mourning over religious delinquencies will never make one acquisition. There are thousands of sluggish hypocritical tears, of sighs and groans, that never bring to the soul one cheering beam of light, one manifestation of Christ’s approval.

“It will cost us something to obtain a Christian experience, and to develop a true and noble character. It requires sacrifice and earnest effort, and this is why so little advancement is made by professing Christians. They do not go to the great source of wisdom, because they shrink from the toil, the cost, the inconvenience. They wish to have righteousness put upon them as a garment. But the white-robed throng of the redeemed ones, are those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ has presented the matter as it is: “Agonize to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”

“We have each a daily work to do, to correct our natural defects of character, and to cultivate the Christian graces. Only by the accomplishment of this work, can we hope to share in the reward of the righteous. Said Christ, “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Rev. 3:21)
YI Oct 25th, 1900

A Thorough Reformation Must Occur

“The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. **When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife.** Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and

God's servants will speak the same things. The Lord will co-operate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10." 8T 251

The Close Connection – The Personal Presence of Christ in the Soul

Always remember that wonderful formula for progressive spiritual growth given in 2 Cor 3:18 and amplified in *Desire of Ages* 302:

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor 3:18

"He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto him." DA 302

"If the eye is kept fixed on Christ, the work of the Spirit ceases not until the soul is conformed to His image. The pure element of love will expand the soul, giving it a capacity for higher attainments, for increased knowledge of heavenly things, so that it will not rest short of the fullness. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." DA 302

The eye is kept fixed on Christ through prayer and study of His word and through meditating on His infinite love as revealed in the plan of salvation. The eye is kept fixed on Christ by witnessing to others of His love and truth.

How the Presence of Christ is Lost

There is a lesson to learn from the account of how Joseph and Mary lost Jesus on their way home from Jerusalem after the Passover visit.

"If Joseph and Mary had stayed their minds upon God by meditation and prayer, they would have realized the sacredness of their trust, and would not have lost sight of Jesus. By one day's neglect they lost the Saviour; but it cost them three days of anxious search to find Him. **So with us; by idle talk, evil-speaking, or neglect of prayer, we may in one day lose the Saviour's presence, and it may take many days of sorrowful search to find Him, and regain the peace that we have lost.**

"In our association with one another, we should take heed lest we forget Jesus, and pass along unmindful that He is not with us. When we become absorbed in worldly things so that we have no thought for Him in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, we separate ourselves from Jesus and from the heavenly angels. These holy beings cannot remain where the Saviour's

presence is not desired, and His absence is not marked. This is why discouragement so often exists among the professed followers of Christ.

“Many attend religious services, and are refreshed and comforted by the word of God; but through neglect of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they lose the blessing, and find themselves more destitute than before they received it. Often they feel that God has dealt hardly with them. They do not see that the fault is their own. By separating themselves from Jesus, they have shut away the light of His presence.

“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.

“As we associate together, we may be a blessing to one another. If we are Christ’s, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him; and as we speak to one another of His love, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be “changed into the same image from glory to glory.” 2 Cor. 3:18.” DA 83

“He who would confess Christ must have Christ abiding in him. He cannot communicate that which he has not received. The disciples might speak fluently on doctrines, they might repeat the words of Christ Himself; but unless they possessed Christlike meekness and love, they were not confessing Him. A spirit contrary to the spirit of Christ would deny Him, whatever the profession. Men may deny Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life’s burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by uncourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness. In all these ways they declare that Christ is not in them. And “whosoever shall deny Me before men,” He says, “him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.” DA 357

Peril of Neglecting Salvation

“The more earnestly we apply our minds to the investigation of truth, the clearer will the evidence of truth appear; and the more closely we relate

ourselves to the God of all wisdom, coming into communion with him who has created all things, the richer will be our knowledge, the more fully shall we comprehend divine truth. God has graciously endowed men with intellectual powers, and these powers are to be wisely improved, that men may have ability to search into and understand rich depths of knowledge in the character, word, and works of God. God will open the treasures of his love to the willing and obedient; he that willeth to do the will of God shall know of the doctrine. By communion with God we become refined, broadened, and elevated. To him who desires the knowledge of divine things, God will open hidden wonders, which are beyond the comprehension of those who are unenlightened by the Spirit of God. Those who hear the wonderful things opened to the Christian will be impressed with that which God can give to the consecrated and earnest soul.

“Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, gave himself for a fallen world, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. No greater gift can be bestowed upon man than that which is comprehended in Christ. And yet men wait, refusing to give to God the allegiance of the heart. But let the impenitent look to the plan of redemption, and ask themselves, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” It is perilous to neglect to render to God the full consecration of all our powers, for he has given them to man in trust. Will you not ask yourself, “How is it with my soul?” The great gift of salvation has been placed within our reach at an infinite cost to the Father and the Son. To neglect salvation is to neglect the knowledge of the Father, and of the Son, whom God hath sent in order that man might become a partaker of the divine nature, and thus, with Christ, an heir of all things. A neglect to lay hold of the priceless treasure of salvation, means the eternal ruin of your soul. The peril of indifference to God and neglect of his gift, is measured by the greatness of salvation. God has done to the uttermost of his almighty power. The resources of infinite love have been exhausted in devising and executing the plan of redemption for man. God has revealed his character in the goodness, the mercy, compassion, and love manifested to save a race of guilty rebels. What could be done that has not been done in the provisions of the plan of salvation? If the sinner remains indifferent to the manifestation of the goodness of God, if he neglects so great a salvation, rejects the overtures of divine mercy, refuses the gift of life purchased by the precious blood of Christ, what can be done to touch his hard heart? If the wonderful achievement wrought out by our Creator and Redeemer, into which he threw all his power and love, does not move

the proud human heart, when man sees that his soul was thought of such value that the Son of the infinite God, the Majesty of heaven, was willing to lay down his life in order that he might be saved, then there is nothing that will move that man. Christ left the royal courts, and accepted a life of shame, reproach, and suffering, and did not shrink even from the death of the cross, in order that he might unite humanity with divinity. Are you so infatuated with the love of self, with the suggestions of Satan, that these considerations do not move you to a life of humility, and of submission to God? Will not the love and compassion of him who gave in one gift all that heaven afforded, awaken a response in your heart? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"Those who do neglect the great gift of salvation, will have no second probation provided for them, but will be left without hope. The Son of the infinite God was the author of our salvation. He covenanted from the first to be man's substitute, and he became man that he might take upon himself the wrath which sin had provoked. The plan of redemption called forth the amazement of the heavenly hosts. The angels looked with wonder to see the mystery wrought out before them in the life of the Son of God. They saw the Redeemer take step after step down the path of humiliation. They saw him rejected, denied, insulted, abused, and crucified, and yet it was something beyond all finite intelligence to comprehend the full mystery of redemption." RH 21 Nov, 1912

"The only way in which salvation could be provided for man was through the union of divinity with humanity. Christ in human flesh alone could bridge the gulf that sin had made. With his humanity he was prepared to touch humanity. The greatness, the breadth, of the plan of salvation invests it with incomparable grandeur; but it can only be spiritually discerned, and it increases in greatness as we contemplate it. Looking to Jesus dying upon the cross, and knowing that it was our sin that placed the innocent Sufferer there, we are bowed down before him in wonder and love. The greatness of this salvation proves the peril of its neglect.

"Satan constantly seeks to make of none effect the great work of redemption. What importance, what magnitude, it gives to the theme of redemption, that he who has undertaken the salvation of man was the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person! How, then, can Heaven regard those who neglect so great a salvation, wrought out for man at such infinite cost? To neglect to lay hold on the rich blessings of heaven

is to refuse, to set at naught, him who was equal with the Father, the only one who could save fallen man. O, shall we through neglect of Christ throw away our one chance for eternal life? Shall we scorn divine mercy, and trample underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing?

“The divine Author of salvation left nothing incomplete in the plan; every phase of it is perfect. The sin of the whole world was laid upon Jesus, and divinity gave its highest value to the suffering of humanity in Jesus, that the whole world might be pardoned through faith in the Substitute. The most guilty need have no fear that God will not pardon, for because of the efficacy of the divine sacrifice the penalty of the law will be remitted. Through Christ the sinner may return to allegiance to God. How wonderful is the plan of redemption in its simplicity and fulness! It not only provides for the full pardon of the sinner, but also for the restoration of the transgressor, making a way whereby he may be accepted as a son of God. Through obedience he may be the possessor of love and peace and joy. His faith may unite him in his weakness to Christ, the source of divine strength; and through the merits of Christ he may find the approval of God, because Christ has satisfied the demands of the law, and he imputes his righteousness to the penitent, believing soul. The spotless robe woven in the loom of heaven covers the contrite one, and he wills to be obedient, taking the yoke of Christ, suffering as Christ suffered when he walked a man among men.

“What love, what wonderful love, was displayed by the Son of God! The death we deserved was suffered to come upon him, that immortality might be given to us, who could never merit such a reward. Is not salvation great in its simplicity, and wonderful in its comprehensiveness? Christ takes the sinner from the lowest degradation, and purifies, refines, and ennobles him. By beholding Jesus as he is, the sinner is transformed, and elevated to the very summit of dignity, even to a seat with Christ upon his throne. Contemplating the fulness of the provision that God has made whereby every son and daughter of Adam may be saved, we are led to exclaim with John, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” The angels are amazed at the manifestation of divine love for the fallen race. The fact that angels look with wonder upon the marvelous display of love on the part of God for man, shows how terrible a thing it is to neglect the salvation he has provided. The plan of redemption provides for every emergency, and for every want of the soul. If it were deficient in any way, the sinner might find some excuse to

plead for neglect of its terms; but the infinite God had a knowledge of every human necessity, and ample provision has been made to supply every need. Thereby our sin can be pardoned, and eternal life secured; for the righteousness of Christ may be imputed unto us, to bear the test and meet the approval of a holy God. What, then, can the sinner say in the great day of final judgment, as to why he refused to give attention, the most thorough and earnest, to the salvation proffered him?" RH Nov 28, 1912

GOD REQUIRES ENERGY IN HIS WORK

BY E.G. WHITE

“The Lord requires his servants to be energetic. It is not pleasing to him to see them listless and indolent. They profess to have the evidence that God has especially selected them to teach the people the way of life; yet frequently their conversation is not profitable, and they give evidence that they have not the burden of the work upon them. Their own souls are not energized by the mighty truths they present to others. Some present these truths of such weighty importance in so listless a manner that they cannot affect the people. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” Those whom God has called, must be trained to put forth efforts, and work earnestly and with untiring zeal for him, and pull souls out of the fire. When such feel the power of the truth in their own souls, thrilling their own being, then can they possess a power which will affect hearts, and show that they firmly believe the truths they preach to others. They should keep before the mind the worth of soul, and the matchless depths of a Saviour’s love, which will awaken the souls, that with David they may say, “My heart was hot within me; while I was missing the fire burned.”

“Paul exhorted Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.” What a weight of importance is here attached to the Christian life of the laborers for God! What a necessity for their faithful study

of the word, that they may be sanctified by the truth themselves, and may be qualified to teach others.

“All are required to exemplify the truth in their lives. Some who think that they have a work to do to teach others the truth, are not all converted and sanctified by the truth themselves. Some have erroneous ideas of what constitutes a Christian, and the means through which a firm religious experience is obtained; much less do they understand the qualifications that God requires his servants to possess. These are unsanctified. They have occasionally a flight of feeling, which gives them the impression that they are indeed the children of God. Depending thus upon impressions is one of the special deceptions of Satan. Those who are thus exercised, make their religion a matter of circumstance. The firm principle is wanting. None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God, and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until perfection of Christian character is attained, and a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality. God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditating upon him, and pleading with him, elevate the soul and quicken the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness.

“The servants of Christ need a new anointing, that they may the more clearly discern sacred things, and have clear conceptions of the holy, blameless character they must form. Nothing that we can do, of ourselves, will bring us up to the high standard where God can accept us as his ambassadors. Only a firm reliance upon God, and a strong and active faith, will accomplish the work that God requires to be wrought in us. Working men God calls for. It is a continuance in well-doing that will form characters for heaven. In plainness, in faithfulness and love, they must appeal to men and women to prepare for the day of God. Some will need to be entreated with earnestness before they will be moved. Let the labor be characterized by humility and meekness, yet with earnestness that will make them understand that these things are a reality, and that life or death are before them, for them to choose. The salvation of the soul is not a matter to be trifled with. The deportment of the laborer for God should be serious, and characterized with simplicity, and with true Christian politeness; and yet he should be fearfully in earnest in the work the Master has left him to do. A decided perseverance in a course of righteousness, disciplining the mind by religious exercises to love devotion and heavenly things, will bring the greatest amount of happiness while thus exercised.

“We have it in our power to control the mind in these things, if we make God our trust. Through continued exercise, the mind will become strong to battle with internal foes, and to subdue self, until there is a transformation of the mind. The passions, appetites, and will are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be a daily piety at home and abroad. When engaged in labor for souls, there will be a power which will attend the efforts that are made. There will be with the humble Christian, seasons of devotion, which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is a perfect surrender to God.

“The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in his earthly mission, was often in earnest prayer. He did not always visit Olivet, for his disciples had learned his favorite retreat, and often followed him. Therefore he chose the stillness of night, when there would be no interruption. While Jerusalem was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to his Father for his disciples, that they might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that his own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while his followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. The dew and frost of night fell upon his head bowed in prayer. His example is left for his followers.

“Jesus could heal the sick and raise the dead. He was himself a source of blessing and strength. He commanded even the tempests, and they obeyed him. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet he prayed, and that often, with strong crying and tears. He prayed for his disciples, and for himself, thus identifying himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, possessing not the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from his Father. Christ is our example.

“Angels ministered to Christ, yet the presence of these angels did not make his life one of ease and freedom from severe conflict and fierce temptations. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. If the laborers, while engaged in the work the Master has appointed them to do, have trials and perplexities and temptations, should they be discouraged, when they know that there is One who has endured all these before them? Shall they cast away their confidence because they do not realize all that they expect from their labors? Christ labored earnestly for his own nation; but his efforts

were despised by the very ones he came to save, and they put him to death who came to give them life.

“True laborers, co-workers with God, have a sense of the sacredness of the work, and the severe conflicts they must meet in order to carry it forward successfully. They will not faint and despond in view of the labor, arduous though it may be. In the epistle of Paul to the Romans he says: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We are without excuse if we fail to avail ourselves of the ample provisions made for us that we may be wanting in nothing. The shrinking from hardships, the complaints while suffering under tribulation, make the servants of God weak and inefficient in bearing responsibilities and burdens.

“All those who unshrinkingly stand in the forefront of the battle, must feel the especial warfare of Satan against them. As they realize his attacks, they will flee to the stronghold; for they feel their need of special strength from God. They labor in his strength; therefore every victory they gain does not exalt them, but leads them in faith to lean more securely upon the Mighty One. Deep and fervent gratitude to God is awakened in their hearts, and a joyfulness in tribulation, which they experience while pressed by the enemy. An experience is being gained by these willing servants. A character is being formed which will do honor to the cause of God.

“It is a season of solemn privilege and sacred trust to the servants of God. If these trusts are faithfully kept, great will be the reward of the faithful servant when the Master shall say, “Give an account of thy stewardship.” The earnest toil endured, the unselfish work of patient, persevering effort, will be rewarded abundantly; while Jesus will say, Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends, guests. The approval of the Master was not given because of the greatness of the work performed, because of having gained many things, but the fidelity in even a few things. It is not because of the great results that the reward is given; but the motives weigh with God. Goodness and faithfulness God prizes more than the greatness of the work accomplished.” RH Aug 17th, 1886.

Peril of Neglecting Salvation

“The more earnestly we apply our minds to the investigation of truth, the clearer will the evidence of truth appear; and the more closely we relate ourselves to the God of all wisdom, coming into communion with him who has created all things, the richer will be our knowledge, the more fully shall we comprehend divine truth. God has graciously endowed men with intellectual powers, and these powers are to be wisely improved, that men may have ability to search into and understand rich depths of knowledge in the character, word, and works of God. God will open the treasures of his love to the willing and obedient; he that willeth to do the will of God shall know of the doctrine. By communion with God we become refined, broadened, and elevated. **To him who desires the knowledge of divine things, God will open hidden wonders, which are beyond the comprehension of those who are unenlightened by the Spirit of God. Those who hear the wonderful things opened to the Christian will be impressed with that which God can give to the consecrated and earnest soul.**

“Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, gave himself for a fallen world, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. No greater gift can be bestowed upon man than that which is comprehended in Christ. And yet men wait, refusing to give to God the allegiance of the heart. But let the impenitent look to the plan of redemption, and ask themselves, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” **It is perilous to neglect to render to God the full consecration of all our powers, for he has given them to man in trust.** Will you not ask yourself, “How is it with my soul?” The great gift of salvation has been placed within our reach at an infinite cost to the Father and the Son. To neglect salvation is to neglect the knowledge of the Father, and of the Son, whom God hath sent in order that man might become a partaker of the divine nature, and thus, with Christ, an heir of all things. A neglect to lay hold of the priceless treasure of salvation, means the eternal ruin of your soul. The peril of indifference to God and neglect of his gift, is measured by the greatness of salvation. God has done to the uttermost of his almighty power. The resources of infinite love have been exhausted in devising and executing the plan of redemption for man. God has revealed his character in the goodness, the mercy, compassion, and love manifested to save a race of guilty rebels. What could be done that has not been done in the provisions of the plan of salvation? If the sinner remains indifferent to the manifestation of the goodness of God, if he neglects so great a salvation, rejects the overtures of divine mercy, refuses the gift of life purchased by the precious blood of Christ, what can be done to touch his hard heart? **If the wonderful achievement wrought out by our Creator and Redeemer, into which he threw all his power and love,**

does not move the proud human heart, when man sees that his soul was thought of such value that the Son of the infinite God, the Majesty of heaven, was willing to lay down his life in order that he might be saved, then there is nothing that will move that man. Christ left the royal courts, and accepted a life of shame, reproach, and suffering, and did not shrink even from the death of the cross, in order that he might unite humanity with divinity. Are you so infatuated with the love of self, with the suggestions of Satan, that these considerations do not move you to a life of humility, and of submission to God? Will not the love and compassion of him who gave in one gift all that heaven afforded, awaken a response in your heart? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"Those who do neglect the great gift of salvation, will have no second probation provided for them, but will be left without hope. The Son of the infinite God was the author of our salvation. **He covenanted from the first to be man's substitute, and he became man that he might take upon himself the wrath which sin had provoked. The plan of redemption called forth the amazement of the heavenly hosts.** The angels looked with wonder to see the mystery wrought out before them in the life of the Son of God. They saw the Redeemer take step after step down the path of humiliation. They saw him rejected, denied, insulted, abused, and crucified, and yet it was something beyond all finite intelligence to comprehend the full mystery of redemption.

"The only way in which salvation could be provided for man was through the union of divinity with humanity. Christ in human flesh alone could bridge the gulf that sin had made. With his humanity he was prepared to touch humanity. The greatness, the breadth, of the plan of salvation invests it with incomparable grandeur; but it can only be spiritually discerned, and it increases in greatness as we contemplate it. Looking to Jesus dying upon the cross, and knowing that it was our sin that placed the innocent Sufferer there, we are bowed down before him in wonder and love. The greatness of this salvation proves the peril of its neglect.

"Satan constantly seeks to make of none effect the great work of redemption. What importance, what magnitude, it gives to the theme of redemption, that he who has undertaken the salvation of man was the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person! How, then, can Heaven regard those who neglect so great a salvation, wrought out for man at such infinite cost? To neglect to lay hold on the rich blessings of heaven is to refuse, to set at naught, him who was equal with the Father, the only one who could save fallen man. O, shall we through neglect of Christ throw

away our one chance for eternal life? Shall we scorn divine mercy, and trample underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing?

The divine Author of salvation left nothing incomplete in the plan; every phase of it is perfect. The sin of the whole world was laid upon Jesus, and divinity gave its highest value to the suffering of humanity in Jesus, that the whole world might be pardoned through faith in the Substitute. The most guilty need have no fear that God will not pardon, for because of the efficacy of the divine sacrifice the penalty of the law will be remitted. Through Christ the sinner may return to allegiance to God. How wonderful is the plan of redemption in its simplicity and fulness! It not only provides for the full pardon of the sinner, but also for the restoration of the transgressor, making a way whereby he may be accepted as a son of God. **Through obedience he may be the possessor of love and peace and joy. His faith may unite him in his weakness to Christ, the source of divine strength; and through the merits of Christ he may find the approval of God, because Christ has satisfied the demands of the law, and he imputes his righteousness to the penitent, believing soul. The spotless robe woven in the loom of heaven covers the contrite one, and he wills to be obedient, taking the yoke of Christ, suffering as Christ suffered when he walked a man among men.**

“What love, what wonderful love, was displayed by the Son of God! The death we deserved was suffered to come upon him, that immortality might be given to us, who could never merit such a reward. Is not salvation great in its simplicity, and wonderful in its comprehensiveness? Christ takes the sinner from the lowest degradation, and purifies, refines, and ennobles him. By beholding Jesus as he is, the sinner is transformed, and elevated to the very summit of dignity, even to a seat with Christ upon his throne. Contemplating the fulness of the provision that God has made whereby every son and daughter of Adam may be saved, we are led to exclaim with John, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” The angels are amazed at the manifestation of divine love for the fallen race. The fact that angels look with wonder upon the marvelous display of love on the part of God for man, shows how terrible a thing it is to neglect the salvation he has provided. The plan of redemption provides for every emergency, and for every want of the soul. If it were deficient in any way, the sinner might find some excuse to plead for neglect of its terms; but the infinite God had a knowledge of every human necessity, and ample provision has been made to supply every need. Thereby our sin can be pardoned, and eternal life secured; for the righteousness of Christ may be imputed unto us, to bear the test and meet

the approval of a holy God. What, then, can the sinner say in the great day of final judgment, as to why he refused to give attention, the most thorough and earnest, to the salvation proffered him?" RH Nov 21,28, 1912

In closing let us go back in history to 1893 when God's people were being prepared to face the image of the beast. A.T. Jones was the lecturer. Follow carefully the message he delivered.

"Last night we came to this: that in order to have the righteousness of God--which is the latter rain, which is the preparation for the loud cry--we must have the mind of Christ only; it cannot come in any other way. This is precisely the advice that is given to us in the Scriptures: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:5,6. What is the thing that that text shows that the mind of Christ does? What did it do in Him? It "emptied himself." When that mind is in us, what will it do there? The same thing. It will empty us of self. Then the first thought that that text gives is that the mind of Christ empties of himself the one in whom it is.

"When that mind that was in Christ emptied himself, then what came? God filled Him. When that mind that was in Him is in us and does in us what it did in Him--empties us of self--what then will fill the place? God in Christ will fill us. Then God in Christ dwells in us. But that takes self out of the way.

"Now what mind is in us to start with? The mind of self. What does that mind do? It exalts self. What kind of mind is it we have to start with? The natural mind. A man has a natural mind, and he must have another mind. He must have the mind that was in Christ, but that mind that is in Christ only empties of self the one in whom it dwells. Therefore as we have a mind to start with and must have another than that, while that other empties of self the one in whom it is, does it not follow inevitably that the mind which we have to start with, is a mind only of self?" GCDB 257

"Now when the man is set free from that carnal mind, that mind of self and Satan, who controls that man? Who then is his master? [Congregation: "Christ."] Yes. He who sets him free. It is Christ Jesus. Then when we are free from Satan's mastery we become bound to another Master. Satan's mastery is slavery and ruin; Christ's mastery is freedom and everlasting life, everlasting joy, and everlasting prosperity.

"Now carry that thought a little further. When we had the mind of Satan and he was ruling, we said we would not do those evil things, but just those were done. Who did it? [Congregation: "Sin that dwelleth in us."] We said we will do so and so. We did not. Who kept us from it? [Congregation: "Satan."] But now in Christ we are free from him: we have the other mind. We say we will do that. Who does it? [Congregation: "Christ."] While in the natural

mind we refuse and who does it? [Congregation: "Satan."] And when in the mind of Christ we choose and who does it? [Congregation: "Christ."] Is that so? [Congregation: "Yes."] It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of His good pleasure." GCDB 260

"Now I want to ask a few questions on what we have gone over. What is the latter rain? [Congregation: "The teaching of righteousness according to righteousness."] What is the loud cry? [Congregation: "The message of the righteousness of Christ."] The loud cry has already begun in the message of the righteousness of Christ. Where does the latter rain come from? [Congregation: "From God."] All of it? [Congregation: "Yes."] What is it? [Congregation: "The Spirit of God."]

"Now let us just put two things together. The teaching of righteousness according to righteousness--the message of righteousness--that is the loud cry; that is the latter rain; that is the righteousness of Christ. Is that so? [Congregation: "Yes."] The latter rain comes down from heaven. How much of that latter rain comes out of me? [Congregation: "None of it."] How much of it can I manufacture? [Congregation: "Not any."] Now is that so? [Congregation: "Yes."] I cannot manufacture any of it? None of it springs from me at all? Where does it come from? [Congregation: "Heaven."] Will you take it that way? Will you receive it from heaven? [Congregation: "Yes."]

"Now that is where we came to the other night. Are you ready to take it from heaven? [Congregation: "Yes."] Is everybody in this house tonight willing and ready to take righteousness from heaven? [Congregation: "Amen!"] According to God, without asking that God shall get some of it from us? Are you? [Congregation: "Yes."] Whoever is willing to take righteousness from heaven can receive the latter rain [Congregation: "Amen!"]; whoever is not, but wants the Lord to get some of it out of him, he cannot have the latter rain; he cannot have the righteousness of God; he cannot have the message of the righteousness of Christ.

"What is the latter rain? [Congregation: "Righteousness."] Are we in the time of the latter rain? [Congregation: "Yes."] What are we to ask for? [Congregation: "Rain."] What is it? [Congregation: "The teaching of righteousness according to righteousness."] Where is it to come from? [Congregation: "Heaven."] Can we have it? [Congregation: "Yes."] Can we have it now? [Congregation: "Yes."] Then the latter train being the righteousness of God, His message of righteousness, the loud cry, it all being that, and that to come down from heaven: we are now in the time of it, we are to ask for it and receive it. Then what is to hinder us from receiving the latter rain now? [Congregation: "Unbelief.]" GCDB 359

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” Heb 10: 35-39

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” Mar 4:28

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THE COMING CRISIS

BY E.G. WHITE

Revelation 12:17

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled as the Protestant churches unite with the world and with the papal power against commandment keepers. The same spirit which actuated papists in ages past will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God.

“Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are working in disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists. Throughout the land the papacy is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated. And the way is preparing for the manifestation, on a grand scale, of those lying wonders by which, if it were possible, Satan would deceive even the elect.

“The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther. The Persian edict sprang from the malice of Haman toward Mordecai. Not that Mordecai had done him harm, but he had refused to show him reverence which belongs only to God. The king’s decision against the Jews was secured under false pretenses through misrepresentation of that peculiar people. Satan instigated the scheme in order to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a counterpower that reigns among the children of men. Angels that excel in

strength were commissioned to protect the people of God, and the plots of their adversaries returned upon their own heads. The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way.

“The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a “Thus saith the Scriptures” to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.

“By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation (The USA) will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.

“As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation’s iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob’s trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven.

And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

"The Lord is doing His work. All heaven is astir. The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority. The mark of deliverance will be set upon the men who keep God's commandments, who revere His law, and who refuse the mark of the beast or of his image.

"God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter His faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord's people may not have mercy or justice. The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent is tending. Its professions are mild and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak it will reveal the spirit of the dragon. It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience. We should search the Scriptures and be able to give the reason for our faith. Says the prophet: "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

"Those who have access to God through Christ have important work before them. Now is the time to lay hold of the arm of our strength. The prayer of David should be the prayer of pastors and laymen: "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law." Let the servants of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar, crying: "Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach." God has always wrought for His people in their greatest extremity, when there seemed the least hope that ruin could be averted. The designs of wicked men, the enemies of the church, are subject to His power and overruling providence. He can move upon the hearts of statesmen; the wrath of the turbulent and disaffected, the haters of God, His truth, and His people can be turned aside, even as the rivers of water are turned, if He orders it thus. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence.

He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep, the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of His people if they call upon Him in faith. He will restrain the forces of darkness until the warning is given to the world and all who will heed it are prepared for the conflict.

“The wrath of man shall praise Thee,” says the psalmist; “the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.” God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God’s means of provoking inquiry and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber.

“Thus it has been in the past history of God’s people. For refusing to worship the great golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up, the three Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace. But God preserved His servants in the midst of the flames, and the attempt to enforce idolatry resulted in bringing the knowledge of the true God before the assembled princes and great men of the vast kingdom of Babylon.

“So when the decree went forth forbidding prayer to any god save the king. As Daniel, according to his custom, made his supplications three times a day to the God of heaven, the attention of the princes and rulers was called to his case. He had an opportunity to speak for himself, to show who is the true God, and to present the reason why He alone should receive worship, and the duty of rendering Him praise and homage. And the deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions was another evidence that the Being whom he worshiped was the true and living God.

“So the imprisonment of Paul brought the gospel before kings, princes, and rulers who otherwise would not have had this light. The efforts made to retard the progress of truth will serve to extend it. The excellence of truth is more clearly seen from every successive point from which it may be viewed. Error requires disguise and concealment. It clothes itself in angel robes, and every manifestation of its real character lessens its chance of success.

“The people whom God has made the depositaries of His law are not to permit their light to be hidden. The truth must be proclaimed in the dark places of the earth. Obstacles must be met and surmounted. A great work is to be done, and this work has been entrusted to those who know the truth. They should make mighty intercession with God for help now. The love of Christ must be diffused in their own hearts. The Spirit of Christ must be poured out upon them, and they must be making ready to stand in the judgment. While they are consecrating themselves to God, a convincing power will

attend their efforts to present the truth to others, and its light will find access to many hearts. We must sleep no longer on Satan's enchanted ground, but call into requisition all our resources and avail ourselves of every facility with which Providence has furnished us. The last warning is to be proclaimed "before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;" and the promise is given, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." 5T 449-454

"All are to show their fidelity to God by the wise use of His entrusted capital, not in means alone, but in any endowment that will tend to the upbuilding of His kingdom. Satan will employ every possible device to prevent the truth from reaching those who are buried in error; but the voice of warning and entreaty must come to them. And while only a few are engaged in this work, thousands ought to be as much interested as they. God never designed that the lay members of the church should be excused from labor in His cause. "Go, labor in My vineyard," is the Master's command to each of His followers. As long as there are unconverted souls in the world, there should be the most active, earnest, zealous, determined effort for their salvation. Those who have received the light should seek to enlighten those who have it not. If the church members do not individually take hold of this work, then they show that they have no living connection with God. Their names are registered as slothful servants. Can you not discern the reason why there is no more spirituality in our churches? It is because you are not collaborators with Christ.

"God has given to every man his work. Let us each wait on God, and He will teach us how to work and what work we are best adapted to perform. Yet none are to start out in an independent spirit to promulgate new theories. The workers should be in harmony with the truth and with their brethren. There should be counsel and co-operation. But they are not to feel that at every step they must wait to ask some higher officer if they may do this or that. Look not to man for guidance, but to the God of Israel.

"The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. **And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren and to excite indignation against them.**

This day is just before us. The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone. The experience which would have helped them in this emergency they have neglected to obtain, and their souls are burdened with remorse for wasted opportunities and neglected privileges.

“My brother, my sister, ponder these things, I beseech you. You have each a work to do. Your unfaithfulness and neglect are registered against you in the Ledger of Heaven. You have diminished your powers and lessened your capabilities. You lack the experience and efficiency which you might have had. But before it is forever too late, I urge you to arouse. Delay no longer. The day is almost spent. The westering sun is about sinking forever from your sight. Yet while the blood of Christ is pleading, you may find pardon. Summon every energy of the soul, employ the few remaining hours in earnest labor for God and for your fellow men.

“My heart is stirred to the very depths. Words are inadequate to express my feelings as I plead for perishing souls. Must I plead in vain? As Christ’s ambassador I would arouse you to labor as you never labored before. Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect.

“Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted. We who occupy this solemn, responsible position, what are we doing, what are we thinking about, that we cling to our selfish love of ease, while souls are perishing around us? Have our hearts become utterly callous? Cannot we feel or understand that we have a work to do for the salvation of others? Brethren, are you of the class who having eyes see not, and having ears hear not? Is it in vain that God has given you a knowledge of His will? Is it in vain that He has sent you warning after warning? Do you believe the declarations of eternal truth concerning what is about to come upon the earth, do you believe that God’s judgments are hanging over the people, and can you still sit at ease, indolent, careless, pleasure loving?

“It is no time now for God’s people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to

leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains. And now, instead of seeking expensive dwellings here, we should be preparing to move to a better country, even a heavenly. **Instead of spending our means in self-gratification, we should be studying to economize.** Every talent lent of God should be used to His glory in giving the warning to the world. God has a work for His colaborers to do in the cities. Our missions must be sustained; new missions must be opened. To carry forward this work successfully will require no small outlay. Houses of worship are needed, where the people may be invited to hear the truths for this time. For this very purpose, God has entrusted a capital to His stewards. Let not your property be tied up in worldly enterprises, so that this work shall be hindered. Get your means where you can handle it for the benefit of the cause of God. Send your treasures before you into heaven.

“The members of the church should individually hold themselves and all their possessions upon the altar of God. Now, as never before, the Saviour’s admonition is applicable: “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Those who are fastening their means in large houses, in lands, in worldly enterprises, are saying by their actions: “God cannot have it; I want it for myself.” They have bound up their one talent in a napkin and hid it in the earth. There is cause for such to be alarmed. Brethren, God has not entrusted means to you to lie idle nor to be covetously retained or hid away, but to be used to advance His cause, to save the souls of the perishing. It is not the time now to bind up the Lord’s money in your expensive buildings and your large enterprises, while His cause is crippled and left to beg its way, the treasury half-supplied. The Lord is not in this way of working. Remember, the day is fast approaching when it will be said: “Give an account of thy stewardship.” Can you not discern the signs of the times?

“Every day that passes brings us nearer the last great important day. We are one year nearer the judgment, nearer eternity, than we were at the beginning of (**this year**) 1884. Are we also drawing nearer to God? Are we watching unto prayer? Another year of our time to labor has rolled into eternity. Every day we have been associating with men and women who are judgment bound. Each day may have been the dividing line to some soul; someone may have made the decision which shall determine his future destiny. What has been our influence over these fellow travelers? What efforts have we put forth to bring them to Christ?

“It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change.

“Again I appeal to the members of the church to be Christians, to be Christlike. Jesus was a worker, not for Himself, but for others. He labored to bless and save the lost. If you are Christians you will imitate His example. He has laid the foundation, and we are builders together with Him. But what material are we bringing to lay on this foundation? “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” If you are devoting all your strength and talent to the things of this world, your lifework is represented by wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed by the fires of the last day. But unselfish labor for Christ and the future life will be as gold, silver, and precious stones; it is imperishable.

“My brethren and sisters, awake, I beseech you, from the sleep of death. It is too late to devote the strength of brain, bone, and muscle to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of heavenly treasure. Seek to push the triumphs of the cross, seek to enlighten souls, labor for the salvation of your fellow beings, and your work will abide the trying test of fire.

“If any man’s work abide, . . . he shall receive a reward.” Glorious will be the reward bestowed when the faithful workers are gathered about the throne of God and the Lamb. When John in his mortal state beheld the glory of God, he fell as one dead; he was not able to endure the sight. But when mortal shall have put on immortality, the ransomed ones are like Jesus, for they see Him as He is. They stand before the throne, signifying that they are accepted. All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions borne away. Now they can look upon the undimmed glory from the throne of God. They have been partakers with Christ of His sufferings, they have been workers together with Him in the plan of redemption, and they are partakers with Him in the joy of beholding souls saved through their instrumentality to praise God through all eternity.” 5T 462-467

APPENDIX



KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

RH	Review & Herald
2T	Testimonies Volume Two
5T	Testimonies Volume Five
GC	The Great Controversy
ST	Signs of the Times
DA	The Desire of Ages
AA	The Acts of the Apostles
EW	Early Writings
COL	Christ Object Lessons
LDE	Last Day Events
SM	Selected Messages
GCDB	General Conference Daily Bulletin

Be an Overcomer

REVELATION 21:7
Charles W. Naylor, 1907

Andrew L. Byers, 1907

1. Be an o - ver - com - er, on - ly cow - ards yield When the foe they meet on the bat - tle - field:
2. Be an o - ver - com - er, He who stands with you Is a might - y One, who is al - ways true:
3. Be an o - ver - com - er, you are heav - en's heir, And a crown of life you may ev - er wear:
4. Be an o - ver - com - er, for - ward bold - ly go, You are strong e - nough if you count it so—

We are blood - bought princ - es of the roy - al host, And must fal - ter not, nor de - sert our post.
In the sor - est con - flict you shall win the day, Face the le - gions dark till they flee a - way.
So with cour - age press the bat - tle to the gates, Till you gain the prize which in heav - en waits.
Strong e - nough to con - quer through sus - tain - ing grace, And to o - ver - come eve - ry foe you face.

Refrain

O - ver - come, _____ o - ver - come; _____
Nev - er yield a step in the hot - test fight, God will send you help from the realms of light;

In Je - ho - vah's might put the foe to flight, And the vic - tor's crown you shall wear at last.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Watch, Ye Saints

Jude 15

Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, 1844 (1807-1874)

William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)

1. Watch, ye saints, with eye - lids wak - ing; Lo! the powers of heaven are shak - ing;
 2. Lo! the prom - ise of your Sav - ior, Par - doned sin and pur - chased fa - vor,
 3. King - doms at their base are crumb - ling, Hark! His char - iot wheels are rum - bling;
 4. Na - tions wane, tho' proud and state - ly; Christ His king - dom hast - eth great - ly;
 5. Sin - ners, come, while Christ is plead - ing; Now for you He's in - ter - ced - ing;

Keep your lamps all trimmed and burn - ing, Read - y for your Lord's re - turn - ing.
 Blood-washed robes and crowns of glo - ry; Haste to tell re - dem - tion's sto - ry.
 Tell, O tell of grace a - bound - ing, While the sev - enth trump is sound - ing.
 Earth her lat - est pangs is sum - ming; Shout, ye saints, your Lord is com - ing.
 Haste, e'er grace and time di - min - ished Shall pro - claim the mys - tery fin - ished.

Refrain

Lo! He comes, Lo! Je - sus comes; Je - sus comes, He comes all glo - rious!

Je - sus comes, to reign vic - to - rious, Lo! He comes, yes, Je - sus comes!

Hold the Fort

PHILIP P. BLISS, 1838-1876

PHILIP P. BLISS, 1838-1876

1. Ho, my com-rades, see the sig-nal Wav-ing in the sky!
2. See the might-y host ad-vanc-ing, Sa-tan lead-ing on;
3. See the glo-rious ban-ner wav-ing! Hear the trum-pet blow!
4. Fierce and long the bat-tle rag-es, But our help is near;

Re-in-force-ments now ap-pear-ing, Vic-to-ry is nigh.
Might-y men a-round us fall-ing, Cour-age al-most gone!
In our Lead-er's name we tri-umph O-ver ev-'ry foe.
On-ward comes our great Com-mand-er— Cheer, my com-rades, cheer!

CHORUS

"Hold the fort, for I am com-ing," Je-sus sig-nals still;

Wave the an-swer back to heav-en, "By Thy grace we will."

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Publications Available from Truth For the Final Generation

The Powerful Message of the Two Covenants in the Doctrine of Righteousness by Faith

This book seeks to show the difference between the Old and New Covenants, but more importantly to show how loving, compassionate, merciful, and sweet is our gracious God who is not only able but eager to fulfill His promises in our lives.

The Sealing Work in the Final Generation

The sealing work begins at conversion when the believer's name is entered into the Book of Life. For the final generation, the sealing ends with the believer's name being retained in the Book of Life, after he has passed the great final test and has demonstrated that his mind is fully fixed in loyalty to God.

Elect According to the Foreknowledge of God

Election, predestination and free choice are subjects that have agitated the minds of God's people down through the centuries of the Christian era. If God has foreknown all things are we really free to choose? Is there a true doctrine of predestination? Christians want to make their calling and election sure. Who are the elect? This book seeks to give the Biblical answers to these questions.

The Power of God's Word in the Science of Faith

Many Christians drift along in a superficial experience without appreciating the power of God's word. In this series of studies we discover the victorious power in God's word, and learn to receive and employ that power in the work of overcoming sin.

God's Character—The Best News in the Universe

A study of the character of God from the Bible alone, allowing scripture to interpret scripture. It is dedicated to the ongoing search for truth and the shining light that results from such scriptural research.

The New World Economic Order—How Will it Affect You?

The coming new world economic order will usher in sweeping changes to our accustomed way of life, especially the liberties we have enjoyed over the past two hundred years. Necessary reading for the new century.

The Proclamation of the Acceptable Year of the Lord

Discussions include studies of the Harvest principle and the Generation concept. They examine the reasons for the long delay of the Second Advent and what must be our responsibilities if we are to hasten the day of the Lord and finish the work early in this new generation.

Other books and publications are available: contact us for details