

Ellen G. White 1883 Manuscripts

Ms 1, 1883

Sermon/Doubting the Testimonies

[Battle Creek, Michigan]

November 1883

[Extract from a sermon at the General Conference of 1883.]

When you find men questioning the testimonies, finding fault with them and seeking to draw away the people from their influence, be assured that God is not at work through them. It is another spirit. Doubt and unbelief are cherished by those who do not walk circumspectly. They have a painful consciousness that their life will not abide the test of the Spirit of God, whether speaking through His Word or through the testimonies of His Spirit that would bring them to His Word. Instead of beginning with their own hearts and coming into harmony with the pure principles of the gospel, they find fault and condemn the very means that God has chosen to fit up a people to stand in the day of the Lord.

Let some skeptical one come along who is not willing to square his life by the Bible rule, who is seeking to gain the favor of all, and how soon the class that are not in harmony with the work of God are called out. Those who are converted and grounded in the truth will find nothing pleasing or profitable in the influence or teaching of such a one. But those who are defective in character, whose hands are not pure, whose hearts are not holy, whose habits of life are loose, who are unkind at home or untrustworthy in deal—all these will be sure to enjoy the new sentiments presented. All may see, if they will, the true measure of the man, the nature of his teaching, from the character of his followers.

Those who have most to say against the testimonies are generally those who have not read them, just as those who boast of their disbelief of the Bible are those who have little knowledge of its teachings. They know that it condemns them, and their rejection of it gives them a feeling of security in their sinful course.

There is in error and unbelief that which bewilders and bewitches the mind. To question and doubt and cherish unbelief in order to excuse ourselves in stepping aside from the straight path is a far easier matter than to purify the soul through a belief of the truth and obedience thereto. But when better influences lead one to desire to return, he finds himself entangled in such a network of Satan, like a fly in a spider's web, that it seems a hopeless task to him, and he seldom recovers himself from the snare laid for him by the wily foe.

When once men have admitted doubt and unbelief in the testimonies of the Spirit of God, they are strongly tempted to adhere to the opinions which they have avowed before others. Their theories and notions fix themselves like a gloomy cloud over the mind, shutting out every ray of evidence in favor of the truth. The doubts indulged through ignorance, pride, or love of sinful practices rivet upon the soul fetters that are seldom broken. Christ, and He alone, can give the needed power to break them.

The testimonies of the Spirit of God are given to direct men to His Word, which has been neglected. Now if their messages are not heeded, the Holy Spirit is shut away from the soul. What further means has God in reserve to reach the erring ones and show them their true condition?

The churches that have cherished influences which lessen faith in the testimonies are weak and tottering. Some ministers are working to attract the people to themselves. When an effort is made to correct any wrong in these ministers, they stand back in independence and say, "My church accepts my labors."

Jesus said, "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." [John 3:20.] There are many today pursuing a similar course. In the testimonies are specified the very sins of which they are guilty; hence they have no desire to read them. There are those who from their youth up have received warning and reproofs through the testimonies; but have they walked in the light and reformed? Not at all. They still indulge the same sins; they have the same defects of character. These evils mar the work of God and make their impress upon the churches. The work the Lord would do to set the churches in order is not done, because the individual members, and especially the leaders of the flock, would not be corrected.

Many a man professes to accept the testimonies while they have no influence upon his life or character. His faults become stronger by indulgence until, having been often reproved and not heeding the reproof, he loses the power of self-control and becomes hardened in a course of wrong doing. If he is overworked, if weakness comes upon him, he has not moral power to rise above the infirmities of character which he did not overcome; they become his strongest points, and he is overborne by them. Then bring him to the test and ask, "Did not God reprove this phase in your character by the testimonies years ago?" He will answer, "Yes, I received a written testimony saying that I was wrong in these things." "Why, then, did you not correct these wrong habits?" "I thought the reprover must have made a mistake; that which I could see, I accepted; that which I could not see, I said was the mind of the one who gave the message. I did not accept the reproof."

In some cases the very faults of character which God would have His servants see and correct, but which they refused to see, have cost these men their lives. They might have lived to be channels of light. God wanted them to live and sent them instruction in righteousness, that they might preserve their physical and mental powers to do acceptable service for Him; and had they received the counsel of God and become altogether such as He would have them, they would have been able workmen for the advancement of the truth, men who would have stood high in the affections and confidence of our people. But they are sleeping in the grave because they did not see that God knew them better than they knew themselves. His thoughts were not their thoughts, nor His ways, their ways. These one-sided men have moulded the work wherever they have labored. The churches under their management have been greatly weakened.

God reproves men because He loves them. He wants them to be strong in His strength, to have well-balanced minds and symmetrical characters; then they will be examples to the flock of God, leading them by precept and example nearer to heaven. Then they will build up a holy temple for God.

Ms 2, 1883

Sermon/Words to Ministers

Battle Creek, Michigan

November 1883

“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. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to perish; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” [Revelation 3:1-3.]

The ministers of the gospel of Christ are to watch for souls as they that must give an account. They are to search the Scriptures earnestly, to be often on their knees in prayer, asking for heavenly wisdom that they may strengthen “the things which remain, that are ready to perish.” [Verse 2.] They are to place themselves under the power of the Scriptures by living in accordance with the will of God. The Word of God is to be their guide. This Word searches the secret working of the human heart. In it there are promises, directions, counsel, and reproof, which are to be used as the case may require. With a humble heart and a willing mind, God’s messenger is to search this Word, that he may understand for himself and draw from the storehouse for the benefit of others, things new and old. Ever he is to seek to lead minds to gain a personal, experimental knowledge of the truth. Many are sorely tempted and ready to die because they have not a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Many think that the work of the minister consists in sermonizing, but in this they are mistaken. There is a work to be done from house to house. In this way many will be brought to a knowledge of the truth. Through the instrumentality of the earnest worker, souls ready to die will be imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The work of coming close to individual souls is neglected. The churches are ready to die for want of the right kind of labor. Church members should receive an education in the things of God that will give them a deep and living experience, enabling them to bring their thoughts into subjection to the divine will. The minister should visit them in their homes, talking and praying with them in earnestness and humility.

In every congregation which gathered about Jesus, there were souls who were hungering and thirsting for light and knowledge. As they listened to the truth which fell from the lips of the divine Teacher, so different from the traditions and dogmas taught by the rabbis, hope sprang up in their hearts. There was a life in Christ’s teaching which sent the truth home in power to the heart and captivated His hearers. God’s ministers are to learn Christ’s method of teaching that they may, as He did, bring fresh flowers full of fragrance from the garden of God’s Word. Only thus can the need of the soul be supplied.

Seeking for wisdom from God in true faith is a matter of no uncertainty. “If any man lack wisdom,” the apostle declares, “let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and 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. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” James 1:5-7. Our only safety is in heeding this inspired counsel. We have reached out altogether too much to human beings for help. Counsel has been asked from men who are not taught by God, in whose hearts Christ does not abide. These men depend largely on their own wisdom and experience. Into their counsel they weave their own spirit, their own likes and dislikes. Their advice bears the same features as their minds. They are guided by their feelings and impressions, and often they discourage plans which should be encouraged and encourage where they should discourage. They have not the mind of Christ; therefore, barriers are thrown in the way of the work that the Lord Himself impressed His co-laborers with the importance of doing. On the other hand, they sanction that which the Lord has not sanctioned.

How many of the presidents of our conferences have armed themselves with the mind that is in Christ? How many, by unceasing watchfulness and prayer, have strengthened the things which remain? I have been shown that instead of going to God for wisdom, our ministers have gone to the president of the General Conference. But the Lord has not made him your mediator. He has not been invested with a supply of wisdom for the presidents of the state conferences. Jesus is the fountainhead of wisdom, and our supply must be received from Him. Those who look to the president of the General Conference are crippled and dwarfed; whereas, if they would look to God, they would find grace and strength to help in every time of need. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." [Verse 5.]

I am pained, brethren, as the weak, sickly condition of our churches is opened before me. "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" [Jeremiah 8:22.] Must we decide that the presidents of our conferences have done the best? I would be loath to do this. We know that the heavenly universe is disappointed in them, because they do not co-operate with God. There are many churches in our conferences which are ready to die, testifying to a lack of the grace of Christ in the hearts of the men appointed to act as ministers. God does not accept the work done in these churches. He cannot say to those ministers, "Well done, good and faithful servant." [Matthew 25:23.] Brethren, I have been shown that the presidents of our conferences are not as efficient as God would have them. He has made every provision that they might have His grace and power to do the work the churches are suffering for.

Brethren, I appeal to you to change this order of things. To whom have you looked for strength? Have you not been trusting altogether too much in your own efficiency? Have you not been looking to man and making flesh your arm? Have you not been light and trifling in your assemblies? Wherein have you shown that you carried the solemn burden of the work of God? Oh, what a difference there would be in the character of your work if you kept before you the abiding presence of a just and holy God, who requires you not merely to go through the form of preaching, but to give full proof of your ministry by revealing clusters of precious fruit.

What precious experiences would have been gained if those who for years have been educating themselves to trust in man had educated themselves to trust fully in God, relying upon Him to do those things which they cannot do for themselves! They would have found that His Word is Yea and Amen. They would have been encouraged to ask and ask again. They would have gained a knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for they would have been brought into sweet companionship with Him. Love for Him would have been kindled on the altar of the heart as they proved Him and found Him to be a very present help in every time of need.

"Come unto me," Christ said, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." [Matthew 11:28-30.] Lean not on the best man who lives. He is not wise enough or strong enough to hold you up. Take all your perplexities to Jesus. You may lean with your whole weight upon Him, and He will uphold you, for He is strong. He will not sink under the burdens you place on Him.

Every church needs to hear the plain, earnest testimony from the Word of God. The parable of the ten virgins presents a picture which should cause us to tremble. Five of these virgins were wise, and five were foolish. The wise had oil in their vessels with their lamps, but the foolish had no oil in their vessels, and their lamps went out. The record says, "While they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they

that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward also came the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not." [Matthew 25:10-12.] This comes as a solemn warning to every church, showing the danger of those whose works do not correspond to their profession of faith.

Working, waiting, praying, and watching—this constitutes genuine Christianity. Our work is not to be all waiting in idle expectancy. Neither is it to be all bustle and excitement, to the neglect of personal piety. Waiting, working, praying, and watching are to be blended as a whole. The servant of God is exhorted to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." [Romans 12:11.] The oil of grace must supply the need of the soul. There must be no weakening of the spiritual force. To ministers God says, "Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine." [1 Timothy 4:16.] Cultivate heart-piety, and then diffuse light. God will not accept the service of the smartest men, those most fluent in speech, unless by a pure and holy life they show their consecration to Him. Unless the root is holy, there can be no healthy branches to bear fruit to God's glory.

God has chosen men and women as instrumentalities through which to work. It is His purpose that divine power and human endeavor shall unite. God is willing to teach all who come to Him in simplicity and faith. Have your sins separated you from God? What saith the Scriptures? "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [1 John 1:9.] Do you believe that God will do as He says? Then act your faith.

There are those who stand upon their dignity, looking upon it as a disgrace to confess. They make mistakes which they should confess to their brethren, but instead of doing this, they cherish bitterness against them. They pronounce judgment against them and grieve the Holy Spirit. They make light of their transgression, refusing to acknowledge that they have sinned. They declare that they enjoy freedom in the love of God. But though they may apparently be earnest in the performance of religious duties, He who reads the heart as an open book writes against them this sentence, Weighed in the balances and found wanting. God bears long with their stubborn perversity, seeking to bring them to repentance.

Thus Christ did in the case of Judas. He gave lessons calculated to arouse the conscience of the erring disciple, to lead him to see his selfishness, his ambition and love of money, as a great sin. But notwithstanding the efforts made by the Saviour, Judas cherished the accursed thing. Stubbornly justifying his course, he went on step by step in the path of sin, hiding his wrong from human sight, ready to pronounce judgment on the defects of others, but making no confession.

Christ constantly sought to soften the heart of Judas. Thus He hoped to bring him to repentance that He might pardon him. But Judas' pride and stubbornness held him back from making any surrender. He would not fall upon the Rock and be broken, and finally his hardness of heart led him to sell his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Thus he ruined himself. He had united himself with Christ voluntarily, as had the other disciples. With them he had the privilege of learning in the school of the divine Teacher. None of the disciples were free from defects, but all were dear to Christ's great heart of love. He loved Judas, and had Judas been willing to learn, he would have been transformed in character. But a man cannot be forgiven unless he repents.

During Christ's ministry the disciples were closely associated with Him. It was the Saviour's purpose that they should be imbued with His Spirit that they might form characters which would fit them to do work

for the Master. They had every advantage for being trained for high and holy service. They may have been called ignorant and unlearned, but they had as an instructor the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, the Light of life. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." [John 1:4.]

He who taught the disciples is willing also to teach His servants today. Christ is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. We must be laborers together with God if we would do more than beat the air. The grace of Christ must be an abiding principle in the life, forming the character after the divine model. God has made every provision for man to receive an increase of moral power and a deep religious experience. He delivered up His Son that He might be the propitiation for our sins, to make reconciliation possible between God and man. What more could God do for His vineyard that He has not done?

The soul temple must be cleansed from its defilement before the heavenly Guest can enter. The minister of the gospel who is a laborer together with God will learn daily in the school of Christ. He will give full proof of his ministry by the wisdom he manifests in dealing with human minds. He will become acquainted with the parents and children of his congregation and will speak kindly words to all. No light trifling words will fall from his lips, for is he not an ambassador bringing from the heavenly courts a message of mercy and salvation to perishing souls? All jesting and joking, lightness and trifling, will be painful to the cross-bearing disciple of Christ. He is weighed down by the burden he feels for souls. His heart is drawn out in silent prayer to God that he may receive the grace of Christ and thus be enabled to discern his work and do it as a faithful steward. He prays to be kept pure and holy and then refuses to rush heedlessly into temptation. When he sees in any member of the church a lessening of zeal, he makes it his business to find out why this is so.

The cross-bearing disciple heeds the injunction, "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." [1 Peter 1:15, 16.] He will grow daily in grace, ever gaining a deeper knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Every heaven-sent messenger will be transformed in character. He will overcome selfishness, laying aside self-conceit as a worthless thing. The mind, the heart, the affections are elevated and ennobled in accordance with God's purpose. Not only a Bible reader, but a Bible believer, he gives a portion of meat to every man in due season. By keeping close to the Master, he receives words from Him to give to the people. He lifts as Christ lifts, he loves as Christ loves, he works as Christ works. He is one with Christ as Christ is one with the Father. He gives himself constantly to self-improvement, that by precept and example he may lead others to a purer, higher, and more elevated life.

Ms 4, 1883

Suppression and the Shut Door

Healdsburg, California

1883

[Statement made in 1883 by Ellen G. White at Healdsburg, California.]

My attention has recently been called to a 16-page pamphlet published by A. C. Long of Marion, Iowa, entitled, Comparison of the Early Writings of Mrs. White with Later Publications. The writer states that portions of my earlier visions, as first printed, have been suppressed in the work recently published

under the title, Early Writings of Mrs. E. G. White, and he conjectures as a reason for such suppression that these passages teach doctrines now repudiated by us as a people.

He also charges us with willful deception in representing Early Writings as a complete republication of my earliest views, with only verbal changes from the original work.

Before I notice separately the passages which are said to have been omitted, it is proper that several facts be stated. When my earliest views were first published in pamphlet form, the edition was small and was soon sold. This was in a few years followed by a larger book, The Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White, printed in 1851 and containing much additional matter.

In our frequent change of location in the earlier history of the publishing work and then in almost incessant travel as I have labored from Maine to Texas, from Michigan to California—and I have crossed the plains no less than seventeen times—I lost all trace of the first published works.

When it was decided to publish Early Writings at Oakland last fall, we were obliged to send to Michigan to borrow a copy of Experience and Views. In doing this, we supposed that we had obtained an exact copy of the earliest visions as first published. This we reprinted, as stated in the preface to Early Writings, with only verbal changes from the original work.

Here I will pause to state that any of our people having in their possession a copy of any or all of my first views, as published prior to 1851, will do me a great favor if they will send them to me without delay. I promise to return the same as soon as a copy can be produced.

So far from desiring to withhold anything that I have ever published, I would feel great satisfaction in giving to the public every line of my writings that has ever been printed.

Testimonies Garbled by Eli Curtis

There is another fact that should be stated here. I am not responsible for all that has been printed as coming from me. About the time that my earliest visions were first published, several articles did appear purporting to have been written by me and to relate what the Lord had shown me, but sanctioning doctrines which I did not believe. These were published in a paper edited by a Mr. Curtis. Of the name of the paper I am not certain. In the years of care and labor that have passed since then, some of these less important particulars have been forgotten, but the main points are still distinct in my mind.

This man took articles that came from my pen and wholly transformed and distorted them, picking out a sentence here and there without giving the connection, and then after inserting his own ideas, he attached my name to them as if they came direct from me.

On seeing these articles, we wrote to him expressing our surprise and disapprobation and forbidding him thus to misconstrue my testimonies. He answered that he should publish what he pleased, that he knew the visions ought to say what he had published, and that if I had written them as the Lord gave them to me, they would have said these things. He asserted that if the visions had been given for the benefit of the church, he had a right to use them as he pleased.

Some of these sheets may still be in existence and may be brought forward as coming from me, but I am not responsible for them. The articles given in Early Writings did pass under my eye; and as the edition of Experience and Views published in 1851 was the earliest which we possessed and as we had no

knowledge of anything additional in papers or pamphlets of earlier date, I am not responsible for the omissions which are said to exist.

The First Omission

The first quotation mentioned by A. C Long is from a pamphlet of twenty-four pages published in 1847, entitled A Word to the Little Flock. Here are a few lines omitted in Experiences and Views:

It was just as impossible for them (those that gave up their faith in the '44 movement) to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected. They fell all the way along the path one after another.

I will give the context, that the full force of the expressions may be clearly seen:

While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them—when a voice said to me, “Look again, and look a little higher.” At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the City, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the Midnight Cry. This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the City, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted Hallelujah! Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below.

Now follows the passage said to be in the original work, but not found in Experience and Views or in Early Writings:

It was just as impossible for them (those that gave up their faith in the '44 movement) to get on the path again and go to the City as all the wicked world which God had rejected. They fell all the way along the path one after another.

The “Shut Door” Defined

It is claimed that these expressions prove the shut-door doctrine and that this is the reason of their omission in later editions. But in fact they teach only that which has been and is still held by us as a people, as I shall show.

For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold in common with the advent body that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error and enabled us to see the true position.

I am still a believer in the shut-door theory, but not in the sense in which we at first employed the term or in which it is employed by my opponents.

There was a shut door in Noah's day. There was at that time a withdrawal of the Spirit of God from the sinful race that perished in the waters of the flood. God Himself gave the shut door message to Noah: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." [Genesis 6:3.]

There was a shut door in the days of Abraham. Mercy ceased to plead with the inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot, with his wife and two daughters, were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven.

There was a shut door in Christ's day. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation, "Your house is left unto you desolate." [Matthew 23:38.]

Looking down the stream of time to the last days, the same infinite power proclaimed through John: "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." [Revelation 3:7.]

I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angel's messages and rejected that light were left in darkness. And those who accepted it and received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven and who afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer pleaded with them.

Those who did not see the light, had not the guilt of its rejection. It was only the class who had despised the light from heaven that the Spirit of God could not reach. And this class included, as I have stated, both those who refused to accept the message when it was presented to them and also those who, having received it, afterward renounced their faith. These might have a form of godliness and profess to be followers of Christ, but having no living connection with God, they would be taken captive by the delusions of Satan. These two classes are brought to view in the vision—those who declared the light which they had followed a delusion and the wicked of the world who, having rejected the light, had been rejected of God. No reference is made to those who had not seen the light and therefore were not guilty of its rejection.

In order to prove that I believed and taught the shut-door doctrine, Mr. Long gives a quotation from the Review of June 11, 1861, signed by nine of our prominent members. The quotation reads as follows:

Our views of the work before us were then mostly vague and indefinite, some still retaining the idea adopted by the body of Advent believers in 1844, with Wm. Miller at their head, that our work for "the world" was finished, and that the message was confined to those of the original Advent faith. So firmly was this believed that one of our number was nearly refused the message, the individual presenting it having doubts of the possibility of his salvation because he was not in "the '44 move."

To this I need only to add that in the same meeting in which it was urged that the message could not be given to this brother, a testimony was given me through vision to encourage him to hope in God and to give his heart fully to Jesus, which he did then and there.

An Unreasonable Conjecture

In another passage from the book *A Word to the Little Flock*, I speak of scenes upon the new earth and state that I there saw holy men of old, "Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Daniel, and many like them." Because I speak of having seen these men, our opponents conjecture that I then believed in the

immortality of the soul and that having since changed my views upon this point, I found it necessary to suppress that passage. They are as near the truth here as in other conjectures.

In the year 1844 I accepted the doctrine we now hold concerning the non-immortality of the soul, as may be seen by reference to Life Sketches pages 170, 171 [1880 edition. See also 1915 edition, page 49; Testimonies, volume 1, pages 39, 40], and I have never, by voice or pen, advocated any other. Had we suppressed this passage on account of its teaching the immortality of the soul, we would have found it necessary to suppress other passages.

In relating my first vision, page 13 of Early Writings [1882 edition, present edition, page 17], I speak of having seen brethren who had but a short time previously fallen asleep in Jesus, and on page 14 [present edition, pages 18, 19] I state that I was shown a great company who had suffered martyrdom for their faith.

The immortality of the soul is no more taught in the “suppressed” passage than in the two last cited.

The fact in the case is that in these visions I was carried forward to the time when the resurrected saints shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. In the same manner the judgment, the second coming of Christ, the establishment of the saints upon the new earth have been presented before me. Does anyone suppose that these scenes have yet transpired? My adversaries show the spirit by which they are actuated in thus accusing me of deception on the strength of a mere “conjecture.”

A Misquotation

In this quotation are also found the words, “I saw two long golden rods on which hung silver wires, and on the wires were glorious grapes.”

My opponents ridicule “that weak and childish expression of glorious grapes growing on silver wires, and these wires attached to golden rods.”

What motive impelled the writer of the above to misstate my words? I do not state that grapes were growing on silver wires. That which I beheld is described as it appeared to me.

It is not to be supposed that grapes were attached to silver wires or golden rods, but that such was the appearance presented. Similar expressions are daily employed by every person in ordinary conversation. When we speak of golden fruit, we are not understood as declaring that the fruit is composed of the precious metal, but simply that it has the appearance of gold. The same rule applied to my words removes all excuse for misapprehension.

The Seal of God

Another “suppression” reads as follows: “Well, bless the Lord, brethren and sisters, it is an extra meeting for those that have the seal of the living God.”

There is nothing in this that we do not still hold. Reference to our published works will show our belief that the living righteous will receive the seal of God prior to the close of probation and also that these will enjoy special honors in the kingdom of God.

Renouncing the Sabbath

The following passage is said to be omitted from the vision related on pages 25-28 [pages 32-35, present edition] of Early Writings:

And if one believed and kept the Sabbath, and received the blessing attending it, and then gave it up, and broke the holy commandment, they would shut the gates of the Holy City against themselves, as sure as there was a God that rules in heaven above.

Those who have clearly seen and fully accepted the truth upon the fourth commandment and have received the blessing attending obedience, but have since renounced their faith and dared to violate the law of God, will find, if they persist in this path of disobedience, the gates of the city of God closed against them.

“Time Nearly Finished”

A statement published in 1851 in Experience and Views, [page 46] and found on page 49 [page 58, present edition] of Early Writings is quoted as proving my testimonies false: “I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the Most Holy Place was nearly finished, and that time cannot last but a very little longer.”

As the subject was presented before me, the period of Christ’s ministration seemed almost accomplished. Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?

Paul writes to the Corinthians: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not.” [1 Corinthians 7:29, 30.]

Again, in his epistle to the Romans, he says, “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.” [Romans 13:12.]

And from Patmos, Christ speaks to us by the beloved John: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” [Revelation 1:3.] “The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” [Revelation 22:6, 7.]

The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional.

God had committed to His people a work to be accomplished on earth. The third angel’s message was to be given; the minds of believers were to be directed to the heavenly sanctuary where Christ had entered to make atonement for His people. The Sabbath reform was to be carried forward. The breach in the law of God must be made up. The message must be proclaimed with a loud voice, that all the inhabitants of earth might receive the warnings. The people of God must purify their souls through obedience to the truth and be prepared to stand without fault before Him at His coming.

Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy

Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.

But in the period of doubt and uncertainty that followed the disappointment, many of the advent believers yielded their faith. Dissensions and divisions came in. The majority opposed with voice and pen the few who, following in the providence of God, received the Sabbath reform and began to proclaim the third angel's message. Many who should have devoted their time and talents to the one purpose of sounding warning to the world were absorbed in opposing the Sabbath truth, and in turn, the labor of its advocates was necessarily spent in answering these opponents and defending the truth. Thus the work was hindered, and the world was left in darkness. Had the whole Adventist body united upon the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, how widely different would have been our history!

It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached went not in "because of unbelief." Hebrews 3:19. Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfil His covenant with them.

For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

There are two other passages said to be found in my first book, but not given in my later writings. Concerning these I shall only say, when I can obtain a book containing them so that I can be assured of the correctness of the quotations and can see for myself their connection, I shall be prepared to speak understandingly in regard to them.

Last-Day Scoffers

From the beginning of my work, I have been pursued by hatred, reproach, and falsehood. Base imputations and slanderous reports have been greedily gathered up and widely circulated by the rebellious, the formalist, and the fanatic. There are ministers of the so-called orthodox churches traveling from place to place to war against Seventh-day Adventists, and they make Mrs. White their textbook. The scoffers of the last days are led on by those ministers professing to be God's watchmen.

The unbelieving world, the ministers of the fallen churches, and the first-day Adventists are all united in the work of assailing Mrs. White. This warfare has been kept up for nearly forty years, but I have not felt at liberty even to notice their vile speeches, reproaches, and insinuations. And I would not now depart from this custom, were it not that some honest souls may be misled by the enemies of the truth who are so exultantly declaring me a deceiver. In the hope of helping the minds of the honest, I make the statements that I do.

I do not expect to reach those who, having seen the light of truth, refuse to heed it, those who have given themselves up to prejudice and entrenched their souls in unbelief.

Jesus, the Majesty of Heaven, He who was equal with God, was in the world thirty-three years, and yet there were but few who acknowledged His divine character. And can I, who am so weak, so unworthy, a frail creature of humanity, expect greater success than was enjoyed by the Saviour of the world?

When I first gave myself to this work, to go when God should bid me, to speak the words which He should give me for the people, I knew that I should receive opposition, reproach, persecution. I have not been disappointed. Had I depended on human applause, I would long ago have become discouraged. But I looked to Jesus and saw that He who was without a fault was assailed by slanderous tongues. Those who made high pretensions to godliness followed as spies upon the Saviour's course and made every exertion in their power to hedge up His way. But although He was all-powerful, He did not visit His adversaries as their sins deserved. He might have launched forth against them the bolts of His vengeance, but He did not. He administered scathing rebukes for their hypocrisy and corruption, and when His message was rejected and His life threatened, He quietly passed to another place to speak the words of life. I have tried, in my weakness, to follow the example of my Saviour.

The Enmity Against Christ

How eagerly the Pharisees sought to prove Christ a deceiver! How they watched His every word, seeking to misrepresent and misinterpret all His sayings! Pride and prejudice and passion closed every avenue of the soul against the testimony of the Son of God. When He plainly rebuked their iniquity and declared that their works proved them to be the children of Satan, they angrily flung back the accusation, saying, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil"? [John 8:48.]

All the arguments urged against Christ were founded in falsehood. So was it in the case of Stephen and of Paul. But the weakest and most unreliable statements made on the wrong side had an influence, because there were so many whose hearts were unsanctified, who desired those statements to be true. Such are ever eager to fasten upon any supposed error or mistake in those who speak to them the unpalatable truth.

It should not surprise us when evil conjectures are greedily seized upon as undoubted facts by those who have an appetite for falsehood. The opposers of Christ were again and again confounded and put to silence by the wisdom of His words; yet they still eagerly listened to every rumor and found some pretext to ply Him again with opposing questions. They were determined not to abandon their purpose. They well knew that if Jesus should continue His work, many would believe on Him and the scribes and Pharisees would lose their power with the people. Hence they were ready to stoop to any base or contemptible measure to accomplish their malicious intentions against Him. They hated the Herodians, yet they joined these inveterate enemies in order to invent some plan to rid the earth of Christ.

Such was the spirit with which the Son of God was met by those whom He came to save. Can any who are seeking to obey God and to bear to the world the message of His truth expect a more favorable reception than was granted Christ?

I have no ill will toward those who are seeking to make of none effect the message which God has given me to reprove, warn, and encourage His people. But as the ambassador of Christ, I must stand in defense of the truth. Who are those that so zealously array themselves against me? Are they the pure and holy children of faith? Have they been born again? Are they partakers of the divine nature? Do they love Jesus and manifest His spirit of meekness and humility? "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Matthew 7:20. Do they resemble the early disciples or those cunning scribes and Pharisees who were constantly watching to entrap Christ in His words? Notice the sharp practice of those ancient opposers of the faith—how lawyers, priests, scribes, and rulers combined to find something against Him who was the light of the world.

And why were they so intent upon condemning Christ? They did not love His doctrines and precepts, and they were displeased as they saw the attention of the people turned to Him and away from their former leaders.

Human nature is human nature still. Let not those who seek to hedge up my way and destroy the influence of my words deceive themselves with the belief that they are doing God [a] service. They are serving another master, and they will be rewarded according to their work.

Rebellion will exist as long as Satan exists. Those who are actuated by his spirit will not discern the Spirit of God or listen to Its voice until the mandate shall go 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.” Revelation 22:11. I expect to encounter the malice of those who despise the light which God has been pleased to give me.

It is God’s plan to give sufficient evidence of the divine character of His work to convince all who honestly desire to know the truth. But He never removes all opportunity for doubt. All who desire to question and cavil will find occasion.

I pity those who have set their feet in the path of doubt and unbelief. I would gladly help them if I could, but the experience of the past gives me little hope that they will ever come to the light. No amount of evidence will convince men of the truth so long as they are unwilling to yield their pride, subdue their carnal nature, and become learners in the school of Christ.

Self-will and pride of opinion lead many to reject the light from heaven. They cling to pet ideas, fanciful interpretations of Scripture, and dangerous heresies; and if a testimony is borne to correct these errors, they will, like many in Christ’s day, go away displeased.

It matters not how blameless the character and life of those who speak to the people the words of God; this procures for them no credit. And why? Because they tell the people the truth. This, brethren, is my offense. But if a false report is circulated, if by some inference or conjecture an imputation is cast upon the character of Christ’s ambassador, with what absurd credulity is it received! How many are ready to magnify and spread the slander! Such are revealing their real character. “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God.” John 8:47.

Calumny and reproach will be the recompense of those who stand for the truth as it is in Jesus. “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12. Those who bear a plain testimony against sin will as surely be hated as was the Master who gave them this work to do in His name.

Like Christ, they will be called the enemies of the church and of religion, and the more earnest and true their efforts to honor God, the more bitter will be the enmity of the ungodly and hypocritical. But we should not be discouraged when thus treated.

We may be called “weak and foolish,” enthusiastic, even insane. It may be said of us as it was of Christ, “He hath a devil.” [John 10:20.] But the work which the Master has given us to do is our work still. We

must direct minds to Jesus, not seeking praise or honor of men, but committing ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously. He knows how to help those who, while following in His steps, suffer in a limited degree the reproach He bore. He was tempted in all points like as we are, that He might know how to succor those who should be tempted.

Whatever wrong construction may be placed upon my testimony by those who profess righteousness yet know not God, I shall in humility go forward with my work. I will speak the words which God gives me to speak in encouragement, reproof, and warning. There remains but a little remnant of my life on earth. The work that my Father hath given me, I will by His grace, perform with fidelity, knowing that all my deeds must pass the scrutiny of Jehovah.

Ms 9, 1883

Walk in the Light

Montpelier, Vermont

September 3, 1883

[The matter which follows was included in Letter 26, 1883, written from Montpelier, Vt., September 3, 1883, to Willie and Mary White, with the heading, "To be read to those assembled in camp meeting, by Mary K. White." The 1883 California camp meeting was held in San Jose, in September. See Signs of the Times, September 27, 1883.]

Our meeting at Worcester, Mass., was very encouraging, and I wish able men could go there at once and proclaim the truth. I have but little hope for those who have had light and have worked against the truth, but I do feel courage for those who have never heard the message. If, instead of caviling and doubting, as some of our people are doing, they would humble their hearts before God, close their souls to temptation and open them to faith, they would be laboring for souls. They would be letting their light shine. They would not then be acting the part of Judas or of Peter who denied his Lord, but would be engaged in building up, strengthening the things that remain.

It is because self is not dead that we see so much caviling, dissension, disunion, and continual doubting. If those who show this disposition had the truth in the heart, they would not notice matters of so little consequence. They would forget self and selfish interest; they would work disinterestedly for the salvation of souls. When I think how strong we might be if we would take hold of the strength of the Mighty One, and then see how weak we are because we do not claim the promises of God, my soul cries out in anguish, "Give not thine heritage to reproach, and let not the heathen say, Where is thy God?" [Joel 2:17.]

This is a time of general dense darkness to the world, but the true light is shining, and we are favored above every other people upon the earth. Our spiritual blessings are more and greater than were given to those who have lived in any other age of the world. But that which makes me tremble for our people is the fact that they do not respond to the light and render corresponding obedience. Our privileges have not made us, as a people, wise, humble, and holy, and the great light which has shone upon us, as the pillar of fire shone upon the Israel of God, will be darkness to all who do not walk in its rays.

We are living in the mediation of Christ, a day when all should think seriously and closely examine their hearts to see whether they be in the faith. We have nought to complain of. Not one word of murmuring

should escape our lips; not one word of doubt should be uttered. There are many among us who profess the truth but who refuse to be crucified with Christ. The Author of our salvation labored and suffered for us. He denied Himself for us; His whole life was one continual scene of toil and privation. He could have done as many of His professed followers choose to do—pass His days on earth in ease and plenty and appropriated to Himself all the pleasures and enjoyments of this life. But He did not. He considered not His own convenience; He lived not to enjoy, but to do good and save others from shame, suffering, and ruin. “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.]

Can those who are partakers of this great salvation, who are objects of this great condescension and infinite love have one breath of complaint, one thought of murmuring because they are not free from trials, toil, and conflicts, because they cannot have a better portion in this life than was given to their Lord? Cannot our enlightened minds comprehend the great privileges which we have through the grace of Christ?

If Jesus had not died our sacrifice and risen again, we should never have known peace, never have felt joy, but only experienced the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. Then let only praise and gratitude be the language of the hearts. All our lives we have been partakers of His heavenly benefits, recipients of the blessings of His priceless atonement. Therefore it is impossible for us to conceive the low and helpless state of ignorance and misery to which we had fallen and from which Christ has raised us. When we feel the pains, the sorrows and bereavements to which we are subject, let not one murmuring thought dishonor our Redeemer. In the hour of trial and affliction consider that we cannot tell how much greater our suffering would be had we not a mediating Saviour; we cannot determine how much less we suffer than our sins deserve.

Oh, that we might, from the eldest to the youngest, seek the Lord as we have never done before! Oh, that we might renounce our sins, break down our pride, and with contrition of soul cast ourselves unreservedly upon Christ, believing that He accepts us just now, not because we are worthy, but because Christ has died! God grant that all who have named the name of Christ might depart from iniquity. All that a God could do has been done for you. He stands now looking upon the people for whom He suffered and died, and says, “What more can I do for My vineyard than I have already done?” [Isaiah 5:4.]

Can we wish to be free from trials and reproach for the truth’s sake? Can we look upon Him whom our sins have pierced and not be willing also to drink with Him of the cup of humiliation? Our sins mingled the bitter cup which He removed from our lips and drank Himself, that in its place He might put to our lips the cup of blessing. He endured the cross, despising the shame, that He might lift us up and reconcile man to God, that whosoever would come unto Him might take of the water of life freely.

Can you, my brethren and sisters, in view of the cross, looking upon Christ crucified, wish or expect to enter His kingdom in any other way than through much tribulation? We have a work to do which we have neglected. We do not love to follow where Jesus leads the way. Our heavenly Father requires of His church and people according to the grace and truth given them, and His requirements are just and right. All His righteous requirements must be fully met, or they remain in force against them. God requires us, as rational, accountable beings, to walk in the light that shines upon us; otherwise our light becomes darkness, and that darkness is in proportion to the amount of light received.

All who profess Christ are accountable for the talents committed to their trust. In order to meet their responsibility Christians must stand on that elevated ground which the truth has for ages been preparing for them. We entirely fail of meeting the mind of the Spirit of God unless we exhibit to the world in character and works that union and oneness with Christ which is in accordance with the light of sacred truth that now shines upon our pathway.

It is not the lack of knowledge and understanding that will condemn Seventh-day Adventists, banish them from the presence of the Lord, and witness against them at the last day. It is the truth of God's Word that has reached the understanding, the light that has illuminated the soul, which will judge and condemn us if we turn away and refuse to be led by it. The light we never had will never be our darkness. If we were blind, we would have no sin, but the Lord has given us great light. Sacred truth has been unfolded to our understanding, but we have not been wise unto salvation. We have not advanced in knowledge and true holiness according to the light and truth which have been bestowed upon us.

I have been shown that God has been very merciful to you in California. Great light has been shining upon you, but there is a great work to be done for yourselves before He can let His rich blessing rest upon you. The character of many is defective, but this is not the greatest evil. Those who are indulging in sin do not put it away, but smooth over their wrongs. Such must be thoroughly transformed in character and in works. When they meet the high standard of the Bible, then will the Lord be to them a present help in every time of need. But we, as a people who have had solemn truth committed to us, are in every way far from meeting the claims of God. How few will bear the test! How few bear the exposure when examined by the light which God has given them! The true inward heart-work must be experienced by many, or they will drift into the deceptions of Satan because they do not come to the knowledge of the truth. Their works are not wrought in God.

Oh, that my dear brethren and sisters would make sure for eternity! There is no hope, no remedy, only in confessing and forsaking sins and with full purpose of heart turning to the Stronghold.

There are advance steps for us to take. There are selfish hearts, covetous hearts, that shut out the blessings of God. The time has come when the Lord requires more of us than merely the payment of the tenth. The message is to go forth, "Sell that ye have, and give alms." [Luke 12:33.] Those who have large farms should begin to cut down and lessen the principal. There is earnest work to do for God, and we are far behind His opening providence. Recall all the mercies and blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon you and consider that He has made you stewards of His goods. Then let each one closely criticize himself and see if he is honoring the Lord with his substance. There are gratitude offerings, thank offerings, and sin offerings. Our obligation to God is endless.

The work of God must not languish for the want of means. God's claims must have attention, and these claims must be discharged first, at whatever cost or sacrifice. God calls upon those who have farms and houses to cut down the principal and make advance moves to extend the work in foreign countries. There are also fields scattered throughout our own land that have not yet been entered.

John Wesley once gave a powerful sermon on the use of money; he laid down three rules: "Make all you can; save all you can; give all you can." To handle much means without saving is improvidence; it is squandering. To hoard up money, adding land to land and house to house, is covetousness and idolatry. To make and to save is wisdom and economy. To give of this means acquired is obeying Christ. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break

through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” [Matthew 6:19, 20.]

Those who have not hitherto felt the claims God has upon them should now begin to act. God calls for all to act a part. Let every needless ornament, every extravagance, every selfish indulgence, be given up, and let these little outgoes, these little streams, flow into the Lord’s treasury. Let us remember continually what Jesus has done for us. He for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. Let us put all confidence in God, trusting ourselves and all we have in His hands. Let us do duty faithfully and then trust in God. He wants not only ours but ourselves.

None can do effectual service unless they do the work He has left for them to do and then leave the result wholly with the Lord. Oh, that those to whom have been entrusted so great and solemn truths would have corresponding faith! They should trust their work in the Lord’s hands, pleading upon their knees for wisdom and guidance, and then instead of taking the burden all back and seeking to plan and execute all themselves and groaning because they are overburdened, let them leave it with the Lord. Avoid a life of constant activity. You will thus find rest to your soul. That which you trust with Him you are not to worry or fret about.

Those who really trust to Him will find the rest He has promised, will find that His yoke is easy and His burden light. If the Lord had a company of workers who would rely wholly upon Him, He would accomplish a great work through them. One could chase a thousand and two would put ten thousand to flight. The Lord is a mighty helper. If we trust in Him we shall have peace and rest.

The language of the soul should be that of joy and gratitude. If any have dark chapters in their experience let them bury them. Let this history not be kept bright by repetition. Forgetting the things that are behind, press forward to the things that are before. Cultivate only those thoughts and those feelings which shall produce gratitude and praise. If you have been wronged, forget it, and think only of the great mercies, the loving-kindness, and inexpressible love of Jesus. Learn to praise rather than to censure.

If you meet with abuse and insult, do not be discouraged, for Jesus met the same. Go forward doing your work. Store the mind with the precious promises of God’s Word and hold communion with God by frequently repeating them. Cease fretting, cease murmuring, cease faultfinding, and make melody to God in your hearts. Think of everything you have to be thankful for and then learn to praise God. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth God.” [Psalm 50:23.] Oh, if all our moanings and frettings and groanings and complainings and hard speeches were presented before us as written in the book of records, what a sight would be revealed to us! How astonished would we be to see and understand our real thoughts and feelings—nought but unhappy complainings.

Now I entreat of you never to utter one word of complaint, but to cherish feelings of gratitude and thankfulness. By so doing you will be learning to make melody to God in your hearts. Weave into your experience the warp and woof, the golden threads, of gratitude. Contemplate the better land, where tears are never shed, where temptations and trials are never experienced, where losses and reproaches are never known, where all is peace and joy and happiness. Here your imagination may have full scope. These thoughts will make you more heavenly-minded, will endue you with heavenly vigor, will satisfy your thirsty soul with rivers of living waters, and will set upon your heart the seal of the divine image.

They will fill you with joy and hope in believing and will abide with you as a comforter forever. May the peace of God abide with you is my prayer.

Ms 11, 1883

Christ our Counselor

1883

Christ, the "Counselor," has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." [Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 11:28.] And again, by the apostle James, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." [James 1:5.] But instead of carrying their perplexities to Jesus, as He has told them to do, many lay their burdens upon human souls; they seek counsel from men, place them where God should be; and as the result, they receive only human help. No other can do our work. By diligent use of our own powers we are to gain knowledge and intelligence. God never designed that another man's mind should do your thinking.

Brethren, do not depend on the president of your conference or the president of the General Conference to think for you. God has given "to every man his work." [Mark 13:34.] When men look to the president of the conference as their helper in all their difficulties, the bearer of their burdens, the counselor in their perplexities, they are doing the very opposite of that which Christ told them to do.

If, while your pens have been employed in writing letters to one already perplexed and over-burdened, you had taken the perplexing things to Jesus and had asked Him to teach you, would it not have been honoring God? Would you not have been showing that you make Him your trust and counselor?

The men appointed to positions of trust are only human. They must receive wisdom and grace from the same source that is open to you. It may be argued that the Lord gives special wisdom to those intrusted with important responsibilities. True, if they walk humbly before Him, He will give them help for their work; and He will give you help for yours, if you seek it in the same spirit.

He who is walking in the counsel of God will seek to lead his brethren to turn to the only Source that is untainted with the errors of humanity instead of looking to him to define their duty. He should see the peril of encouraging any to look to man for wisdom and should refuse to be brains and conscience for his brethren. If all, laymen and workers, are thus taught to look to God in humility for wisdom, many dangers will be averted.

If the leader errs, if he permits human influence to sway his judgment or yields to temptation, he can be corrected and helped by his brethren. Those who learn to rely upon God in their difficulties will be growing in faith, in experience; they will be gaining spiritual strength. It is the neglect to do as Christ has told them to do that makes men so destitute of the fruits of the Spirit of God, so dwarfed in religious experience.

There has been on the part of our people a trifling with personal responsibilities. They have not wrestled with difficulties with earnest prayer and diligent effort, and they have looked for the approval of mortal man with far greater anxiety than for the approval of God.

Satan exults as he sees men looking to and trusting in man, for often a two-fold evil is thus wrought. The one who is the object of this undue confidence is exposed to strong temptation. In consequence Satan will, if possible, lead him to self-confidence in order that human defects may mar their work. He will be in danger of encouraging his brethren in their dependence upon him and feeling that all things which pertain to the movements of the cause must be brought to his notice. Thus the work will bear the impress of man instead of the impress of God.

In order to perform his work in the very best manner to meet the approval of God, each laborer must think and plan for himself, while at the same time he should be ready to receive counsel from his brethren. While brethren should counsel together in laying their plans for the work, there should be on the part of all far more earnest effort in seeking God for higher counsel. Thus each will have an experience that does not have its foundation in any human being, but in the living God.

Ms 12, 1883

Diary Fragments — Early 1883

1883

[Early 1883]

We went to Forestville Thursday with Br. Ross's two children. Stayed overnight. Next morning, Friday, went to Br. Lyttaker. Sister L. was at Healdsburg. Called on her daughter. Sister Ross found her sick in bed. Prayed with her and tried to comfort her. She was alone in faith among unbelievers and seemed much discouraged. About two p.m. we went on our way to Santa Rosa. [We were] welcomed at Dr. Coles. I felt drawn out to talk in regard to our having courage under all circumstances. The church is reduced in numbers (many moved to Healdsburg to be benefited with the college) which has a discouraging influence on the remaining few.

I spoke on Sabbath in regard to faithfulness under discouraging appearances. We had a good social meeting. Nearly everyone spoke. Sunday early we left for Healdsburg. Sister Cole accompanied us.

Elder Brownsberger asked me to speak Sunday evening. I was weary, but the Lord was my Helper. I was carried away from and out of myself. I forgot my weakness in the precious subject, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, & c." [John 14:1.] The power of God rested upon me. The audience was deeply attentive.

February 17-26, 1883

Spoke in Healdsburg College, Feb. 17. Wrote ten pages.

Spoke to the people Sunday evening, Feb. 18—to a large congregation. Had great freedom in speaking.

Spoke Sabbath, Feb. 24, in regard to keeping the Sabbath according to the commandment. Many confessions were made in the social meeting in regard to their being remiss in keeping the Sabbath according to the commandment, many saying that they had not seen it in this light before. They would from that time regard the Sabbath with greater sacredness. They had blacked their boots on Sabbath, done unnecessary cooking on Sabbath. They would take a different course.

I wrote 20 pages on Vol. 4. Sunday evening spoke in College chapel to a crowded house. They listened as if spellbound. My text was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, & c." [Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37.] I had great liberty in addressing the people. Wrote 12 pages for Vol. 4.

Monday, 26th, I feel my labors of Sabbath and Sunday, but my trust is in the Lord. He has been my Helper and He will be my Tower of strength.

March 2-7, 1883

Friday, March [2], Br. and Sr. Ings and I rode to Santa Rosa. Spoke in Santa Rosa Sabbath. Sunday, 4th, spoke in Forestville. Rode home to Healdsburg that night. Monday [1] was too weary to write. Tuesday, 6th, wrote 15 pages. Wednesday wrote 15 pages.

March 25, 1883

Mr. Wallace, his wife, and wife's sister, visited us.