

Ellen G. White 1876 Signs of The Times

January 6, 1876

Christian Temperance

We are living in an age of intemperance. Health and life are sacrificed, by very many, to gratify their appetite for hurtful indulgences. These last days are characterized by depreciated morals and physical debility, in consequence of these indulgences and the general unwillingness to engage in physical labor. Many are suffering today from inaction and wrong habits.

The majority of the youth of this generation are fond of amusements and afraid of work. They generally lack moral courage to deny appetite and respond to the claims of duty. They have but little self-control, and become excited and passionate on the slightest occasion. Idleness and plenty of money to spend in amusements, exciting pleasures, wines, liquors and tobacco, lay the foundation for disease and ruin. Manhood and virtue are sacrificed upon the altar of lust. Very many of every age and station in life are without principle or conscience, and with spend-thrift habits are rushing into all vices, and are corrupting society, until our world is becoming a second Sodom.

Gluttonous feasting and the indulgence of narcotics and stimulants, are carried to great lengths even by the Christian world. How many close their last precious hours of probationary time, in scenes of gaiety, feasting and amusement, where serious thoughts are not allowed to enter, where the spirit of Jesus would be unwelcome! Their last precious hours are passing while their minds are benumbed with tobacco and alcoholic liquors. There are not a few who pass directly from the dens of infamy to the sleep of death; they close their life-record among the associations of dissipation and vice. What will the awakening be at the resurrection of the unjust!

The eye of the Lord is open upon every scene of debasing amusement and profane dissipation. The words and deeds of the pleasure-lovers pass directly from these halls of vice to the Book of final records. What is the life of this class worth to the world, except as a beacon of warning to those who will be warned, not to live like these men, and die as the fool dieth. The apostle thus entreats, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

When we pursue a course of eating and drinking that lessens physical and mental vigor, or become the prey of habits that tend to the same results, we dishonor God, for we rob him of the service he claims from us. Those who acquire and indulge the unnatural appetite for tobacco, do this at the expense of health. They are destroying nervous energy, lessening vital force and sacrificing mental strength.

Those who profess to be the followers of Christ yet have this terrible sin at their door, cannot have a high appreciation of the atonement and an elevated estimate of eternal things. Minds that are clouded

and partially paralyzed by narcotics, are easily overcome by temptation, and cannot enjoy communion with God.

Those who use tobacco can make but a poor plea to the liquor inebriate. Two-thirds of the drunkards in our land created an appetite for liquor by the use of tobacco. Those who claim that tobacco does not injure them, can be convinced of their mistake by depriving themselves of it for a few days; the trembling nerves, the giddy head, the irritability they feel, will prove to them that this sinful indulgence has bound them in slavery. It has overcome will power. They are in bondage to a vice that is fearful in its results.

The love of tobacco is a warring lust. Means are thereby squandered that would aid in the good work of clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and sending the truth to poor souls out of Christ. What a record will appear when the accounts of life are balanced in the book of God! It will then appear that vast sums of money have been expended for tobacco and alcoholic liquors! For what? To ensure health and prolong life? Oh, no! To aid in the perfection of Christian character and a fitness for the society of holy angels? Oh, no! But to minister to a depraved, unnatural appetite for that which poisons and kills not only the user but those to whom he transmits his legacy of disease and imbecility. God does not propose to work a miracle to preserve our health and strength which we are daily injuring by vice and habits of hurtful indulgence.

Food prepared with condiments and spices inflames the stomach, corrupts the blood and paves the way to stronger stimulants. It induces nervous debility, impatience and lack of self-control. Tobacco and the wine-cup follow.

We have seen that the victories gained by the "Temperance Crusade" are not often permanent. In those places where the excitement ran highest and apparently the most was accomplished in closing liquor saloons and reclaiming inebriates, after the lapse of a few months, intemperance prevailed to a greater extent than before the effort to suppress it was made.

The reason of this is evident. The work is not deep and thorough. The axe is not laid at the root of the tree. The roots of intemperance lie deeper than mere liquor drinking. In order to make the temperance movement a success, the work of reform must begin at our tables. Eating flesh-meat does not increase physical, mental, or moral health, but, on the contrary, frequently causes diseases of a very aggravating character. The use of highly seasoned meats creates an appetite for stronger stimulants such as tobacco and liquor.

The immediate results of meat-eating may be apparently to invigorate the system, but this is no reason for its being considered the best article of diet. The moderate use of brandy will have the same effect for the time being, but when its exciting influence is gone there follows a sense of languor and debility. Those who depend upon simple and nutritious food, that is comparatively unstimulating in its effects, can endure more labor in the course of months and years than the meat-eater or the liquor-drinker. They who work in the open air will feel less injury from the use of flesh-meats than those of sedentary habits, for sun and air are great helps to digestion, and do much to counteract the effect of wrong habits of eating and drinking.

All stimulants hurry the human machinery too fast, and although, for the time, activity and vigor may seem to be increased, in proportion to the irritating influence employed, there must be a reaction; a debility will follow corresponding in degree to the unnatural excitement that has been produced.

When this debility is felt, something to stimulate and tone up the system is again used to give immediate relief from disagreeable languor. Nature is gradually educated to rely upon this oft-repeated remedy, until her powers are enfeebled by being often aroused to unnatural action. All persons should become acquainted with the laws of their being. It should be an important subject of study, how to live, how to regulate labor, and how to eat and drink in reference to health.

The more simply and naturally we live the better shall we be able to resist epidemic and disease. If our habits are good and the system is not weakened by unnatural action, Nature will furnish all the stimulus that we require.

If men and women perseveringly live in accordance with the laws of life and of health, they will realize the blessed results of an entire health reform. But many make a mistake at the very commencement of their reform. They go to extremes. They carry their ideas too far. Their views in regard to healthful diet are too narrow. They have the same articles of food upon their tables, with scarcely a variation, from week to week, and from month to month. They take no pains to prepare fruits and grains in an inviting as well as healthful manner, and, after this course has been rigidly followed for a while, they decide that they cannot follow out the principles of health reform, and go back to their former manner of living.

Those who set out from impulse and pursue a radical course for a time and then go back, do great injury to the cause. Many make too great and sudden changes in their diet. As the light of health reform comes to them, conscience is aroused in regard to their eating and drinking, and in their effort to change their habits of living they do not preserve a safe medium, but go to an extreme at once. They reduce the quantity and quality of their food. This abstemiousness reduces their strength, and really injures their health. They finally conclude that they cannot live the health reform. The real facts in the case are, they never did carry out its principles. Health reform as we understand it, does not consist in an impoverished diet. The table should be well provided with fruits and grains prepared in such a manner that they are not only nutritious but inviting.

Some get the idea that to adopt the health reform is to subsist upon the very cheapest food prepared with the least labor. This is not true. It is a libel on the principles of health reform. The human system must have nourishment, and all cannot relish the same dishes. So when the table is spread with the same article of food, prepared in the same way, meal after meal and day after day, some members of the family may be well satisfied and enjoying their food very much, while others may be only able to eat sparingly of one dish and the wants of the system will not be met; for it is a fact that some persons cannot relish, or be nourished by articles of food which others enjoy and thrive upon. But every person may do much towards educating the taste and appetite to relish plain and healthful food, such as graham bread and oat-meal gruel, and various vegetables, even if they are at first distasteful to them.

The rule which some recommend, is to eat whenever there is a sense of hunger, and to eat until satisfied. This course will lead to disease and numerous evils. Appetite at the present day is not

generally natural, therefore is not a correct index to the wants of the system. It has been pampered and misdirected until it has become morbid and can no longer be a safe guide. Nature has been abused, her efforts crippled by wrong habits and indulgence in sinful luxuries, until taste and appetite are alike perverted. It is unnatural to have a craving for flesh-meats. It was not thus in the beginning. The appetite for meat has been made and educated by man. Our Creator has furnished us, in vegetables, grain, and fruits, all the elements of nutrition necessary to health and strength. Flesh-meats composed no part of the food of Adam and Eve before their fall. If fruits, vegetables and grains are not sufficient to meet the wants of man, then the Creator made a mistake in providing for Adam.

The habits of the age are serious obstacles to the perfecting of Christian character. Physically we are composed of what we eat, and our minds are greatly influenced by our bodies. If we subsist largely upon the flesh of animals, the animal nature is increased in like proportion. Man is sufficiently animal in his nature without cultivating those propensities by the eating of food which stimulates and excites the animal organs to activity. As these propensities are strengthened the mental and moral powers are diminished.

God did not withhold meat from the Hebrews in the wilderness simply to show his authority, but for their good, that they might preserve physical and moral strength. He knew that the use of animal food strengthens the animal passions and enfeebles the intellect. He knew that the gratification of the appetite of the Hebrews for flesh-meats, would weaken their moral powers, and induce such an irritable disposition that the vast army would become insubordinate, that they would lose the high sense of their moral obligations, and refuse to be controlled by the wise laws of Jehovah. Violence and rebellion would exist among them, making it impossible for them to be a pure and happy people in the land of Canaan. God knew what was best for the children of Israel, therefore he deprived them in a great measure of flesh-meats.

Satan tempted them to consider this unjust and cruel. He caused them to lust after forbidden things, because he saw that through the indulgence of perverted appetite they would become carnally-minded and could be easily brought to do his will; the lower organs would be strengthened, while the intellectual and moral powers would be weakened.

Satan is no novice in the business of destroying souls. He well knows that if he can lead men and women into wrong habits of eating and drinking, he has gained, in a great degree, the control of their minds and baser passions. In the beginning man ate of the fruits of the earth, but sin brought into use the flesh of dead animals as food. This diet works directly against the spirit of true refinement and moral purity. The substance of that which is taken into the stomach, passes into the circulation, and is converted into flesh and blood.

Those who subsist largely upon flesh-meats inflame the stomach thereby, the blood becomes torpid and impure, head-aches and indispositions follow. The system is filled with humors; fevers, scrofula and cancers are the consequences. Especially is this true of those who eat swine's flesh. Yet so great is the tendency to ignore these evils, that few can be brought to realize the true effects of this sort of diet upon the human system.

God requires that his people should be temperate in all things. The example of Christ, during that long fast in the wilderness, should teach his followers to repulse Satan when he comes under the guise of appetite. Then may they have influence to reform those who have been led astray by indulgence, and have lost moral power to overcome the weakness and sin that has taken possession of them. Thus may Christians secure health and happiness, in a pure, well-ordered life and a mind clear and untainted before God.

January 6, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

[Note: This article introduces a series of fifteen, published from January 6 to May 11, 1876, provided by James White, the editor. It represents his method of bringing to the attention of the general public the call and work of his wife, Ellen G. White. Each article is comprised mainly of the story of her life as she told it in 1860 in *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume II, an autobiographical account she wrote for the reading of the household of faith. As it was prepared for the columns of the missionary journal of the church, it was slightly edited to better fit the needs of the general reading public. Being a variant of the *Spiritual Gifts* account, the articles are included in this facsimile reprint.]

White Estate.

The name of Mrs. Ellen G. White is widely known in consequence of her writings and her public labors as a speaker in nineteen of the States and in the Canadas. Her books in print amount to about four thousand pages which have had an extensive circulation. And her labors as a speaker cover a period of more than thirty years. But in the last ten years the providence of God, in harmony with the wishes of the people with whom she has been connected, has moved her out to speak to the crowds at our annual conferences and camp-meetings in the several states where they have been held. Newspaper reporters have given sketches of her addresses, and have made statements of their effects upon audiences which have given her prominence in the minds of thousands who have neither read her books nor heard her speak. And the fact which is made prominent in her books that Mrs. White has received the sentiments she has taught by direct revelation from God, has made her a person of peculiar interest to all those who have received her as one thus favored of the Lord. And, on the other hand, persons have not been wanting among those who reject her testimony and her work, to mention her name unfavorably through the press, and in the spirit of persecution seek to excite prejudice against her. This, however, has served as an advertisement, and has greatly increased the desire of the people to hear her speak, and to read her books.

In view of the situation, we have for several years felt that it was due the public that the life, Christian experience, and labors of Mrs. White, be brought out in a humble volume for circulation as extensively as her name is known. Almost every opponent, in preaching and writing against the Sabbath and other doctrines held by the Seventh-day Adventists, refers to Mrs. White and her work in a scoffing manner, in order to please the rabble, and prejudice honest people. And many, in consequence of misrepresentations of her work, and from want of knowledge of the facts in the case, take unfavorable views of the cause with which she has held close connection from its earliest existence. It is therefore

necessary in order to disabuse honest minds, and for the general good of the cause of Bible truth, that her work be correctly represented, and properly defended before the people. The reader will doubtless be interested in brief sketches of Mrs. White's parentage and early life.

Her parents, Robert and Eunice Harmon, were residents of Maine. In early life they were earnest and devoted members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In that church they held prominent connection, and labored for the conversion of sinners, and to build up the cause of God for a period of forty years. During this time they had the joy of seeing their children, eight in number, all converted and gathered to the fold of Christ. Their decided Second Advent views, however, severed the connection of the family from the Methodist Church in the year 1843, after which meetings were held in their house in the city of Portland much of the time for several years. Of her early life and Christian experience we will here let Mrs. White speak for herself, as taken from her second volume of Spiritual Gifts.

“At the age of nine years an accident happened to me which was to affect my whole life. In company with my twin sister and one of our schoolmates, I was crossing a common in the city of Portland, Maine, when a girl about thirteen years of age, also a member of our school, becoming angry at some trifle, followed us, threatening to strike us. Our parents had taught us never to contend with any one, but if we were in danger of being abused or injured, to hasten home at once. We were doing this with all speed, but the girl followed us as rapidly, with a stone in her hand. I turned my head to see how far she was behind me, and as I did so, she threw the stone and it hit me on the nose. A blinding, stunning sensation overpowered me, I fell senseless.

“When I revived and became conscious, I found myself in a merchant's store, my garments were covered with blood which was pouring from my nose and streaming over the floor. A kind stranger offered to take me home in his carriage, but I, not knowing how weak I was, told him that I preferred to walk home rather than soil his carriage with blood. Those present were not aware that I was so seriously injured, and allowed me to have my own way; but I had only walked a few rods when I grew faint and dizzy. My twin sister and my schoolmate carried me home.

“I have no recollection of any thing further for some time after the accident. My mother said that I noticed nothing but lay in a stupor for three weeks; no one but herself thought it possible for me to recover. For some reason she felt that I would live. A kind neighbor, who had been very much interested in my behalf, at one time thought me to be dying. She wished to purchase a burial robe for me, but my mother said ‘Not yet,’ for something told her that I would not die.

“When I again aroused to consciousness, it seemed to me that I had been asleep. I did not remember the accident and was ignorant of the cause of my illness. As I began to gain a little strength, my curiosity was aroused by overhearing those who came to visit me say ‘What a pity!’ ‘I should not have known her,’ etc. I asked for a looking-glass, and as I gazed into it, I was shocked at the change in my appearance. Every feature of my face seemed changed. The bones of my nose had been broken and caused this disfigurement.

“The idea of carrying my misfortune through life was insupportable. I could see no pleasure in my existence. I did not wish to live and I dared not die for I was unprepared. Friends often visited my

parents and looked with pity upon me and advised them to prosecute the father of the girl who had, as they said, ruined me. But my mother was for peace; she said that if such a course could bring me back my health and natural looks there would be something gained, but as this was impossible, it was best not to make enemies by following such advice.

“Physicians thought that a silver wire might be put in my nose to hold it in shape. This would have been very painful, and they feared it would be of little use, as I had lost so much blood and sustained such a nervous shock that my recovery was very doubtful. Even if I revived it was their opinion I could live but a short time. I was reduced almost to a skeleton.

“At this time I began to pray the Lord to prepare me for death. When Christian friends visited the family, they would ask my mother if she had talked to me about dying. I overheard this and it roused me. I desired to become a Christian and prayed as well as I could for the forgiveness of my sins. I felt a peace of mind resulting. I loved every one and felt desirous that all should have their sins forgiven and love Jesus as I did.

“I well remember one night in winter when the snow was on the ground, the heavens were lighted up, the sky looked red and angry, and seemed to open and shut, while the snow looked like blood. The neighbors were very much frightened. Mother took me out of bed in her arms and carried me to the window. I was happy, I thought Jesus was coming, and I longed to see him. My heart was full, I clapped my hands for joy, and thought my sufferings were ended. But I was disappointed; the singular appearance faded away from the heavens, and the next morning the sun arose the same as usual.”

J. W.

January 13, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

We do not say that there are no sound conversions to God in advanced years; but we do affirm that good Christian character is seldom commenced and matured in old age, and even then is perfected under great difficulties. Both the experiences of the past and the uniform appeals of the sacred writers to the young, to seek the Lord in their youth, give evidence that early life, even in tender years, is most favorable to the formation and growth of true Christian character.

Providence, to outward view, was dealing severely with Mrs. W. in her childhood, but now she can look back over thirty years of hardships, toils, and reproaches in the cause of Christ, for his dear name's sake, and kiss the chastening rod that struck down her early hopes for this life, but was sanctified of God to her early consecration and mature growth in grace. Of this we let her speak, as continued from last week:

“I gained strength very slowly. As I became able to join in play with my young friends I was forced to learn the bitter lesson that one's personal appearance makes a difference in the treatment they receive from the majority of their companions. At the time of my misfortune, my father was absent in Georgia. When he returned he embraced my brother and sisters and then inquired for me. I, timidly shrinking

back, was pointed out by my mother, but my own father did not recognize me. It was hard for him to believe that I was his little Ellen, whom he had left only a few months before a healthy, happy child. This cut my feelings deeply, but I tried to appear cheerful though my heart seemed breaking.

“Many times in those childish days, I was made to feel my misfortune keenly. My feelings were unusually sensitive and caused me great unhappiness. Often with a wounded pride, mortified and wretched in spirit, have I sought a lonely place and gloomily contemplated the trials I was daily doomed to bear.

“I had not the relief of tears, for I could not weep readily as could my twin sister, so, though my heart was heavy and ached as if it were breaking, I could not shed a tear. I often felt that it would greatly relieve me to weep away my overcharged feelings. Sometimes the kindly sympathy of friends banished my gloom and removed, for a time, the leaden weight that oppressed my heart. How vain and empty seemed the pleasures of earth to me then! How changeable the friendships of my young companions! yet these little schoolmates were not unlike a majority of the great world's people. A pretty face, a handsome dress attracts them, but let misfortune take these away and the fragile friendship grows cold or is broken. But when I turned to my Saviour, he comforted me. I sought the Lord earnestly in my trouble and received consolation, for I believed that Jesus loved even me.

“My health seemed to be completely shattered. For two years I could not breathe through my nose, and was able to attend school but little. It seemed impossible for me to study and retain what I learned. The same girl who was the cause of my misfortune, was appointed monitor by our teacher, and it was among her duties to assist me in my writing and other lessons. She always seemed sincerely sorry for the great injury she had done me, although I was careful not to remind her of it. She was tender and patient with me, and seemed sad and thoughtful as she saw me laboring, under serious disadvantages, to get an education.

“My nervous system was prostrated, and my hand trembled so that I made but little progress in writing and could get no farther than the simple copies in coarse hand. As I endeavored to bend my mind to my studies, the letters on the page would run together, great drops of perspiration would stand upon my brow, and a faintness and giddiness would seize me. I had a bad cough, and my whole system seemed debilitated: My teachers advised me to leave school and not pursue my studies further till my health would warrant it. It was the hardest struggle of my young life to yield to my feebleness, and decide that I must give up my studies and relinquish the cherished hope of acquiring an education.

“My ambition to become a scholar had been very great, and when I pondered over my disappointed hopes, and the thought that I was to be an invalid for life, despair seized me. The future stretched out before me dark and cheerless, without one ray of light. I was unreconciled to my lot, and at times murmured against the providence of God in thus afflicting me. I concealed my troubled feelings from my family and friends, fearing that they could not understand me. This was a mistaken course, had I opened my mind to my mother, she might have instructed, soothed, and encouraged me.

“After I had struggled with this unreconciled spirit for days the tempter came under a new guise and increased my distress by condemning me for having allowed such rebellious thoughts to take possession

of my mind. My conscience was perplexed, and I knew no way to extricate myself from the labyrinth in which I was wandering.

“The happy confidence in the Saviour's love that I had enjoyed during my illness, was gone. I had lost the blessed consciousness that I was a child of God, and felt that the hopes of my heart had deceived me. It was my determination not to again put confidence in my feelings, until I knew for a certainty that the Lord had pardoned my sins.

“At times my sense of guilt and responsibility to God lay so heavy upon my soul, that I could not sleep but lay awake for hours, thinking of my lost condition and what was best for me to do. The consequences of my unfortunate accident again assumed gigantic proportions in my mind. I seemed to be cut off from all chance of earthly happiness, and doomed to continual disappointment and mortification. I was even pained by the tender sympathy of my friends, for my pride rebelled against being in a condition to excite their pity. My prospect of worldly enjoyment was blighted, and Heaven seemed closed against me.

“I had the highest reverence for Christians and ministers of the gospel, but religion seemed too holy and sacred for me to obtain. A strange inconceivable anguish bore me down until I felt that I could no longer live beneath the burden. I locked my secret agony within my heart, and did not seek the advice of experienced Christians as I should have done.

“No one conversed with me on the subject of my soul's salvation, and no one prayed with me. I felt that Christians were so far removed from me, so much nobler and purer than myself, that I dared not approach them on the subject that engrossed my thoughts, for I was ashamed to reveal the lost and wretched condition of my heart.”

J. W.

January 20, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

Thorough Christian experience lies at the foundation of the Christian life. Such experiences can be read from our blessed Bible, from the prophets, the psalms, and from the epistles, and acts of the apostles. These are distinctly marked by sorrow for sin, self-abasement, solemn vows of consecration and obedience followed by the peace of God ruling in the heart which passeth all knowledge.

Experiences of this kind were common in the good old days of thorough reformation about the time when Wm. Miller came upon the stage as a lecturer upon the prophecies, giving his reasons for expecting the second coming of Christ “about the year 1843.” Then, and long before that time, the wholesome phrase was current, that this one and that were “struck under conviction.” Mrs. W. Continues her experience:

“In March, 1840, Eld. Wm. Miller visited Portland, Me., and gave his first course of lectures on the second coming of Christ. These lectures produced a great sensation, and the Christian church, on Casco

street, that Eld. Miller occupied, was crowded day and night. No wild excitement attended these meetings, but a deep solemnity pervaded the minds of those who heard his discourses. Not only was there manifested a great interest in the city, but the country people flocked in day after day, bringing their lunch-baskets, and remaining from morning until the close of the evening meeting.

“Eld. Miller dwelt upon the prophecies, reasoning from Bible history, that the end of the world was near. In company with my friends I attended these meetings and listened to the strange doctrines of the preacher. Four years previous to this, on my way to school, I had picked up a scrap of paper containing an account of a man in England, who was preaching that the earth would be consumed in about thirty years from that time. I took this paper home and read it to the family.

“In contemplating the event predicted, a great terror seized me; for the time seemed so short for the conversion and salvation of the world. I had been taught that a temporal millennium would take place prior to the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Such a deep impression was made upon my mind by the little paragraph on the waste scrap of paper, that I could scarcely sleep for several nights, and prayed continually to be ready when Jesus came.

“But now I was listening to the most solemn and powerful sermons to the effect that Christ was coming in 1843, only a few short years in the future. The preacher traced down the prophecies with a keen exactitude that struck conviction to the hearts of his hearers. He dwelt upon the prophetic periods, and piled up proof to strengthen his position. Then his solemn and powerful appeals and admonitions to those who were unprepared, held the crowds as if spell-bound.

“Special meetings were appointed where sinners might have an opportunity to seek their Saviour and prepare for the fearful events soon to take place. Terrible conviction spread through the entire city. Prayer-meetings were established, and there was a general awakening among the various denominations, for they all felt more or less the influence that proceeded from the teaching of the near coming of Christ.

“When sinners were invited forward to the anxious seats, hundreds responded to the call, and I, among the rest, pressed through the crowd and took my humble place with the seekers. But there was a hopeless feeling in my heart that I could never become worthy to be called a child of God. A lack of confidence in myself and a conviction that it would be impossible to make any one understand my feelings, prevented me from seeking advice and aid from my Christian friends. Thus I wandered needlessly in darkness and despair, while they, not penetrating my peculiar reserve, were entirely ignorant of my true state.

“One evening my brother Robert and myself were returning from a meeting where we had listened to a most impressive discourse on the approaching reign of Christ upon the earth, followed by an earnest and solemn appeal to Christians and sinners, urging them to prepare for the Judgment and the coming of the Lord. My soul had been stirred within me by what I had heard. And so deep was the sense of conviction in my heart, that I feared the Lord would not spare me to reach home.

“These words kept ringing in my ears, The great day of the Lord is at hand! Who shall be able to stand when he appeareth! The language of my heart was, ‘Spare me, O Lord, through the night! Take me not away in my sins, pity me, save me!’ For the first time, I tried to explain my feelings to my brother Robert, who was two years older than myself; I told him that I dared not rest nor sleep until I knew that God had pardoned my sins.

“My brother made no immediate response, but the cause of his silence was soon apparent to me; he was weeping in sympathy with my distress. This encouraged me to confide in him still more, to tell him that I had coveted death in the days when life seemed so heavy a burden for me to bear; but now the thought that I might die in my present sinful state and be eternally lost, filled me with inexpressible terror. I asked him if he thought God would spare my life through that one night, if I spent it agonizing in prayer to him. He answered, ‘I think he will if you ask him with faith, and I will pray for you and for myself. Ellen, we must never forget the words we have heard this night.

“Arriving home. I spent the most of the long hours of darkness in prayer and tears. One special reason that prompted me to conceal my feelings from my friends, was that I very much dreaded a word of discouragement. My hope was so small, and my faith so weak, that I feared if another took a similar view of my condition, it would plunge me into absolute despair. Yet how I longed to have some one tell me what I should do to be saved, what steps to take to meet my Saviour and give myself entirely up to the Lord. I regarded it a great thing to be a Christian, and felt that it required some peculiar effort on my part.

“For months my mind remained in this condition. I had usually attended the Methodist meetings with my parents; but since becoming interested in the soon appearing of Christ, I had attended the meetings on Casco street. The following summer my parents went to the Methodist Camp-meeting at Burton, Me., taking me with them. I was fully resolved to seek the Lord in earnest there, and obtain, if possible, the pardon of my sins. There was a great longing in my heart for the Christians hope and the peace that comes of believing.

“Some things at this camp-meeting perplexed me exceedingly. I could not understand the exercises of many persons during the conference meetings at the stand and in the tents. They shouted at the top of their voices, clapped their hands, and appeared greatly excited. Quite a number fell, through exhaustion it appeared to me, but those present said they were sanctified to God, and this wonderful manifestation was the power of the Almighty upon them. After lying motionless for a time, these persons would rise and again talk and shout as before.

“In some of the tents, meetings were continued through the night, by those who were praying for freedom from sin and the sanctification of the Spirit of God. Quite a number became sick in consequence of the excitement and loss of sleep, and were obliged to leave the ground. These singular manifestations brought no relief to me, but rather increased my discouragement. I despaired of ever becoming a Christian if, in order to obtain the blessing, it was necessary for me to be exercised as these people were. I was terrified by such peculiar demonstrations, and at a loss to understand them.”

J. W.

January 27, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

The Christian life is made up of Christian experience from beginning to end. And it is important that the convert should commence the new life with correct views of the change from sin to obedience and holiness. True repentance is a sorrow for sins committed, and forsaking a sinful life by turning to the Lord with full purpose of heart. Conversion means change. For want of a proper sense of the great change in scriptural conversion, very many are converted only in part, and never reach the Bible standard of the Christian life. Last week Mrs. W. Spoke of her early conviction. Of confiding faith and pardoning love, she speaks this week as follows:

“At length I was greatly relieved while listening to a discourse from the words, ‘I will go in unto the king,’ ‘and if I perish, I perish.’ In his remarks the speaker referred to those who were wavering between hope and fear, longing to be saved from their sins and receive the pardoning love of Christ, yet held in doubt and bondage by timidity and fear of failure. He counseled such ones to surrender themselves to God and venture upon his mercy without delay. They would find a gracious Saviour ready to present to them the scepter of mercy even as Ahasuerus offered to Esther the signal of his favor. All that was required of the sinner, trembling in the presence of his Lord, was to put forth the hand of faith and touch the scepter of his grace. That touch ensured pardon and peace.

“Those who were waiting to make themselves more worthy of divine favor, before they dared venture to claim the promises, were making a fatal mistake. Jesus alone cleanses from sin, he only can forgive our transgressions. He has pledged himself to listen to the petition and grant the prayer of those who come to him in faith. Many had a vague idea that they must make some wonderful effort in order to gain the favor of God. But all self-dependence is vain. It is only by connection with Jesus through faith that the sinner becomes a hopeful, believing child of God.

“These words comforted me and gave me views of what I must do to be saved. Soon after this I passed into a tent where the people were praying and shouting, some confessing their sins and crying for mercy, while others were rejoicing in their new-found happiness. My attention was attracted to a little girl who seemed to be in great distress. Her face would pale and flush by turns, as though she were passing through a severe conflict.

“Tightly clasped in her arms was a pretty little parasol, occasionally she would loosen her hold of it for a moment as if about to let it fall, then her grasp would tighten upon it again; all the time she seemed to be regarding it with a peculiar fascination. At last she cried out, ‘Dear Jesus, I want to love thee and go to Heaven! Take away my sins! I give myself to thee, parasol and all.’ She threw herself into her mother’s arms weeping and exclaiming, ‘Ma, I am so happy, for Jesus loves me and I love him better than my parasol or anything else!’

“The face of the child was fairly radiant, she had surrendered her little all. In her childish experience she had fought the battle and won the victory. There was much weeping and rejoicing in the tent. The mother was deeply moved and very joyful that the Lord had added her dear child as a lamb to his fold.

She explained to those present that her little daughter had received the parasol as a present not long before. She was very much delighted with it, and had kept it in her hands most of the time, even taking it to bed with her.

“During the meeting her tender heart had been moved to seek the Saviour, she had heard that nothing must be withheld from Jesus, that nothing short of an entire surrender of ourselves and all we have would be acceptable with him. The little parasol was the child's earthly treasure upon which her heart was set, and, in the struggle to give it up to the Lord, she had passed through a trial keener perhaps than that of the mature Christian, who sacrifices this world's treasures for the sake of Christ.

“It was afterwards explained to the little girl, that since she had relinquished her parasol to Jesus, and it no longer stood between herself and her love for him, it was right for her to retain and use it in a proper manner.

“Many times in after life that little incident has been brought to my mind. When I saw men and women holding desperately to the riches and vanity of earth, yet anxiously praying for the love of Christ, I would think, ‘How hard it is to give up the parasol!’ Yet Jesus gave up Heaven for our sake, and became poor that we, through his poverty and humiliation, might secure eternal riches.

“I now began to see my way more clearly, and the darkness began to pass away. I saw that, in my despair of at once attaining to the perfection of Christian character, I had scarcely dared to make the trial of serving God. I now earnestly sought the pardon of my sins and strove to give myself entirely to the Lord. But my mind was often in great distress for I did not experience the spiritual ecstasy that I considered would be the evidence of my acceptance with God, and dared not believe myself converted without it. How much I needed instruction concerning the simplicity of faith.

“While bowed at the altar with others who were seeking the Lord, all the language of my heart was, ‘Help, Jesus, save me or I perish! I will never cease to entreat till my prayer is heard and my sins forgiven!’ I felt my needy, helpless condition as never before. As I knelt and prayed, suddenly my burden left me and my heart was light. At first a feeling of alarm came over me and I tried to resume my load of distress again. It seemed to me that I had no right to feel joyous and happy. But Jesus seemed very near me, I felt able to come to him with all my griefs, misfortunes and trials, even as the needy ones came to him for relief when he was upon earth. There was a surety in my heart that he understood my peculiar trials and sympathized with me. I can never forget this precious assurance of the pitying tenderness of Jesus toward one so unworthy of his notice. I learned more of the divine character of Christ in the short period when bowed among the praying ones than ever before.

“One of the mothers in Israel came to me and said, ‘Dear child, have you found Jesus?’ I was about to answer, ‘Yes,’ when she exclaimed, ‘Indeed you have, his peace is with you, I can see it in your face!’ Again and again I said to myself, ‘Can this be religion? Am I not mistaken?’ It seemed too much for me to claim, too exalted a privilege. But I felt that the Saviour had blessed me and pardoned my sins, though I was too timid to openly confess it.

“Soon after this the meeting came to a close and we started for home. My mind was full of the sermons, exhortations and prayers we had heard. Everything in nature seemed changed. During the meeting, clouds and rain prevailed a greater part of the time and my feelings had been in harmony with the weather. Now the sun shone bright and clear and flooded the earth with light and warmth. The trees and grass were a fresher green, the sky a deeper blue. The earth seemed to smile under the peace of God. So the rays of the Sun of righteousness had penetrated the clouds and darkness of my mind, and dispelled its gloom.

“It seemed to me that every one must be at peace with God and animated by his Spirit. Everything my eyes rested upon seemed to have undergone a change. The trees were more beautiful, and the birds sang sweeter than ever before; they seemed to be praising the Creator in their songs. I did not care to talk, for fear this happiness might pass away, and I should lose the precious evidence of Jesus’ love for me.

“As we neared our home in Portland, we passed men at work upon the street. They were conversing upon ordinary topics with each other, but my ears were deaf to everything but the praise of God, and their words came to me as grateful thanks and glad hosannas. Turning to my mother, I said, ‘Why, these men are all praising God, and they haven’t been to the camp-meeting.’ I did not then understand why the tears gathered in my mother’s eyes, and a tender smile lit up her face, as she listened to my simple words, that recalled a similar experience of her own.

“My mother was a great lover of flowers, and took great pleasure in cultivating them, and thus making her home attractive and pleasant for her children. But our garden had never before looked so lovely to me as upon the day of our return. I recognized an expression of the love of Jesus in every shrub, bud, and flower. These things of beauty seemed to speak in mute language of the love of God.

“There was a beautiful pink flower in the garden called the rose of Sharon. I remember approaching it and touching the delicate petals reverently; they seemed to possess a sacredness in my eyes. My heart overflowed with tenderness and love for these beautiful creations of God. I could see divine perfection in the flowers that adorned the earth. God tended them, and his all-seeing eye was upon them. He had made them and called them good. ‘Ah,’ thought I, ‘If he so loves and cares for the flowers that he has decked with beauty, how much more tenderly will he guard the children who are formed in his image.’ I repeated softly to myself, ‘I am a child of God, his loving care is around me, I will be obedient and in no way displease him, but will praise his dear name and love him always.’

“My life appeared to me in a different light. The affliction that had darkened my childhood seemed to have been dealt me in mercy for my good, to turn my heart away from the world and its unsatisfying pleasures and incline it towards the enduring attractions of Heaven.

“Soon after our return from the camp-meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion. My sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the

candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God.

“Finally the day was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. Although usually enjoying, at this time, a great peace, I frequently feared that I was not a true Christian, and was harassed by perplexing doubts as to my conversion. It was a windy day when we, twelve in number, were baptized, walking down into the sea. The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore, but in taking up this heavy cross, my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world, but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of life.

“My cousin Hannah made confession of her faith at the same time that I did. She wished to be baptized by immersion, but her father, who was not a Christian, would not consent to this although we urged him to do so. So she knelt before the altar and had a few drops of water sprinkled upon her head. As I witnessed the ceremony, my heart rejoiced that I had not submitted to receive sprinkling for baptism, feeling confident that there was no scripture to sustain it.

“The same day in the afternoon, I was received into the church in full membership. A young woman, arrived at the age of maturity, stood by my side and was also a candidate for admission to the church with myself. My mind was peaceful and happy till I noticed the gold rings glittering upon this sister's fingers, and the large showy ear-rings in her ears. I then observed that her bonnet was adorned with artificial flowers and trimmed with costly ribbons, arranged in bows and puffs. My joy was dampened by this display of vanity in one who professed to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.

“I expected that the minister would give some whispered reproof or advice to this sister, but he was apparently regardless of her showy apparel and no rebuke was administered. We both received the right hand of fellowship. The hand decorated with jewels was clasped by the representative of Christ, and both our names were registered upon the church book.”

J. W.

February 3, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

The religion of Jesus Christ is within the grasp of even the youthful mind when taught from the plain letter of the word of God. It is then that Christian experience appears rational and beautiful. Extremes in the Christian lives of many are the result of those wrong teachings which clothe in bewildering mysteries the pure, simple and plain teachings of the Bible relative to the way of life.

The Christian world is cursed with religious fiction. This is especially exhibited in Sunday-school books which are early thrown into the laps of children as their first series for instruction. Next, as they reach riper years, come those volumes in which learned doctors of divinity philosophize upon the mysteries of the “hidden life.” Their efforts to make it appear that “entire consecration” is a second great work to succeed justification, has added to the general bewilderment.

By this time the religion of the plain and humble teacher of Judea, the meek, dying sacrifice of Calvary, the adorable Redeemer and pitying Mediator at the Father's right hand, is wrapped in impenetrable mystery, and placed at a dizzy height in the minds of most young people. Despair of ever reaching a life of holiness and perfect obedience seizes them, followed by a decided distaste for what is supposed to be the religion of the Bible. Under these influences and false impressions the path of Bible holiness is made obscure and difficult, as seen in Mrs. White's experience continued from last week:

"I can now look back upon my youthful experience and see how near I came to making a fatal mistake. I had read many of the religious biographies of children who had possessed numberless virtues and lived faultless lives. I had conceived a great admiration for the paragons of perfection there represented. But far from encouraging me in my efforts to become a Christian, these books were as stumbling-blocks to my feet. I despaired of ever attaining to the perfection of the youthful characters in those stories who lived the lives of saints and were free from all the doubts, and sins, and weaknesses under which I staggered.

"Their faultless lives were followed by a premature but happy death, and the biographers tacitly intimated that they were too pure and good for earth, therefore, God in his divine pity had removed them from its uncongenial atmosphere. The similarity of these avowedly true histories seemed to point the fact to my youthful mind, that they really presented a correct picture of a child's Christian life.

"I repeated to myself again and again, 'If that is true, I can never be a Christian. I can never hope to be like those children,' and was driven by this thought to discouragement and almost to despair. But when I learned that I could come to Jesus just as I was, that the Saviour had come to ransom just such unworthy sinners, then light broke upon my darkness, and I could claim the promises of God.

"Later experience has convinced me that these biographies of immaculate children mislead the young. They extol the amiable qualities of their characters, and suppress their faults and failures. If they were represented as struggling with temptations, occasionally vanquished, yet triumphing over their trials in the end, if they were represented as subject to human frailties, and beset by ordinary temptations, then children would see that they had experienced like trials with themselves, yet had conquered through the grace of God. Such examples would give them fresh courage to renew their efforts to serve the Lord, hoping to triumph as those before them had done.

"But the sober realities and errors of the young Christian's life were vigorously kept out of sight, while the virtues were so exaggerated as to lift them from above the common level of ordinary children, who naturally despair of ever reaching such excellence and therefore give up the effort, in many cases, and gradually sink into a state of indifference.

"I again became very anxious to attend school and make another trial to obtain an education. But upon attempting to resume my studies my health rapidly failed, and it became apparent that if I persisted in attending school it would be at the expense of my life. I had found it difficult to enjoy religion in a large female seminary, surrounded by influences calculated to attract the mind and lead it from God.

"I felt a constant dissatisfaction with myself and my Christian attainments, and did not continually realize a lively sense of the mercy and love of God. Feelings of discouragement would come over me, and this caused me great anxiety of mind. I heard much in regard to sanctification, but had no defined idea in regard to it. This blessing seemed away beyond my reach, a state of purity my heart could never know. The manner in which it was preached and taught made it appear a human impossibility.

"In June, 1842, Elder Wm. Miller gave his second course of lectures in the Casco street church, in Portland, I felt it a great privilege to attend these lectures, for I had fallen under discouragements and did not feel prepared to meet my Saviour. This second course created much more excitement in the city than the first. The different denominations, with a very few exceptions, closed the doors of their churches against Elder Miller. Many discourses from the different pulpits sought to expose the alleged fanatical errors of the lecturer. But crowds of anxious listeners attended his meetings while many were unable to enter the house, which was literally packed.

"The congregations were unusually quiet and attentive. His manner of preaching was not flowery or oratorical, but he dealt in plain and startling facts that roused his hearers from the apathy in which they had been locked. He substantiated his statements and theories by Scripture as he progressed. A convincing power attended his words that seemed to stamp them as the language of truth.

"He was courteous and sympathetic. When every seat in the house was full, and the platform and places about the pulpit seemed crowded, I have seen him leave the desk and walk down the aisle, and take some feeble old man or woman by the hand and find a seat for them, then return and resume his discourse. He was indeed rightly called Father Miller, for he had a watchful care over those who came under his ministrations, was affectionate in his manner, of genial and tender heart.

"He was a very interesting speaker, and his exhortations, both to professed Christians and the impenitent, were appropriate and powerful. Sometimes a solemnity so marked as to be painful, pervaded his meetings. A sense of the impending crisis of human events impressed the minds of the listening crowds. Many yielded to the conviction of the Spirit of God. Gray-haired men and aged women, with trembling steps, sought the anxious-seats. Those in the strength of maturity, the youth and children, were deeply stirred. Groans and the voice of weeping and of praising God were mingled together at the altar of prayer.

"I believed the solemn words spoken by the servant of God, and my heart was aggrieved when they were opposed or made the subject of jest. I attended the meetings on Casco street quite frequently, and believed that Jesus was soon to come in the clouds of Heaven; but my great anxiety was to be ready to meet him. My mind constantly dwelt upon the subject of holiness of heart, I longed above all things to obtain this great blessing, and feel that I was entirely accepted of God.

"Among the Methodists I had heard much in regard to sanctification, I had seen people lose their physical strength under the influence of strong mental excitement, and had heard this pronounced to be the evidence of sanctification. But I could not comprehend what was necessary in order to be fully consecrated to God. My Christian friends said to me, 'Believe in Jesus now! Believe that he accepts you now! This I tried to do but found it impossible to believe that I had received a blessing which, it seemed

to me, should electrify my whole being. I wondered at my own hardness of heart in being unable to experience the exaltation of spirit that others manifested. It seemed to me that I was different from them, and forever shut out from the perfect joy of holiness of heart.

“My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from each other. Yet I failed to comprehend the difference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers increased my difficulties. I was unable to claim the blessing for myself, and wondered if it was only to be found among the Methodists, and if, in attending the Advent meetings, I was not shutting myself away from that which I desired above all else, the sanctifying Spirit of God.

“Still, I observed that some of those who pretended to be sanctified, manifested a bitter spirit when the subject of the soon coming of Christ was introduced; this did not seem to me a manifestation of the holiness which they professed. I could not understand why ministers from the pulpit should so oppose the doctrine that Christ's second coming as near at hand. Reformation had followed the preaching of this belief and many of the most devoted ministers and laymen had received it as the truth. It seemed to me that those who sincerely loved Jesus would be ready to accept the tidings of his coming, and rejoice that it was near at hand.”

J. W.

February 10, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

I felt that I could only claim what they called justification. In the word of God I read that without holiness no man should see God. Then there was some higher attainment that I must reach before I could be sure of eternal life. I studied over the subject continually, for I believed that Christ was soon to come, and feared he would find me unprepared to meet him. Words of condemnation rang in my ears day and night, and my constant cry to God was, What shall I do to be saved? In my mind the justice of God eclipsed his mercy and love.

I had been taught to believe in an eternally burning hell, and the horrifying thought was ever before me that my sins were too great to be forgiven, and that I should be forever lost. The frightful descriptions that I had heard of souls lost in perdition sank deep into my mind. Ministers in the pulpit drew vivid pictures of the condition of the damned. They taught that God never proposed to save any but the sanctified. The eye of God was upon us always, every sin was registered and would meet its just punishment. God himself was keeping the books with the exactitude of infinite wisdom, and every sin we committed was faithfully recorded against us.

The devil was represented as eager to seize upon his prey and bear us to the lowest depths of anguish, there to exult over our sufferings in the horrors of an eternally burning hell, where, after the tortures of thousands upon thousands of years, the fiery billows would roll to the surface the writhing victims, who would shriek, “How long, O Lord, how long?” Then the answer would thunder down the abyss, “Through

all eternity!" Again the molten waves would engulf the lost, carrying them down into the depths of an ever restless sea of fire.

While listening to these terrible descriptions, my imagination would be so wrought upon that the perspiration would start from every pore, and it was difficult to suppress a cry of anguish, for I seemed to already feel the pains of perdition. Then the minister would dwell upon the uncertainty of life. One moment we might be here, and the next in hell, or one moment on earth, and the next in Heaven. Would we choose the lake of fire and the company of demons, or the bliss of Heaven with angels for our companions. Would we hear the voice of wailing and the cursing of lost souls through all eternity, or sing the songs of Jesus before the throne.

Our Heavenly Father was presented before my mind as a tyrant, who delighted in the agonies of the condemned; not the tender, pitying Friend of sinners who loves his creatures with a love past all understanding, and desires them to be saved in his kingdom.

My feelings were very sensitive. I dreaded giving pain to any living creature. When I saw animals ill-treated my heart ached for them. Perhaps my sympathies were more easily excited by suffering, because I myself had been the victim of thoughtless cruelty, resulting in the injury that had darkened my childhood. But when the thought took possession of my mind that God delighted in the torture of his creatures, who were formed in his image, a wall of darkness seemed to separate me from him. When I reflected that the Creator of the universe would plunge the wicked into hell, there to burn through the ceaseless rounds of eternity, my heart sank with fear, and I despaired that so cruel and tyrannical a being would ever condescend to save me from the doom of sin.

I thought that the fate of the condemned sinner would be mine, to endure the flames of hell forever, even as long as God himself existed. This impression deepened upon my mind until I feared that I should lose my reason. I would look upon the dumb beasts with envy, because they had no soul to be punished after death. Many times the wish arose that I had never been born.

Total darkness settled upon me and there seemed no way out of the shadows. Could the truth have been presented to me as I now understand it, my despondency would have taken flight at once, much perplexity and sorrow would have been spared me. If the love of God had been dwelt upon more and his stern justice less, the beauty and glory of his character would have inspired me with a deep and earnest love for my Creator.

I have since thought that many inmates of the lunatic asylums were brought there by experiences similar to my own. Their tender consciences have been stricken with a sense of sin, and their trembling faith dared not claim the promised pardon of God. They have listened to descriptions of the orthodox hell until it has seemed to curdle the very blood in their veins, and burnt an impression on the tablets of their memory. Waking or sleeping, the frightful picture has ever been before them, until reality has become lost in imagination, and they see only the wreathing flames of a fabulous hell and hear only the shrieking of the damned. Reason has become dethroned and the brain is filled with the wild phantasy of a terrible dream. Those who teach the doctrine of an eternal hell, would do well to look more closely after their authority for so cruel a belief.

I had never prayed in public, and had only spoken a few timid words in prayer-meeting. It was now impressed upon me that I should seek God in prayer at our small social meetings. This I dared not do, fearful of becoming confused, and failing to express my thoughts. But the duty was impressed upon my mind so forcibly that when I attempted to pray in secret I seemed to be mocking God, because I had failed to obey his will. Despair overwhelmed me, and for three long weeks no ray of light pierced the gloom that encompassed me about.

My sufferings of mind were intense. Sometimes for a whole night I would not dare to close my eyes, but would wait until my twin sister was fast asleep, then quietly leave my bed and kneel upon the floor, praying silently with a dumb agony that cannot be described. The horrors of an eternally burning hell were ever before me. I knew that it was impossible for me to live long in this state, and I dared not die and meet the terrible fate of the sinner. With what envy did I regard those who realized their acceptance with God. How precious did the Christian's hope seem to my agonized soul.

I frequently remained bowed in prayer nearly all night, groaning and trembling with inexpressible anguish and hopelessness that passes all description. Lord have mercy! was my plea, and, like the poor publican, I dared not lift my eyes to Heaven but bowed my face upon the floor. I became very much reduced in flesh and strength, yet kept my suffering and despair to myself.

While in this state of despondency, I had a dream that made a powerful impression upon my mind, but in no wise lifted the veil of melancholy that darkened my life. I dreamed that I saw a temple, to which many people were flocking. Only those who took refuge in that temple would be saved when time should close. All who remained outside would be forever lost. The multitudes without who were going about their various ways, were deriding and ridiculing those who were entering the temple, and told them that this plan of safety was a cunning deception, that in fact there was no danger whatever to avoid. They even laid hold of some to prevent them from hastening within the walls.

Fearing to be laughed at and ridiculed, I thought best to wait until the multitude were dispersed or until I could enter unobserved by them. But the numbers increased instead of diminishing, and fearful of being too late, I hastily left my home and pressed through the crowd. In my anxiety to reach the temple I did not notice or care for the throng that surrounded me. On entering the building I saw that the vast temple was supported by one immense pillar, and to this was tied a Lamb all mangled and bleeding. We who were present seemed to know that this Lamb had been torn and bruised on our account. All who entered the temple must come before it and confess their sins.

Just before the Lamb, were elevated seats upon which sat a company of people looking very happy. The light of Heaven seemed to shine upon their faces and they praised God and sang songs of glad thanksgiving that seemed to be like the music of the angels. These were they who had come before the Lamb, confessed their sins, been pardoned, and were now waiting in glad expectation of some joyful event.

Even after having entered the building, a fear came over me, and a sense of shame that I must humiliate myself before these people. But I seemed compelled to move forward, and was slowly making my way around the pillar in order to face the Lamb, when a trumpet sounded, the temple shook, shouts of

triumph arose from the assembled saints, an awful brightness illuminated the building, then all was intense darkness. The happy people had all disappeared with the brightness, and I was left alone in the silent horror of night.

I awoke in agony of mind and could hardly convince myself that I had been dreaming. It seemed to me that my doom was fixed, that the Spirit of the Lord had left me never to return. My despondency deepened if that were possible. Soon after this I had another dream. I seemed to be sitting in abject despair with my face in my hands, reflecting like this: If Jesus were upon earth I would go to him, throw myself at his feet and tell him all my sufferings. He would not turn away from me, he would have mercy upon me, and I should love and serve him always. Just then the door opened, and a person of beautiful form and countenance entered. He looked upon me pitifully and said, "Do you wish to see Jesus? He is here and you can see him if you desire to do so. Take everything you possess and follow me."

I heard this with unspeakable joy, and gladly gathered up all my little possessions, every treasured trinket, and followed my guide. He led me to a steep and apparently frail stairway. As I commenced to ascend the steps, he cautioned me to keep my eyes fixed upward, lest I should grow dizzy and fall. Many others who were climbing up the steep ascent fell before gaining the top.

Finally we reached the last step and stood before a door. Here my guide directed me to leave all the things that I had brought with me. I cheerfully laid them down, he then opened the door and bade me enter. In a moment I stood before Jesus. There was no mistaking that beautiful countenance; to no other could belong such a radiant expression of benevolence and majesty. As his gaze rested upon me I knew at once that he was acquainted with every circumstance of my life and all my inner thoughts and feelings.

I tried to shield myself from his gaze, feeling unable to endure his searching eyes, but he drew near with a smile, and, laying his hand upon my head, said, "Fear not." The sound of his sweet voice thrilled my heart with a happiness it had never before experienced, I was too joyful to utter a word, but, overcome with ineffable happiness sank prostrate at his feet. While I was lying helpless there, scenes of beauty and glory passed before me, and I seemed to have reached the safety and peace of Heaven. At length my strength returned and I arose. The loving eyes of Jesus were still upon me, and his smile filled my soul with gladness. His presence filled me with a holy reverence and an inexpressible love. My guide now opened the door, and we both passed out. He bade me take up again all the things I had left without. This done, he handed me a green cord coiled up closely, this he directed me to place next my heart, and when I wished to see Jesus take it from my bosom and stretch it to the utmost. He cautioned me not to let it remain coiled for any length of time, lest it should become knotted and difficult to straighten. I placed the cord near my heart and joyfully descended the narrow stairs, praising the Lord as I went, and joyfully telling all whom I met where they could find Jesus. This dream gave me hope. The green cord represented faith to my mind, and the beauty and simplicity of trusting in God began to dawn upon my benighted soul.

March 2, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

As I look back upon my early life, and recall my youthful experience, my brother, the confidant of my hopes and fears, the earnest sympathizer with me in my Christian experience, comes to my mind with a flood of tender memories. He was one of those to whom sin presents but few temptations. Naturally devotional, he never sought the society of the young and gay, but chose rather the company of Christians, whose conversation would instruct him in the way of life. His manner was serious beyond his years, he was gentle and peaceful, and his mind was filled with thoughts upon religion. His life was pointed at, by those who knew him, as a pattern to the youth, a living example of the grace and beauty of true Christianity.

My father's family still occasionally attended the Methodist church and also the class-meetings held in private houses. One evening my brother Robert and myself went to class-meeting. The Methodist presiding elder was present. When it came my brother's turn, he spoke with great humility, yet with clearness, of the necessity for a complete fitness to meet our Saviour, when he should come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. While speaking, a heavenly light irradiated his usually pale countenance. He seemed to be carried in spirit above present surroundings, and spoke as if in the presence of Jesus. When I was called upon to speak, I arose, free in spirit, with a heart full of love and peace. In my simple way I told the story of my great suffering under the conviction of sin, how that I had at length received the blessing I had sought so long, an entire conformity to the will of God; that I rejoiced in the tidings of the soon coming of my Redeemer to take his children home.

I expected, in my simplicity, that my Methodist brethren and sisters would understand my feelings and rejoice with me. But I was disappointed; several sisters groaned and moved their chairs noisily, turning their backs upon me. I could not think what I had said to offend them. I spoke very briefly, feeling the chilling influence of their disapprobation. After I ceased speaking, Elder B—asked me if it would not be more pleasant to live a long life of usefulness here, doing others good, than for Jesus to come speedily and destroy poor sinners. I replied that I longed for the coming of Jesus. Then sin would have an end, and we should enjoy sanctification forever, with no devil to tempt and lead us astray.

He then inquired if I would not rather die peacefully upon my bed than to pass through the pain of being changed, while living, from mortality to immortality. My answer was that I wished for Jesus to come and take his children; that I was willing to live or die as God willed; that I could easily endure all the pain that could be borne in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; that I desired the wheels of time to roll swiftly round, and bring the welcome day when these vile bodies should be changed, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. I also stated that when I lived nearest to the Lord, then I most earnestly longed for his appearing. Here some present seemed to be greatly displeased.

When Elder B—addressed others in the class he expressed great joy in anticipating the temporal millennium of a thousand years, when the earth would be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. He longed to see this glorious period ushered in, and appeared to be in an ecstasy over the expected event. After the meeting closed I was conscious of being treated with marked coldness by those who had formerly been kind and friendly to me. My brother and I returned home feeling sad that we should be so misunderstood by our brethren, and that the subject of the near coming of Jesus should awaken such bitter antagonism in their breasts.

Yet we were thankful that we could discern the precious light, and rejoice in looking for the coming of the Lord. On the way we talked seriously concerning the evidences of our new faith and hope. "Ellen," said Robert, "are we deceived? Is this hope of Christ's soon appearing upon earth a heresy, that ministers and professors of religion oppose it so bitterly? They say that Jesus will not come for thousands and thousands of years. If they even approach the truth, then the world cannot come to an end in our day."

I dared not give unbelief a moment's encouragement, but quickly replied, "I have not a doubt but that the doctrine preached by Wm. Miller is the truth. What power attends his words, what conviction is carried home to the sinner's heart."

We talked the matter over candidly, as we walked along, and decided that it was our duty and privilege to look for our Saviour's coming, that it would be safest to make ready for his appearing and be prepared to meet him with joy. If he did come, what would be the prospect of those who were now saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and had no desire for his appearance? We wondered how ministers dared to quiet the fears of sinners and backsliders by saying peace, peace, while the message of warning was being given by a few faithful souls all over the land. The period seemed very solemn to us, we felt that we had no time to lose.

Said Robert, "A tree is known by its fruits. What has this belief done for us? It has convinced us that we were not ready for the coming of the Lord, that we must become pure in heart or we cannot meet our Saviour in peace. It has aroused us to seek for new strength and grace from God. What has it done for you, Ellen? Would you be what you are now if you had never heard the doctrine of Christ's soon coming? What hope has inspired your heart, what peace, joy, and love has it given you. And for me, it has done everything. I love Jesus, and all Christians. I love the prayer-meeting. I find great joy in reading my Bible and in prayer. If this precious faith has done so great a work for us, will it not do as much for all those who will believe it, and earnestly long for the appearing of the Lord?"

We both felt strengthened by this conversation, and resolved that we would not be turned from our honest convictions of truth, and the blessed hope of Christ's soon coming in the clouds of heaven. Not long after this we again attended the class-meeting. We really wanted an opportunity to speak of the precious love of God that animated our souls. I wished particularly to tell of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. So great a change had been wrought in me that it seemed my duty to improve every opportunity of testifying to the unsurpassed love of my Saviour.

When my turn came to speak, I stated the evidences I enjoyed of Jesus' love, and that I looked forward with glad expectation to meeting my Redeemer soon. The belief that Christ's coming was near had stirred my soul to seek most earnestly for the sanctification of the Spirit of God. Here the class-leader interrupted me, saying, "You received sanctification through Methodism, through Methodism, sister, not through an erroneous theory." My heart was full of love and happiness, but I felt that I must confess the truth, that it was not through Methodism my heart had received its new blessing. But by the stirring truths I had heard concerning the personal appearance of Jesus, I had found peace and joy and perfect love. Thus I finished my testimony, the last that I was to bear in class with my Methodist brethren.

Robert then spoke in his meek way, yet in so clear and touching a manner that some wept and were much moved; but others coughed dissentingly and seemed quite uneasy: After leaving the class-room, we again talked over our faith, and marveled that our Christian brethren and sisters could so illy endure to have a word spoken in reference to our Saviour's coming. We thought if they loved Jesus as they should, it would not be so great an annoyance to hear of his second advent, but, on the contrary, they would hail the news with great joy.

We were convinced that we ought no longer to attend the Methodist class-meeting. The hope of the glorious appearing of Christ filled our souls, and would find expression when we rose to speak. This seemed to kindle the ire of those present against the two humble children who dared, in the face of opposition, to speak of the faith that had filled their hearts with peace and happiness. It was evident that we could have no freedom in the class—meeting, for our simple testimony provoked sneers and taunts that reached our ears at the close of the meeting from brethren and sisters whom we had respected and loved.

March 9, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

Meetings of the Adventists were held at this time in Beethoven Hall. My father, with his family, attended them quite regularly, for we greatly prized the privilege of hearing the doctrine of Christ's personal and soon appearing upon earth. The period of the second advent was thought to be in the year 1843. The time seemed so short in which souls could be saved, that I resolved to do all that was in my power to lead sinners into the light of truth. But it seemed impossible for me, so young, and in feeble health, to do much in the great work.

There were three sisters of us at home, Sarah, who was several years the oldest, my twin sister Elizabeth, and myself. We talked the matter over among ourselves, and decided to earn what money we could and spend it in buying books and tracts to distribute gratuitously among the people. This was the best we could do, and we did this little gladly. I could earn only twenty-five cents a day, but my dress was plain, I spent nothing for needless ornaments, or ribbons, for vain display appeared sinful in my eyes; so I had ever a little fund in store with which to purchase suitable books. These were placed in the hands of experienced persons to send abroad.

Every leaf of this printed matter seemed precious in my eyes, for they were as messages of light to the world, bidding them to prepare for the great event near at hand. Day after day I have sat in bed propped up with pillows, performing my allotted task with trembling fingers; how carefully would I lay aside the precious bits of silver taken in return, and which was to be expended in reading matter that might enlighten and arouse those who were in darkness. I had no temptation to lay out my earnings for my own personal gratification, for the salvation of souls was the burden of my mind, and my heart ached for those who flattered themselves they were living in security, while the message of warning was being given to the world. My constant thought was, What can I, a child, do to help on the work of God and save poor sinners from destruction.

One day I was listening to a conversation between my mother and a sister, in reference to a discourse which they had recently heard, to the effect that the soul had not natural immortality. Some of the minister's proof texts were repeated. Among them I remember these impressed me very forcibly:

"The soul that sinneth it shall die." "A living dog is better than a dead lion, for the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything." "Which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life." "Why," said my mother, after quoting the foregoing passage, "should they seek for what they already have?"

I listened to these new ideas with an intense and painful interest. When alone with my mother, I inquired if she really believed that the soul was not immortal? Her reply was she feared we had been in error on that subject as well as upon some others."

"But mother," said I, "Do you really believe that the soul sleeps in the grave until the resurrection? Do you think that the Christian, when he dies, does not go immediately to Heaven, nor the sinner to hell?"

She answered, "The Bible gives us no proof that there is an eternally burning hell. If there is such a place, it should be mentioned in the Sacred Book."

"Why, mother!" cried I, in astonishment, "This is strange talk for you! If you believe this strange theory, do not let any one know of it, for I fear that sinners would gather security from this belief and never desire to seek the Lord."

"If this is sound Bible truth," she replied, "instead of preventing the salvation of sinners, it will be a means of winning them to Christ. If the love of God will not induce the rebel to yield, the terrors of an eternal hell will not drive him to repentance. Besides it does not seem a proper way to win souls to Jesus, by appealing to one of the lowest attributes of the mind, abject fear. The love of Jesus attracts, it will subdue the hardest heart."

It was some months after this conversation before I heard of anything farther concerning this doctrine; but I had, during this time, thought much upon the subject. When I heard it preached I believed it to be the truth. From the time that light in regard to the sleep of the dead dawned upon my mind, the mystery that had enshrouded the resurrection vanished, and the great event itself assumed a new and sublime importance. My mind had often been disturbed by its efforts to reconcile the immediate reward or punishment of the dead, with the undoubted fact of a future resurrection and Judgment. If the soul, at death, entered upon eternal happiness or misery, where was the need of a resurrection of the poor mouldered body?

But this new and beautiful faith taught me the reason that inspired writers had dwelt so much upon the resurrection of the body, it was because the entire being was slumbering in the grave. I could now clearly perceive the fallacy of our former position on this question. The confusion and uselessness of a final Judgment, after the souls of the departed had already been judged once and appointed to their lot,

was very apparent to me now. I saw that the hope of the bereaved was in looking forward to the glorious day when the Life-giver shall break the fetters of the tomb, and the righteous dead shall arise and leave their prison-house, to be clothed with glorious immortal life.

Our family were all interested in the doctrine of the Lord's soon coming. My father had long been considered one of the pillars of the Methodist church where he lived, and the whole family had been active members, but we made no secret of our new belief, although we did not urge it upon others on inappropriate occasions, or manifest any antagonism toward our church. However, the Methodist minister made us a special visit, and took the occasion to inform us that our faith and Methodism could not agree. He did not inquire our reasons for believing as we did, nor make any reference to the Bible in order to convince us of our error; but he stated that we had adopted a new and strange belief that the Methodist church could not accept.

My father replied that he must be mistaken in calling this a new and strange doctrine, that Christ himself had preached his second advent to his disciples. He had said, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

When he was taken up to Heaven before their eyes and a cloud received him out of their sight, as his faithful followers stood gazing after their vanishing Lord, "Behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, 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."

"And," said my father, warming with his subject, "the inspired Paul wrote a letter to encourage his brethren in Thessalonica, saying, 'And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.' 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.'"

"This is high authority for our faith. Jesus and his apostles dwell upon the event of the second advent with joy and triumph; and the holy angels proclaim that Christ who has ascended up into Heaven shall come again. This is our offense, believing the word of Jesus and his disciples. This is a very old doctrine, and bears no taint of heresy."

The minister did not attempt to refer to a single text that would prove us in error, but excused himself on the plea of a want of time. He advised us to quietly withdraw from the church and avoid the publicity of a trial. We were aware that others of our brethren were meeting with similar treatment, for a like cause, and we did not wish it understood that we were ashamed to acknowledge our faith, or were

unable to sustain it by Scripture; so my parents insisted that they should be acquainted with the reason for this request.

The only answer to this was an evasive declaration that we had walked contrary to the rules of the church, and the best course would be to voluntarily withdraw from it to save a trial. We answered that we preferred a regular trial, and demanded to know what sin was charged to us, as we were conscious of no wrong in looking for and loving the appearing of the Saviour.

Not long after, we were notified to be present at a meeting to be held in the vestry of the church. There were but few present. The influence of my father and his family was such that our opposers had no desire to present our cases before a large number of the congregation. The single charge preferred was that we had walked contrary to their rules. Upon our asking what rules we had violated, it was stated, after a little hesitation, that we had attended other meetings and had neglected to meet regularly with our class. We stated that a portion of the family had been in the country for some time past, that none who remained in the city had been absent from class-meeting more than a few weeks, and they were morally compelled to remain away because the testimonies they bore met with such marked disapprobation. If the hope of their Saviour's soon coming was mentioned, a feeling of displeasure was manifested against them, and they were conscious of arousing a bitter spirit of antagonism. We also reminded them that certain persons who had not attended class-meeting for a year were yet held in good standing.

It was asked if we would confess that we had departed from their rules, and if we would also agree to conform to them in future. We answered that we dared not yield our faith nor deny the sacred truth of God; that we could not forego the hope of the soon coming of our Redeemer; that after the manner which they called heresy we must continue to worship the Lord. My father in his defense received the blessing of God, and we all left the vestry with free spirits and happy in the consciousness of right and the approving smile of Jesus. We felt the assurance that God was on our side, and he was stronger than all that were against us.

The next Sunday, at the commencement of love-feast, Elder B ----- read off our names, seven in number, as discontinued from the church. He stated that we were not expelled on account of any wrong or immoral conduct, that we were of unblemished character and enviable reputation; but we had been guilty of walking contrary to the rules of the Methodist church. He also declared that a door was now open and all who were guilty of a similar breach of the rules, would be dealt with in like manner.

At this time there were many in the church who waited for the appearing of the Saviour, and this implied threat was made for the purpose of frightening them into subjection. In some cases this policy brought about the desired result, and the favor of God was sold for a place in the Methodist church. Many believed, but dared not confess their faith lest they should be turned out of the synagogue. But some left soon afterward and joined the company of those who were looking for the Saviour.

At this time the words of the prophet were exceedingly precious: "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

March 16, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

For six months not a cloud intervened between me and my Saviour. Whenever there was a proper opportunity I bore my testimony, and was greatly blessed. At times the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me with such power that my strength was taken from me. This was a trial to some who had come out from the formal churches, and remarks were often made that grieved me much. Many could not believe that one could be so overpowered by the Spirit of God as to lose all strength. My position was exceedingly painful. I began to reason with myself whether I was not justified in withholding my testimony in meeting, and thus restrain my feelings when there was such an opposition in the hearts of some who were older in years and experience than myself.

I reasoned that repressing my testimony would not hinder me from faithfully living out my religion. I adopted this plan of silence for a time. I often felt strongly impressed that it was my duty to speak in meeting, but refrained from doing so, and was sensible of having grieved the Spirit of God. Sometimes I even remained away from meetings that I knew would be attended by those who were annoyed by my testimony. I shrank from offending my brethren; but in this I allowed the fear of men to break up that interrupted communion with God which had blessed my heart for so many months.

We had appointed evening prayer-meetings in different localities of the city to accommodate all who wished to attend them. The family who had been most forward in opposing me attended one of these. Upon this occasion, while those assembled were engaged in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the meeting, and one of the members of this family was prostrated as one dead. His relatives stood weeping around him, rubbing his hands and applying restoratives. At length he gained sufficient strength to praise God, and quieted their fears by shouting with triumph over the marked evidence he had received of the power of the Lord upon him. This young man was unable to return home that night.

This was believed by the family to be a demonstration of the Spirit of God, but did not convince them that it was the same divine power that rested upon me at times, robbing me of my natural strength, and filling my soul with the unbounded peace and love of Jesus. They were free to say that not a doubt could be entertained of my sincerity and perfect honesty, but they considered me deceived in taking that for the power of the Lord which was only the result of my own over-wrought feelings.

My mind was in great perplexity, in consequence of this opposition, and, as the time drew near for our regular meeting, I was in doubt whether or not it was best for me to attend it. For some days previous I had been in great distress on account of the feeling manifested towards me. Finally I decided not to go, and thus escape the criticism of my brethren. In trying to pray I repeated these words again and again, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" The answer that came to my heart seemed to bid me trust in my Heavenly Father and wait patiently to know his will. I yielded myself to the Lord with the simple trust of a little child, remembering that he had promised that those who follow him shall not walk in darkness.

My duty impelled me to go to the meeting. I went with the full assurance in my mind that all would be well. While we were bowed before the Lord, my heart was drawn out in prayer and filled with a peace that only Christ can give. My soul rejoiced in the love of the Saviour, and my physical strength left me. With child-like faith I could only say, "Heaven is my home, and Christ my Redeemer."

One of the same family whom I have mentioned as being opposed to the manifestations of the power of God upon me, stated on this occasion, that he considered I was under an excitement which he thought it my duty to resist, but instead of doing so he thought I encouraged it, as a mark of God's favor. His doubts and opposition did not affect me at this time, for I seemed shut in with the Lord, and lifted above all outward influence. But he had scarcely stopped speaking when a strong man, a devoted and humble Christian, was struck down by the power of God before his eyes, and the room was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Upon recovering sufficiently, I was very happy in bearing my testimony for Jesus, and in telling of his love for me. I confessed my lack of faith in the promises of God, and that I had checked the promptings of his Spirit from fear of men, but that, notwithstanding my distrust, he had bestowed upon me unlooked for evidence of his love and sustaining grace. H----- P-----, the brother who had opposed me, rose, and with many tears, confessed his error in regard to me, that his feelings had been all wrong. He humbly asked my forgiveness. Said he, "Sister Ellen, I will never again lay a straw in your way. God has shown me the coldness and stubbornness of my heart, and he has broken it by the evidence of his power. I have been very wrong. When sister Ellen seemed so happy I would think, Why don't I feel like that? Why don't brother R-----receive some such evidence? for I felt that he was a devoted Christian, yet no such power had fallen upon him. I offered a silent prayer that, if this was the holy influence of God, brother R-----might experience it this evening.

"Almost as the desire went up from my heart, brother R----- fell, prostrated by the power of God, crying, 'Let the Lord work!' My heart is convinced that I have been warring against the Holy Spirit, but I will grieve it no more by stubborn unbelief. Welcome, light! Welcome, Jesus! I have been backslidden and hardened, feeling offended if any one praised God and manifested a fullness of joy in his love; but now my feelings are changed, my opposition is at an end, Jesus has opened my eyes, and I may yet shout his praises myself. I have said bitter and cutting things of sister Ellen, that I sorrow over now, and pray for her forgiveness as well as all who are present."

Brother R----- then bore his testimony. His face was lighted with the glory of Heaven, as he praised the Lord for the wonders he had wrought that night. Said he, "This place is awfully solemn because of the presence of the Most High. Sister Ellen, in future you will have our help and sustaining sympathies, instead of the cruel opposition that has been shown you. We have been blind to the manifestations of God's Holy Spirit."

There had never been a question as to my perfect sincerity, but many had thought me young and impressible, and that it was my duty to restrain my feelings, which they regarded as the effect of excitement. But all the opposers were now brought to see their mistake and confess that the work was indeed of the Lord. In a prayer-meeting soon after, H----- P-----, the brother who had confessed that he

was wrong in his opposition, experienced the power of God in so great a degree that his countenance shone with a heavenly light, and he fell helpless to the floor. When his strength returned, he again acknowledged that he had been ignorantly warring against the Spirit of the Lord in cherishing the feeling he had against me.

In another prayer-meeting still another member of the same family was exercised in a similar manner and bore the same testimony. A few weeks after, while the large family of brother P----- were engaged in prayer at their own house, the Spirit of God swept through the room and prostrated the kneeling suppliants. My father came in soon after and found them all, both parents and children, helpless under the power of the Lord.

Cold formality began to melt before the mighty influence of the Most High. All who had opposed me, confessed that they had grieved the Holy Spirit by so doing, and they united in sympathy with me and in love for the Saviour. My heart was glad that divine mercy had smoothed the path for my feet to tread, and rewarded my faith and trust so bounteously. Unity and peace now dwelt among our people who were looking forward toward the coming of the Lord.

March 23, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience and Labors

How carefully and tremblingly did we approach the time of expectation. We sought, as a people, with solemn earnestness to purify our lives that we might be ready to meet the Saviour at his coming. Notwithstanding the opposition of ministers and churches, Beethoven Hall, in the city of Portland, was nightly crowded, and especially was there a large congregation on Sundays. Elder Stockman was a man of deep piety. He was in feeble health, yet when he stood before the people he seemed to be lifted above physical infirmity, and his face was lighted with the consciousness that he was teaching the sacred truth of God.

There was a solemn, searching power in his words that struck home to many hearts. He sometimes expressed a fervent desire to live until he should welcome the Saviour coming in the clouds of heaven. Under his ministration, the Spirit of God convicted many sinners, and brought them into the fold of Christ. Meetings were still held at private houses in different parts of the city with the best results. Believers were encouraged to work for their friends and relatives, and conversions were multiplying day by day.

In the district where my father's family properly belonged, these evening meetings were held at the house of a sea-captain. He made no profession of religion, but his wife was a sincere lover of the truth. Finally the captain became convicted through the influence of the meetings, professed Christ and embraced the belief that he was soon coming to the world.

All classes flocked to the meetings at Beethoven Hall. Rich and poor, high and low, ministers and laymen were all, from various causes, anxious to hear for themselves the doctrine of the second advent. The crowd was such that fears were expressed that the floor might give way beneath its heavy load; but the

builder, upon being consulted, quieted such apprehensions and established confidence in regard to the strength of the building.

Many came who, finding no room to stand, went away disappointed. The order of the meetings was simple; usually a short and pointed discourse was given, then liberty was granted for general exhortation. There was usually the most perfect stillness possible for so large a crowd. The Lord held the spirit of opposition in check, while his servants explained the reasons of their faith.

Sometimes the instrument was feeble but the Spirit of God gave weight and power to his truth. The presence of the holy angels was felt in the assembly, and numbers were daily being added to the little band of believers.

On one occasion, while Elder Stockman was preaching, Elder Brown, a Christian Baptist minister, whose name has been mentioned before in this narrative, was sitting in the desk listening to the sermon with intense interest. He became deeply moved, suddenly his countenance grew pale as the dead, he reeled in his chair, and Elder Stockman caught him in his arms just as he was falling to the floor, and laid him on the sofa behind the desk, where he lay powerless until the discourse was finished.

He then arose, his face still pale, but shining with light from the Son of righteousness, and gave a very impressive testimony. He seemed to receive holy unction from above. He was usually slow of speech, with a solemn manner, entirely free from excitement. But on this occasion, his solemn, measured words carried with them a new power, as he warned sinners and his brother ministers to put away unbelief, prejudice and cold formality, and, like the noble Bereans, search the sacred writings, comparing scripture with scripture to ascertain if these things are not true. He entreated the ministers present not to feel themselves injured by the direct and searching manner in which Elder Stockman had presented the solemn subject that interested all minds.

Said he, "We want to reach the people, we want sinners to be convicted and become truly repentant to God before it is too late for them to be saved, lest they shall take up the lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Brethren in the ministry say that our arrows hit them, will they please stand aside from between us and the people, and let us reach the hearts of sinners? If they make themselves a target for our aim they have no reason to complain of the wounds they receive. Stand aside brethren and you will not get hit!"

He related his own experience with such simplicity and candor, that many who had been greatly prejudiced were affected to tears. The Spirit of God was felt in his words and seen upon his countenance. With a holy exaltation he boldly declared that he had taken the Word of God as his counsellor, that his doubts had been swept away and his faith confirmed. With sanctified earnestness he invited his brother ministers, church-members, sinners and infidels to examine the Bible for themselves and let no man turn them from their purpose of ascertaining what was the truth.

Elder Brown neither then nor afterwards severed his connection with the Christian Baptist church, but was looked upon with great reverence and respect by his people. After he finished speaking, those who desired the prayers of the people of God were invited to rise. Hundreds responded to the call. The sea-

captain who had been recently converted, sprang to his feet with tears raining down his cheeks. He was unable to express his feelings in words, and stood for a moment the picture of mute thanksgiving; then he involuntarily raised his hat, and swung it above his head with the free movement of an old sailor, and in the abandonment of his joy, shouted, "Hurrah for God! I've enlisted in his crew, he is my captain! Hurrah for Jesus Christ!" He sat down overpowered by the intensity of his emotions, his face glowing with the radiance of love and peace.

His singular testimony, so characteristic of the bluff mariner, was not received with laughter, for the Spirit of God that animated the speaker lent his extraordinary words a strange solemnity that was felt through all that dense crowd.

Others followed with their testimonies. The voice of Bro. Abbot rung through the hall in notes of warning to the world. He repeated the evidences of the soon coming of Christ, and in sacred silence that vast crowd listened to his stirring words. The Holy Spirit rested upon the assembly. Heaven and earth seemed to approach each other. The meeting lasted until a late hour of the night. The power of the Lord was felt upon young, old, and middle aged. Some Methodists and Baptists who were present seemed to fully unite with the spirit of the meeting.

As we returned to our homes by various ways, a voice praising God would reach us from one direction, and, as if in response, voices from another and still another quarter, shouted, "Glory to God, the Lord reigneth!" Men sought their homes with praises upon their lips, and the glad sound rang out upon the still night air. No one who attended these meetings can ever forget those scenes of deepest interest.

Those who sincerely love Jesus can appreciate the feelings of those who watched with the most intense interest for the coming of their Saviour. The point of expectation was nearing. The time when we hoped to meet him was close at hand. We approached this hour with a calm solemnity. The true believers rested in a sweet communion with God, an earnest of the peace that was to be theirs in the bright hereafter. Those who experienced this hope and trust can never forget those precious hours of waiting.

Worldly business was for the most part laid aside for a few weeks. We carefully scrutinized every thought and emotion of our hearts as if upon our death-beds and in a few hours to close our eyes forever upon earthly scenes. There was no making of "ascension robes" for the great event; we felt the need of internal evidence that we were prepared to meet Christ, and our white robes were purity of soul, character cleansed from sin by the atoning blood of our Saviour.

But the time of expectation passed. This was the first close test brought to bear upon those who believed and hoped that Jesus would come in the clouds of heaven. The disappointment of God's waiting people was great. The scoffers were triumphant and winning the weak and cowardly to their ranks. Some who had appeared to possess true faith seemed to have been influenced only by fear, and now their courage returned with the passing of the time and they boldly united with the scoffers declaring they had never been duped to really believe the doctrine of Miller, who was a mad fanatic. Others, naturally yielding or vacillating, quietly deserted the cause. I thought if Christ had surely come, what would have become of these weak and changing ones? Where would have been their robes of

righteousness? They professed to love and long for the coming of Jesus, but when he failed to appear they seemed greatly relieved and went back to a state of carelessness and disregard of true religion.

We were perplexed and disappointed, yet we did not renounce our faith. Many still clung to the hope that Jesus would not long delay his coming; the Word of the Lord was sure, it could not fail. We felt that we had done our duty, we had lived up to our precious faith, we were disappointed but not discouraged; the signs of the times denoted that the end of all things was near at hand, we must watch and hold ourselves in readiness for the coming of the Master at any time. We must wait with hope and trust, not neglecting the assembling of ourselves together for instruction, encouragement and comfort, that our light might shine forth into the darkness of the world.

March 30, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience and Labors

Wm. Miller's calculation of the time was so simple and plain that even the children could understand it. From the date of the decree of the King of Persia, found in Ezra 7, which was given in 457 before Christ, the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14 must terminate with 1843. Accordingly we looked to the end of this year for the coming of the Lord. We were sadly disappointed when the year entirely passed away and the Saviour had not come.

It was not at first perceived that if the decree did not go forth at the beginning of the year 457 B.C. the 2300 years would not be completed at the close of 1843. But it was ascertained that the decree was given near the close of the year 457, B.C., and therefore the prophetic period must reach to the fall of the year 1844. Therefore the vision of time did not tarry, though it had seemed to do so. We learned to rest upon the language of the prophet, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

God tested and proved his people by the passing of the time in 1843. The mistake made in reckoning the prophetic periods was not at once discovered even by learned men who opposed the views of those who were looking for Christ's coming. These profound scholars declared that Mr. Miller was right in his calculation of the time, though they disputed him in regard to the event that would crown that period. But they, with the waiting people of God, were in a common error on the question of time.

We fully believe that God, in his wisdom, designed that his people should meet with a disappointment, which was well calculated to reveal hearts and develop the true characters of those who had professed to look for and rejoice in the coming of the Lord. Those who embraced the first angel's message (See Revelation 14:6, 7) through fear of the wrath of God's judgments, not because they loved the truth and desired an inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven, now appeared in their true light. They were among the first to ridicule the disappointed ones who sincerely longed for and loved the appearing of Jesus. This most searching test of God revealed the true characters of those who would shirk responsibility and stigma by denying their faith in the hour of trial.

Those who had been disappointed were not left in darkness; for in searching the prophetic periods with earnest prayers, the error was discovered, and the tracing of the prophetic pencil down through the tarrying time. In the joyful expectation of the coming of Christ, the apparent tarrying of the vision had not been taken into account, and was a sad and unlooked for surprise. Yet this very trial was highly necessary to develop and strengthen the sincere believers in the truth.

Our hopes now centered on the coming of the Lord in 1844. This was also the time for the message of the second angel, who, flying through the midst of heaven, cried, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city!" Many left the churches in obedience to the message of the second angel. Near its close the Midnight Cry was given, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him!" In every part of the land light was being given concerning this message, and the cry aroused thousands. It went from city to city, from village to village, and into the remote country regions. It reached the learned and talented, as well as the obscure and humble.

This was the happiest year of my life. My heart was full of glad expectation. I felt great pity and anxiety for those who were in discouragement and had no hope in Jesus. As a people, we united in earnest prayer for true inward experience and the unmistakable evidence of our acceptance with God.

We needed unbounded patience, for the scoffers were many. We were frequently greeted by scornful allusions to our former disappointment. "You are not gone up yet; when do you expect to go up?" and similar sarcasms were often vented upon us by our worldly acquaintances, and even by some professed Christians, who accepted the Bible yet failed to learn its great and important truths. Their blinded eyes seemed to see but a vague and distant meaning in the solemn warning that "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world," and that the saints will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

The formal churches used every means to prevent the belief in Christ's soon coming from spreading. No liberty was granted in their meetings to those who dared to mention a hope of the soon coming of Christ. Professed lovers of Jesus scornfully rejected the tidings that their best friend was soon to visit them. They were excited and angered against those who proclaimed the news of his coming and rejoiced that they should speedily behold him in his glory.

Every moment seemed precious and of the utmost importance to me. I felt that we were doing work for eternity, and that the careless and uninterested were in the greatest peril. My faith was unclouded, and I appropriated the precious promises of Jesus to myself. He had said to his disciples, "Ask, and ye shall receive." I firmly believed that whatever I asked in accordance with the will of God would certainly be granted to me. I sank in humility at the feet of Jesus with my heart in harmony with the divine will.

I often visited families and engaged in earnest prayer with those who were oppressed by fears and despondency. My faith was so strong that I never doubted for a moment that God would answer my prayers, and without a single exception the blessing and peace of Jesus rested upon us in answer to our humble petitions, and the hearts of the despairing ones were made joyful by light and hope.

With diligent searching of hearts and humble confessions we came prayerfully up to the time of expectation. Every morning we felt that it was our first business to secure the evidence that our lives were right before God. We realized that if we were not advancing in holiness we were sure to retrograde. Our interest for each other increased; we prayed much with and for one another. We assembled in the orchards and groves to commune with God and offer up our petitions to him, feeling more nearly in his presence when surrounded by his natural works. The joys of salvation were more necessary to us than our food and drink. If clouds obscured our minds we dared not rest or sleep till they were swept away by the consciousness of our acceptance with the Lord.

My health was very poor, my lungs were seriously affected, and my voice failed me. The Spirit of God often rested upon me with great power and my frail body could scarcely endure the weight of glory that flooded my soul. The name of Jesus filled me with rapture, I seemed to breathe in the atmosphere of Heaven. I rejoiced in the prospect of soon meeting my Redeemer and living in the light of his countenance forever.

The waiting people of God approached the hour when they fondly hoped their joy would be complete in the coming of the Saviour. But the time again passed unheralded by the advent of Jesus. Mortality still clung to us, the effects of the curse were all around us. It was hard to take up the vexing cares of life that we thought had been laid down forever. It was a bitter disappointment that fell upon the little flock whose faith had been so strong and whose hope had been so high. But we were surprised that we felt so free in the Lord, and were so strongly sustained by his strength and grace.

The experience of the former year was, however, repeated to a greater extent. A large class renounced their faith. Some, who had been very confident, were so deeply wounded in their pride that they felt like fleeing from the world. Like Jonah they complained of God and chose death rather than life. Those who had built their faith upon the evidence of others and not upon the Word of God were now as ready to exchange their views again. The hypocrites, who had hoped to deceive the Almighty as well as themselves, with their counterfeit penitence and devotion, now felt relieved from impending danger, and launched into open opposition to the cause they had lately professed to love.

The weak and the wicked united in declaring that there could be no more fears or expectations now. The time had passed, the Lord had not come, and the world would remain the same for thousands of years. This second great test revealed a mass of worthless drift that had been drawn into the strong current of the Advent faith, and been borne along for a time with the true believers and earnest workers.

April 20, 1876

Christian Watchfulness

We are living in the last days. John exclaims: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Jesus Christ is the only refuge in these perilous times. Satan is at work in secrecy and darkness.

Cunningly he draws away the followers of Christ from the cross, and brings them into self-indulgence and wickedness.

Satan is opposed to everything that will strengthen the cause of Christ and weaken his own power. He is diligently laying plans to undermine the work of God. He never rests for a moment when he sees that the right is gaining the ascendancy. He has legions of evil angels that he sends to every point where light from Heaven is shining upon the people. Here he stations his pickets to seize every unguarded man, woman, or child, and pass them over to his service.

It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the testimonies. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the testimonies, once believed, are doubted, and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this, but he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction.

Very many do not realize that God holds them accountable for every advantage gained by the foe who is admitted to the fort. The desolation and ruin following lays at the door of the unfaithful sentinels, who, by their neglect, become agents in the hands of the adversary to win souls to destruction. Men professing this faith should seek wisdom and guidance of God and not trust in their own judgment and knowledge. They should, like Solomon, earnestly pray for faith and light, and he will give them freely of his abundant supply.

God would have his work done intelligently, not in a hap-hazard manner. He would have it done with faith and careful exactitude, that he may place the sign of his approval upon it. Those who love him and walk with fear and humility before him, he will bless, and guide, and connect them with Heaven. If the workers rely upon him he will give them wisdom and correct their infirmities, so that they will be able to do the work of the Lord with perfection.

Our good works alone will not save any of us, but we cannot be saved without good works. And after we have done all that we can do, in the name and strength of Jesus we are to say, "We are unprofitable servants." We are not to think we have made great sacrifices and should receive great reward for our feeble services.

We must put on the armor and be prepared to successfully resist all the attacks of Satan. His malignity and cruel power is not sufficiently estimated. When he finds himself foiled upon one point, he assumes new ground and fresh tactics, and tries again, working wonders in order to deceive and destroy the children of men. The youth should be carefully warned against his power, and patiently and prayerfully directed how to endure the trials sure to come upon them in this life. They should be led to cling to the Word of God and give attention to counsel and advice.

The Saviour of the world offers to the erring the gift of eternal life. He watches for a response to his offers of love and forgiveness with a more tender compassion than that which moves the heart of an earthly parent to forgive a wayward, repenting, suffering son. He cries after the wanderer, Return unto

me and I will return unto you. If the sinner still refuses to heed the voice of mercy which calls after him with tender, pitying love, his soul will be left in darkness.

But if he neglects the opportunity presented him and goes on in his evil course, the wrath of God will, in an unexpected moment, break forth upon him. Those who, being often reproved, harden their hearts, shall be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It lays at the foundation of a proper education. Those who, having a favorable opportunity, have failed to learn this first great lesson, are not only disqualified for service in the cause of God, but are a positive injury to the community in which they live.

Living faith in the merits of a crucified Redeemer will carry men through the fiery furnace of affliction and trial. The form of the Fourth will be with them in the fierce heat of the furnace, which will not leave even the smell of fire upon their garments. Children should be encouraged to become Bible students and have firm religious principles that will stand the test of the perils sure to be experienced by all those who live upon earth during the last days, in the closing history of the world.

In this sinful world of ours, truth and falsehood are so mixed that one is not always clearly discerned from the other. But why has one who professes the truth so little strength? Because he understands not his own ignorance and his own weakness. If he knew this, if he was distrustful of himself, he would feel the importance of Divine help to preserve him from the wiles of the enemy.

We need to be active, working Christians, unselfish in heart and life, having an eye single to the glory of God. Oh! what wrecks of weakness we meet everywhere! Silent lips, and fruitless lives! This is the result of falling under temptation. Nothing mars the peace of the soul like sinful unbelief.

Christ asks for all. It will not do to withhold anything. He has purchased us with an infinite price, and he requires that all we have shall be yielded to him a willing offering. If we are fully consecrated to him in heart and life, faith will take the place of doubts, and confidence the place of distrust and unbelief.

April 20, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors

We were disappointed but not disheartened. We resolved to submit patiently to the process of purifying that God deemed needful for us; to refrain from murmuring at the trying ordeal by which the Lord was purging us from the dross and refining us like gold in the furnace. We resolved to wait with patient hope for the Saviour to redeem his tried and faithful ones.

We believe that the preaching of definite time was of God. It was this that led men to search the Bible diligently, discovering truths they had not before perceived. Jonah was sent of God to proclaim in the streets of Nineveh that within forty days the city would be overthrown; but God accepted the humiliation of the Ninevites and extended their period of probation. Yet the message that Jonah brought was sent of God, and Nineveh was tested according to his will. The world looked upon our hope as a delusion and our disappointment its consequent failure, but though we were mistaken in the event that was to occur at that period, there was no failure in reality of the vision that seemed to tarry.

The words of the Saviour in the parable of the wicked servant applies very forcibly to those who ridicule the near coming of the Son of man. "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."

We found everywhere the scoffers which Peter says shall come in the last days, "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But those who had looked for the coming of the Lord were not without comfort, they had obtained valuable knowledge in the searching of the Word. The plan of salvation was plainer to their understanding. Every day they discovered new beauties in its sacred pages and a wonderful harmony running through all, one scripture explaining another and no word used in vain.

Our disappointment was not so great as that of the disciples. When the Son of man rode triumphantly into Jerusalem they expected him to be crowned king. The people flocked from all the region about and cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" And Jesus, when the priests and elders besought him to still the multitude, declared that if they should hold their peace even the stones would cry out, for prophecy must be fulfilled. Yet in a few days these very disciples saw their beloved Master, whom they believed would reign on David's throne, stretched upon the cruel cross above the mocking, taunting Pharisees. Their high hopes were drowned in bitter disappointment, and the darkness of death closed about them.

Yet Christ was true to his promises. Sweet was the consolation he gave his people, rich the reward of the true and faithful.

Wm. Miller and those who were in union with him supposed that the cleansing of the sanctuary, spoken of in Daniel 8:14, meant the purifying of the earth prior to its becoming the abode of the saints. This was to take place at the advent of Christ, therefore we looked for that event at the end of the 2300 days, or years. But after our disappointment the Scriptures were carefully searched with prayer and earnest thought, and after a period of suspense as to our true position, light poured in upon our darkness; doubt and uncertainty was swept away.

Instead of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 referring to the purifying of the earth, it was now plain that it pointed to the closing work of our High Priest in Heaven, the finishing of the atonement, and the preparing of the people to abide the day of his coming.

I might give a more detailed explanation of the passing of the time as considered in the light of prophecy, but it is not in the legitimate province of these articles to do so. I merely designed to give as brief an account as possible of these important events with which my life was so closely interwoven that they cannot consistently be omitted from these pages. I would, however, refer those readers who desire further information, to works on this subject, published at the Signs Office.

I now return to my personal history from which I have necessarily digressed:

After the passing of the time in 1844, my health rapidly failed, I could only speak in a whisper or broken tone of voice. One physician stated that my disease was dropsical consumption, he pronounced my right lung decayed and the left one considerably diseased, while the heart was seriously affected. He thought that I could live but a short time, and might die suddenly at any time. It was very difficult for me to breathe when lying down, and at night I was bolstered in almost a sitting posture, and was frequently wakened by coughing and bleeding at the lungs.

About this time, while visiting a dear sister in Christ, whose heart was knit with mine, the first vision was given to me. There were but five of us, all women, kneeling quietly in the morning at the family altar, when this event transpired. Space forbids me from entering into a detailed account of the wonders of these visions, which would of themselves, fill volumes; but when the book is published, of which these hasty articles will be the basis, it will contain a full relation of the views that God has seen fit to reveal to me. In order to record in these sketches some of the most stirring incidents in my busy life, I shall be obliged to pass lightly over, or altogether omit a great share of that which would no doubt be of great interest to the readers. Many facts for which there is not room in the columns of this paper will soon appear in the volume of my life spoken of above.

I related this vision to the believers in Portland, who had full confidence that these manifestations were of God. A power attended them that could only emanate from the divine. A solemn sense of eternal interests was constantly upon me. An unspeakable awe filled me, that I, so young and feeble, should be chosen as the instrument by which God would give light to his people. While under the power of the Lord I was so inexpressibly happy, seeming to be surrounded by radiant angels in the glorious courts of Heaven, where all is peace and joy, that it was a sad and bitter change to wake up to the unsatisfying realities of mortal life.

In a second vision, which soon followed the first, I was shown the trials through which I must pass, and that it was my duty to go and relate to others the things that God had revealed to me. It was shown me that my labors would meet with great opposition, and that my heart would be wrought with anguish, but that the grace of God would be sufficient to sustain me through all. The teaching of this vision troubled me exceedingly, for it pointed that my duty was to go out among the people and teach the truth.

My health was so poor that I was in actual bodily suffering, and, to all appearance, had but a short time to live. I was but seventeen years of age, small and frail, unused to society, and naturally so timid and retiring that it was painful for me to meet strangers. I prayed earnestly for several days and far into the night, that this burden might be removed from me and laid upon some one else more capable of bearing it. But the light of duty never changed, and the words of the angel sounded continually in my ears, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you."

May 4, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience and Labors

At this time Bro. Wm. H. Hyde was very sick with bloody dysentery. His symptoms were alarming, and the physician pronounced his case almost hopeless. We visited him and prayed with him, but he had come under the influence of certain fanatical persons, who were bringing dishonor upon our cause. We wished to remove him from their midst, and petitioned the Lord to give him strength to leave that place. He was strengthened and blessed in answer to our prayers, and rode four miles to the house of Bro. P----. But after arriving there he seemed to be rapidly sinking.

The fanaticism and errors into which he had fallen through evil influence seemed to hinder the exercise of his faith. He gratefully received the plain testimony borne him, and made humble confession of his fault. Only a few who were strong in faith were permitted to enter the sick-room. The fanatics whose influence over him had been so injurious, and who had persistently followed him to Bro. P----'s, were positively forbidden to come into his presence, while we prayed fervently for his restoration to health. I have seldom known such a reaching out to claim the promises of God. The salvation of the Holy Spirit was revealed, and power from on high rested upon our sick brother and upon all present.

Bro. Hyde immediately dressed and walked out of the room praising God, with the light of Heaven shining upon his countenance. A farmer's dinner was ready upon the table. Said he, "If I were well I should partake of this food; and as I believe God has healed me, I shall carry out my faith." He sat down to dinner with the rest and ate heartily without injury to himself. His recovery was perfect and lasting.

From Topsham we returned to Portland and found there quite a number of our faith from the East. Among them were the very fanatics to whom I had borne my testimony in Exeter, declaring that it was not their duty to visit Portland. These persons had laid aside reason and judgment; they trusted every impression of their excitable and over-wrought minds. Their demonstrative exercises, while claiming to be under the Spirit of God, were unworthy of their exalted profession. We trembled for the church that was to be subjected to this spirit of fanaticism. My heart ached for God's people. Must they be deceived and led away by this false enthusiasm? I faithfully pronounced the warnings given me of the Lord; but they seemed to have little effect except to make these persons of extreme views jealous of me.

These false impressions of theirs might have turned me from my duty, had not the Lord previously showed me where to go and what to do. Although so young and inexperienced, I was preserved from falling into the snare of the enemy, through the mercy of God, in giving me special instructions whom to fear and whom to trust. Had it not been for this protection I now see many times when I might have been led from the path of duty.

About this time I was shown that it was my duty to visit our people in N. H. My constant and faithful companion at this time was Louisa Foss, the sister of my brother-in-law. She has been dead for many years; but I can never forget her kind and sisterly attention to me in my journeyings. We were also accompanied by Bro. Files and his wife, who were old and valued friends of my family, and brethren Haskins and White.

We were cordially received; but there were wrongs existing in that field which burdened me much. We had to meet a spirit of self-righteousness that was very depressing. I had previously been shown the

pride and exaltation of certain ones whom we visited, but had not the courage to meet them with my testimony. Had I done so the Lord would have sustained me in doing my duty.

While visiting at the house of Bro. Morse, the burden did not leave me, but I did not yet feel sufficiently strong to relieve my mind and place the oppressive burden upon those to whom it belonged. During our stay at this house I was very ill. Prayer was offered in my behalf, the Spirit of God rested upon me, and I was taken off in vision. While in this state, some things were shown me concerning the disappointment of 1844, in connection with the case of Bro. Morse. He had been a firm and consistent believer that the Lord would come at that time. He was bitterly disappointed when the period passed without bringing the event that was expected. He was perplexed and unable to explain the delay.

He did not renounce his faith as some did, calling it a fanatical delusion; but he was bewildered, and could not understand the position of God's people on prophetic time. He had been so earnest in declaring that the coming of the Lord was nigh, that when the time passed, he was despondent and did nothing to encourage the disappointed people, who were like sheep without a shepherd, left to be devoured by wolves.

The case of Jonah was presented before me. God commanded him to go into Nineveh and deliver the message that he gave him. Jonah obeyed, and for the space of three days and nights the solemn cry was heard throughout the streets of the wicked city, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" The city was a marvel of wealth and magnificence; yet the king believed the warning and humbled himself and his people before the Lord in fasting and sackcloth.

A merciful God accepted their repentance and lengthened the days of their probation. He turned away his fierce anger and awaited the fruits of Nineveh's humiliation. But Jonah dreaded being called a false prophet. He murmured at the compassion of God in sparing the people whom he had warned of destruction by the mouth of his prophet. He could not bear the thought of standing before the people as a deceiver. He overlooked the great mercy of God toward the repentant city, in the personal humiliation of seeing his prophecy unfulfilled.

Bro. Morse was in a similar condition to that of the disappointed prophet. He had proclaimed that the Lord would come in 1844. The time had past. The check of fear that had partially held the people was removed, and they indulged in derision of those who had looked in vain for Jesus. Bro. Morse felt that he was a bye-word among his neighbors, an object of jest. He could not be reconciled to his position. He did not consider the mercy of God in granting the world a longer time to prepare for his coming; that the warning of his judgment might be heard more widely, and the people tested with greater light. He only thought of the humiliation of God's servants.

I was shown that although the event so solemnly proclaimed did not occur, as in the case of Jonah, the message was none the less of God, and accomplished the purpose that he designed it should. Subsequent light upon the prophecies revealed the event which did take place, in the High Priest entering the most holy place of the sanctuary in Heaven to finish the atonement for the sins of man. Nevertheless God willed for a wise purpose that his servants should proclaim the approaching end of time.

I was shown that, instead of being discouraged at his disappointment, as was Jonah, Bro. Morse should gather up the rays of precious light that God had given his people and cast aside his selfish sorrow. He should rejoice that the world was granted a reprieve, and be ready to aid in carrying forward the great work yet to be done upon earth, in bringing sinners to repentance and salvation.

It has been reported that on the occasion of this vision I declared that in forty days the end of the world would come. No such words were uttered by me. I had no light concerning the end of time. The subject of Nineveh, her lengthened probation, and the consequent grief of Jonah, was presented to me as a parallel case with our own disappointment of 1844.

The case of Bro. Morse was presented to me as one that represented the condition of a large class of our people at that time. Their duty was plainly marked; it was to trust in the wisdom and mercy of God and patiently labor as his providence opened the way before them.

May 11, 1876

Mrs. Ellen G. White—Her Life, Christian Experience and Labors

It was difficult to accomplish much good in New Hampshire. We found little spirituality there. Many pronounced their experience in '44 a delusion; it was hard to reach this class, for we could not accept the position they ventured to take. A number who were active preachers and exhorters in '44, now seemed to have lost their moorings, and did not know where we were in prophetic time; they were fast uniting with the spirit of the world.

Upon one occasion, when I was delivering the message that the Lord had given me for the encouragement of his people, I was interrupted several times by a certain minister. He had been very active in preaching definite time; but when the appointed period passed, his faith utterly failed, and he wandered in darkness, doubting and questioning everything. He was ever ready to array himself against any one who claimed more light than he possessed. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, as I related what had been shown to me of God. This minister interrupted me several consecutive times; but I continued speaking, when he became very angry and excited, violently opposing what I said. He raised his voice to a high key, and abused me till he was forced to stop from sheer exhaustion. In a few moments he left the house, being seized with hemorrhage of the lungs. He rapidly failed from that time, and died not long after.

Our testimony was welcomed by some; but many received us suspiciously. Fanaticism and spiritual magnetism seemed to have destroyed the spirit of true godliness. Many appeared unable to discern or appreciate the motives that led me in my feebleness, to travel and bear my testimony to the people. Those who had little interest for the salvation of souls, and whose hearts had turned from the work of preparation, could not comprehend the love of God in my soul that quickened my desire to help those in darkness to the same light that cheered my path. Could they also have seen what had been revealed to me of God's matchless love for men, manifested in giving his only Son to die for them, they would not have doubted my sincerity.

I believed all that had been shown me in vision. Truth was to me a living reality, and my labor was for eternity. However others might view my work, the weight of its importance was heavy on my soul. In feeble health I was toiling to do good to others unto eternal life. Moments seemed precious to me, delays dangerous.

In New Hampshire we had to contend with a species of spiritual magnetism, of a similar character with mesmerism. It was our first experience of this kind, and happened thus: Arriving at Claremont, we were told there were two parties of Adventists; one holding fast their former faith, the other denying it. At other places we had visited and labored with this latter class, and found that they were so buried in worldliness, and had so far adopted the popular view in regard to our disappointment that we could not reach nor help them.

But we were now pleased to learn that there was a little company here who believed that in their past experience they had been led by the providence of God. We were directed to Elders B-----t and B-----s as persons holding similar views with ourselves. We discovered that there was much prejudice against these men, but concluded that they were persecuted for righteousness' sake. We called on them and were kindly received and courteously treated. We soon learned that they professed sanctification, claiming they were above the possibility of sin, being entirely consecrated to God. Their clothing was excellent, and they had an air of ease and comfort.

Presently a little boy about eight years old entered, literally clad in dirty rags. We were surprised to find that this little specimen of neglect was the son of Elder B-----t. The mother looked exceedingly ashamed and annoyed; but the father, utterly unconcerned, continued talking of his high spiritual attainments without the slightest recognition of his little son. But his sanctification had suddenly lost its charm in my eyes. Wrapped in prayer and meditation, throwing off all the toil and responsibilities of life, this man seemed too spiritually-minded to notice the actual wants of his family, or give his children the least fatherly attention. He seemed to forget that the greater our love to God, the stronger should be our love and care for those whom he has given us; that the Saviour never taught idleness and abstract devotion, to the neglect of the duties laying directly in our path.

This husband and father declared that the heavenly attainment of true holiness carried the mind above all earthly thoughts. Still he sat at the table and ate temporal food; he was not fed by a miracle, and some one must provide that food, although he troubled himself little about that matter, his time was so devoted to spiritual things. Not so his wife, upon whom rested the burden of the family. She toiled unremittingly in every department of household labor to keep up the home. The husband declared that she was not sanctified, but allowed worldly things to draw her mind from religious subjects.

I thought of our Saviour as a constant worker for the good of others. He said "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The sanctification that he taught was shown in deeds of kindness and mercy, and the love that counteth others better than ourselves.

While at this house a sister of B-----s requested a private interview with me. She had much to say concerning entire consecration to God, and endeavored to draw out my views in regard to that subject. I felt that I must be guarded in my expressions. While talking, she held my hand in hers, and with the

other softly stroked my hair. I felt that angels of God would protect me from the unholy influence this attractive young lady was seeking to exercise over me, with her fair speeches, and gentle caresses. She had much to say in regard to the spiritual attainments of B-----t, and his great faith. Her mind seemed very much occupied with him and his experience. I was glad to be relieved at length from this trying interview.

These persons, who made such lofty professions, were calculated to deceive the unwary. They had much to say of love and charity covering a multitude of sins. I could not unite with their views and feelings; but felt that they were wielding a terrible power for evil. I wished to escape from their presence as soon as possible.

Eld. B-----t, in speaking of faith, said, "All we have to do is to believe, and whatever we ask of God will be given us."

Bro. White suggested that there were conditions specified. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Said he, "Your theory of faith must have a foundation; it is as empty as a flour-barrel with both heads out. True charity never covers up unrepented and unconfessed sins. She only drops her mantle over the faults that are confessed and renounced. True Charity is a very delicate personage, never setting her pure food outside of Bible truth."

As soon as the views of these people were crossed, they manifested a stubborn, self-righteous spirit that rejected all instruction. Though professing great humiliation they were boastful in their sophistry of sanctification, and resisted all appeals to reason. That same afternoon, we visited the house of Brother Collier, where we purposed to hold a meeting in the evening. We supposed this family were in union with those we had left. We asked some questions in reference to those men; but Brother Collier gave us no information. Said he, "If the Lord sent you here, you will ascertain what spirit governs them, and will solve the mystery for us."

B-----s and B-----t both attended the meeting. While I was earnestly praying for light and the presence of God, they began to groan and cry "Amen!" apparently throwing their sympathy with my prayer. Immediately my heart was oppressed with a great weight, the words died upon my lips, darkness overshadowed the whole meeting.

Bro. White arose and said, "I am distressed. The Spirit of the Lord is grieved. I resist this influence in the name of the Lord! O God, rebuke this foul spirit!"

I was immediately relieved, and rose above the shadows. But again, while speaking words of encouragement and faith to those present, their groanings and amens chilled me. Once more Bro. White rebuked the spirit of darkness, and again the power of the Lord rested upon me, while I spoke to the people. These agents of the evil one were then so bound as to be unable to exert their baneful influence any more that night.

After the meeting, Bro. White said to Bro. Collier, "Now I can tell you concerning those two men. They are acting under a Satanic influence, yet attributing all to the Spirit of the Lord."

"I believe God sent you to encourage us," said Bro. Collier. "We call their influence mesmerism. They affect the minds of others in a remarkable way, and have controlled some to their great damage. We seldom hold meetings here, for they intrude their presence, and we can have no union with them. They manifest deep feeling, as you observed tonight, but they crush the very life from our prayers, and leave an influence blacker than Egyptian darkness. I have never seen them tied up before tonight.

During family prayer that night the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I was shown many things in vision. Elders B-----t and B-----s were presented to me as doing great injury to the cause of God. While professing sanctification they were transgressing the sacred law. They were corrupt at heart and all those in unison with them were under a Satanic delusion and obeying their own carnal instincts instead of the Word of God. These two men exerted a marked and peculiar power over the people, holding their attention and winning their confidence through a baneful mesmeric influence that many who were innocent and unsuspecting attributed to the Spirit of the Lord. Those who followed their teachings were terribly deceived and led into the grossest errors.

I was shown that the daily lives of these men were in direct contrast with their profession. Under the garb of sanctification they were practicing the worst sins and deceiving God's people. Their iniquity was all laid open before me, and I saw the fearful account that stood against them in the great book of records, and their terrible guilt in professing utter holiness, while their daily acts were hateful in the sight of God. Some time after this, the characters of these persons were developed before the people and the vision given in reference to them was fully vindicated.

June 15, 1876

Christ's Teachings

In the life and ministry of Christ he said and did very many things which provoked the self-righteous Jews, and excited their jealousy and hatred. The Jews professed to be more favored of God than any other people upon the earth, and they felt insulted and abused by the pointed, cutting truths uttered by Jesus.

At the feast of the Passover Jesus appeared as a stranger, clad in the humble garments of a Galilean peasant, with no outward badge of authority. His eye took in the scene of the desecrated temple. The lowing of the oxen, the bleating of the sheep, the cooing of the doves, the jingling of the money, the sharp and angry contentions over the merchandise and in the traffic, drowned the voice of prayer in the temple. He looked upon them and, with indignant sorrow, he poured out the money of the changers; he overthrew the tables, and with a whip of small cords, drove the cattle and people out of the court. With majestic authority he commands, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

This language was close and cutting indeed. It was not addressed to the rabble, but to the chief priests, to the teachers of the people, who were defiling the sacred temple for the sake of gain. Indignation was seen in the searching eye and in the stern look of Jesus. His divine power was felt by the guilty, selfish,

avaricious masters in Israel, and they fled from before him as the guilty, condemned sinner will flee when, in his terrible, kingly majesty, Jesus will stand as Judge of the world, and proclaim, "Depart, ye workers of iniquity." Many will plead, We have done this and that good work; we have eaten and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But again the terrible sentence is uttered, Depart; I know you not. You have no connection with me, You are workers of iniquity.

Christ, at Jacob's well, laid open the sinful life and character of the woman of Samaria. "Unnecessary, uncourteous," say many. Jesus knew that this was the only way to reach the case. But how many would complain of such a way of saving souls. When the nobleman came to him asking him to heal his son, he met him with a reproof for their unbelief. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Thus was his eager entreaty met. He was not only greatly disappointed, but chagrined. With some impatience, and with a dread that the least delay would result in the death of his son, he said, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Jesus at last graciously granted his request. But how many in these days would have allowed the feelings of their own natural heart to overbear their judgment, and become impatient and unreconciled to Jesus' manner of working? They would have said, "Why pain and seemingly disappoint the father, when he might have healed his son at once with his word." Christ did not feel called upon to explain his motives and purposes to man. He designed that the repulse should expand the feeble faith of the parent, and it had this effect. There were Pharisees and chief priests, elders and scribes, to stand at the out-look and watch with jealousy and envy all that Christ might do, and to question it because it did not come to their prescribed rules.

If our Saviour was thus treated, can his co-laborers who go forth bearing the messages which he gives them expect to be treated better than was their Master? How many blessings Jesus bestowed on the world. How many discouraged, desponding and distressed ones he relieved. His work was to bless and save. He covered his glory with humanity, bringing from Heaven the very best gifts which could be given to man; spoke peace, gave messages of light and hope. But all these gifts were considered as matters of course; the gift was received but the Giver forgotten. They walked in the light with no thought of gratitude to him from whom its beams proceeded. When the chastisement came in reproof, in warning, or by affliction, to save from apostasy and ruin, then there was a turning upon Jesus with a defiant, stubborn, impenitent resistance which was fearful. And why, says the proud, perverse spirit, must I be crushed by rebuke? Why must I be humiliated? They forget all the light, all the favors previously given, and feel that they are abused because God takes with them the only course which will bring them to a knowledge of themselves, that they may find peace in him through submission, penitence for sin, and confiding trust in God. For this reason God sends to the church the greatest blessing he can give them in a knowledge of themselves. Satan is alluring them to sin that they may be lost; God gives a clear presentation of their sins that they may repent and be saved. The greatest danger of the world is, that sin does not appear sinful. This is the greatest evil existing in the church; sin is glossed over with self-complacency. Blessed indeed are they who possess a sensitive conscience; who can weep and mourn over their spiritual poverty and wanderings from God; who are poor in spirit and can receive the reproof God sends them; and who, with confessions and brokenness of heart, will take their places, all penitent, in humiliation at the cross of Christ. God knows it is good for men to tread a hard and humble path, to

encounter difficulties, to experience disappointments, and to suffer affliction. Faith strengthens by coming in conflict with doubt, and resisting unbelief through the strength of Jesus.

They who despise reproof will be left to their own devices.

E. G. W.

August 3, 1876

Love to God and Man

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

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

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

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

Professed Christians often disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God, and feel no compunctions of conscience. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of

affliction, and places them in similar positions to those who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

Jesus said in giving to his hearers an illustration of this subject:

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.”

Here Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity, and plainly impresses upon us all, in his sermon, that indifference or injustice done to the least of his saints is done to him. Here is the Lord's side, and whoever will be on the Lord's side, let him come over with us. In the heavenly records Christ preserves, as done to himself, all acts of mercy and benevolence done for the unfortunate, the lame, the blind, the sick and the needy. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and Levite for the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice, and every manifestation of careless indifference and neglect of the afflicted. Every one will finally be rewarded as his works have been.

E. G. W.

September 7, 1876

Wanted, Laborers for the Harvest

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ,

We are living in a most solemn time. Important responsibilities are resting upon us. New fields are being opened for our labor, and the Macedonian cry is coming from every direction: “Come over and help us.” Some beg for even a day of labor with them, if they can have no more. Angels of God are preparing ears to hear, and hearts to receive the message of warning. Honest souls are living in our very midst who have never yet heard the reasons of our faith. People are perishing for want of knowledge. Not one-hundredth part is being done that might be done to give the third angel's message to the world. There are those who will be responsible for these souls who have never heard the truth. Many excuse themselves with trivial reasons, for not engaging in the work they might do if they were consecrated to God. They have wrapped their talents in a napkin and buried them in the ground, where they cannot increase.

Young men have lost years of experience wherein they might have been growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. But love of self and love of the world has engrossed their minds to the exclusion

of eternal interests. God would have accepted them as laborers years ago, if they had been willing to give themselves unreservedly to his work. Now, when there are doors open everywhere for the entrance of the truth, there are but a few who have sufficient courage and experience to carry it forward in the name of Jesus.

The very ones who should be valuable workmen have wasted these precious years in selfishly following their own inclinations. They have turned a deaf ear when the Master called them to lift unpleasant burdens, to perform disagreeable duties. Many have little care for the souls for whom Christ died. The Majesty of Heaven submitted to the most cruel humiliation that he might lift degraded man to a state of purity and eternal joy.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” In the death of Christ we see the greatness of God's love for his sinful children. He sacrificed his dear Son to save them from eternal ruin. All Heaven is interested in the salvation of souls. We should be willing and ready to make all sacrifices in order to win souls to Jesus. This would evidence that we are co-laborers with him, that we are faithfully bearing the cross. To shun the solemn responsibilities of our time and position is to weaken the moral powers and enfeeble the spiritual muscle.

The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed by a sense of his incapacity to be a mouth-piece for God to Israel. But he accepted the work, putting all his trust in the Lord. The greatness of his mission called into exercise the best powers of his mind. God blessed his ready obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well-fitted for the greatest work ever given to man. This is an example of what God does to strengthen the characters of those who trust him implicitly, and give themselves unreservedly to his commands.

The work of saving souls is sacred and all-important. The humble, efficient worker, who obediently responds to the call of God in this direction, may be sure of receiving divine assistance. To feel so great and holy a responsibility is of itself elevating to the human character. It calls into action the highest mental qualities, and their continued exercise strengthens and purifies mind and heart. The influence upon one's own life, as well as upon the lives of others, is incalculable.

He who is called of God to so sacred a work should bend all his energies to its accomplishment. Every other consideration should become secondary to this great object. He should feel the solemn obligations resting upon him, one whom God has honored by choosing to unite him with the angels in the work of ministering to souls and enlightening them with the divine truth.

It is wonderful how strong a weak man may become through faith in the power of God, how decided his efforts, how prolific of great results. And the timid woman, shrinking and self-distrustful, is transformed to a courageous missionary, valiantly wielding the sword of truth. The hesitating and irresolute, through exercising his abilities in the cause of God, becomes firm and decided. Taking in the great fact that he is called by the Redeemer of the world to work with him for the salvation of man, he dedicates his life to the work. His nature becomes exalted; the mission of Christ opens before him with new importance and glory, and with deep humility he recognizes in himself a co-laborer with the Saviour. No higher office is given to man. No joy can equal the assurance of being an instrument in the hands of God of saving souls.

It is a grand thing to look back upon a course of labor all marked with glorious results; to see precious souls progressing in the light through your efforts; to feel that God has worked with and through you in the harvest-field of the world.

Careless spectators may not appreciate your work, or see its importance. They may consider it a losing business, a life of thankless labor and self-sacrifice. But the servant of Jesus Christ sees in it the light reflected from the cross. His sacrifices appear small in comparison with those of his blessed Master, and he is glad to follow in his footsteps. The success of his labor affords him the purest joy, and is the richest recompense for a life of patient toil.

In reviewing the past, the trials and difficulties that have beset him are not magnified in his mind. The consciousness of duty performed amply compensates for all his sufferings, and the glory of his coming reward clothes the future with the light of Heaven. Glancing over the well-fought field of life, he says with Paul, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor 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."

But he who accepts the responsibility of teaching the word of God, must expect stern, self-denying work. Some who are only superficially acquainted with the doctrines of our faith, venture indiscreetly before the public in large towns, and, from their ignorance and indiscretion, bring discredit upon the cause.

These young men who so rashly undertake to stand as ministers of God, fail because they lack thoroughness. They acquaint themselves with the reasons of our faith, and gather up the arguments ready-made from the lips or pens of others. They do not carefully study the word of God, and establish themselves firmly on the principles, of Bible truth, line upon line, and precept upon precept. With such a preparation they can boldly meet the opposition of the world. Our ministers are in danger of using only the facts sought out by others, and going no further. They do not themselves dig for truth as for hidden treasures, but become careless and easily satisfied with the researches of others. They need a deep religious experience and knowledge gained for themselves in order to be successful in the important work of the ministry.

Many fail to see the necessity of earnest effort and close connection with Jesus Christ. They do not feel their utter helplessness without the aid of God, and they do not teach the truth with the Spirit and power, because they have it not in their hearts. It requires agonizing prayer to bring our souls into harmony with Christ. The history of our Saviour's conflict in the wilderness of temptation, his life of self-sacrificing love, his soul-agony in the lonely garden of Gethsemane, the cruelty of the judgment hall, and the agony upon the cross, all combine to teach us a lesson of self-sacrifice, of patience under affliction, of solemn consecration to God, and of fitting preparation for his holy work.

Laborers for God, be not discouraged; when weary and heavy-laden, fly to Christ who has promised you rest. He is the Burden-bearer, he is your strength. Never allow yourself to imagine that you are in yourself sufficient for the exigency of the times; never consider yourself a graduated Christian. Your

work is to discipline the mind, to store up knowledge, to perfect character while life lasts. Only thus can you be able to wage successfully the great warfare of life.

Keep the spirit humble as that of a little child. Pride, envy, worldly ambition, cupidity and love of ease must be sacrificed upon the altar of duty. In the simplicity of love, be like those little ones whose angels do always behold the face of our Heavenly Father. But unite with these virtues the courage of a tried warrior. We want faithful Calebs who will raise their voices fearlessly in defense of the right, who are the first to press into the front of the battle and plant the banner of truth in the heart of the enemy's camp.

Jesus calls for young men who will volunteer to carry the truth to the world. Men of spiritual nerve and muscle are wanted, who are able to find work close at hand, because they are looking for it. The church needs new men to give new energy to the ranks, men for the times, and able to cope with its crying errors, who will inspire with fresh zeal the flagging efforts of the few, whose hearts are warm with Christian love, and whose hands are eager to go about their Father's work.

The unsearchable riches of Christ are to be presented to the world in contrast with the poverty of sin, and the delusive pleasures of the world. Only a heart, brimming with the love of God, only a mind active by constant study of eternal interests, can properly set forth the beauties of the truth of God.

Those who unreservedly give themselves to this work, who faithfully reflect the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, fulfilling their mission with fidelity and love, will be recompensed on earth by the sweet consciousness of duty performed, and, in the bright Hereafter, when the saints come into their inheritance, then the devoted minister of Christ will be welcomed into the joy of his Lord, hearing from the Master's lips: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

E. G. White.

September 14, 1876

Incidents at Groveland, Mass

What a scene is before me! It is estimated that twenty thousand people are assembled in this grove. The third train, of fifteen cars, has just arrived. Every seat was filled and every foot of standing room, also the platform and the steps. A sea of human heads is already before me, and still the cars are to come. This is to me the most solemn sight I ever beheld. Hundreds in carriages are driving away because they cannot get within sound of the speaker's voice.

There is one very interesting case at this meeting. It is that of a blind sister who embraced the truth at the camp-meeting last year. After she embraced the Sabbath she had a very earnest desire to read the Bible that is prepared for the blind. But she was about forty years old, and her fingers were not sufficiently sensitive to discern the raised letters. Sister Haskell was her teacher, and these two would sit for hours so engaged in the work that time passed unheeded. But still the difficulty existed. Her fingers were too much calloused to trace the delicate lines of the letters, and she wept bitterly in her disappointment. She carried her troubles to the Lord in prayer, and was comforted and encouraged to persevere in her efforts. Shortly after she suffered a long sickness and during that illness her fingers

became so sensitive that she could read successfully. Her joy was beyond expression. With countenance beaming with hope and joy she exalted the truth of the Bible. She prized the precious words of inspiration, and recommended its study to all especially to the young.

I could not but think of those who are blessed with good eyesight and can search the Scriptures for themselves. What an account such will have to give for their neglect of the words of reproof, warning, instruction and encouragement given in the written word.

There is another sister here, who has recently been converted to our truth. She lives in Boston, but said she could not consent to be baptized in a pool, choosing rather the flowing river. Having seen the appointment of the camp-meeting, she had come alone to attend. She enjoyed the meetings Sabbath very much, but was obliged, on account of the sickness of her husband, to return home Sunday evening, but came on the ground again Monday to receive baptism with the others. This seemed much like sheep hunting for a shepherd.

Many other testimonies were borne of the deepest interest. One sister from the State of Maine who was visiting her niece at Summersville stated that as she was about to return home her niece plead with her to remain longer. She did so, and as the result she had to report that her niece was rejoicing with her in the truth.

If the visits we make our friends are productive of the salvation of souls, we must not be indifferent and silent upon religious subjects, but we should let the precious light God has given us shine forth to others. If the truth is in the heart sanctifying the life, it must be reflected upon those with whom we are brought in contact. The lives of genuine Christians should be living epistles known and read of all men.

The events of this meeting have given me very solemn reflections. The people seem to have an awakening interest to hear for themselves. Angels of God are moving upon hearts. God, in his providence, is opening the way for the message of warning to be given to those who are in darkness. Many who are not of our faith have come on the ground to remain through the entire meeting.

From the very commencement the brethren have manifested a personal interest, as though the success of the meeting depended upon their course of action. This is as it should be. They have not left all the work for the ministers, but have generally done their work promptly and given their spirited testimonies, thereby adding greatly to the interest of the meeting. Such a willingness on the part of the people to come up to the work is a great encouragement to the servants of God.

E. G. White.

Groveland, Mass.

October 5, 1876

Camp-Meeting in Indiana

Peru, Ind., September 14, 1876.—The camp-meeting in this place has been one of the best we have attended this season. There was quite a good representation of our brethren, although we learned that many were detained at home because of sickness. The meeting had been in progress two days when we came upon the ground. Sabbath morning the prayer and conference meetings were very interesting. Sabbath forenoon my husband spoke with freedom upon the subject of faith. Luke 12:1.

In the afternoon I spoke to the people upon the barren fig-tree. It stood forth among the leafless trees with its apparently flourishing branches far in advance of all other trees. Christ sought for fruit upon this tree from the topmost bough to the lowest branches, but finding nothing but leaves, he passed an irrevocable sentence of doom upon it.

Christ invests the fig-tree with moral qualities, and makes it the expositor of divine truth that he may teach a lesson to his disciples, and not only to them but to all who should believe on the Word. Many, like the portentous fig-tree, make high profession of godliness, but bear no fruit to the glory of God. They have not responded to the sacred influences which God has given them. Opportunities have been unimproved, blessings have been unappreciated, warnings and reproofs have been rejected. The fostering love and care of the Redeemer has been unrequited, and like the barren fig-tree they stand forth fruitless, having nothing but leaves.

The word seemed to reach hearts. I then invited those who had never identified themselves with the people of God, and backsliders, and those who felt that they must have a new conversion, to come forward. Seventy-five responded to the call. My husband spoke with great freedom and power to the people, and addressed those who came forward particularly in regard to their having faith in the promises of God. He dwelt upon the simplicity of faith. Opportunity was given for all who wished to speak to relieve their minds. Many testimonies of confession were borne, well wet down with tears. A number stated that this was the first Sabbath they had kept. Others said they were making a start to serve God and had come forward for the first time. Very deep feeling pervaded the meeting. My husband led in prayer, and his faith fastened upon the throne of God. Heaven seemed to be very near. Praying and weeping was mingled, and earnest, agonizing prayer went forth from unfeigned lips. The solemn power of God rested upon the company bowed in humiliation before him. I thought of the day of Pentecost, when the power of God came upon the worshipers like a mighty, rushing wind. I have not witnessed such an exhibition of the manifest power of God for years. There was no wild fanaticism, but a sweet, soft, subduing spirit, bringing the entire company in harmony with Heaven. There were no wild, unintelligible shrieks, but the praise of God was upon almost every lip.

Testimonies were universally borne that they never had realized the blessing of God as upon this occasion. And who could doubt it. Their countenances were all aglow with the reflection of the light beams of the Sun of Righteousness. It was sunshine and rain; tears were bedewing the cheeks that were illuminated by the Sun of Peace. The scene will never be effaced from my memory. The setting sun in his mellow radiance reflected through the opening of the trees directly in the center of the congregation, sifting its gleam of glorifying light upon the happy company who were assembled. The light of the setting sun mingling with the light borrowed of Heaven made this a hallowed spot, a little Heaven below.

We assembled at the stand at half-past two in the afternoon and remained there until half-past six. All felt reluctant to leave the place made so sacred by the presence of God.

Eld. Canright spoke in the evening upon the Sleep of the Dead. He spoke with great clearness and perfect freedom. Sunday morning he again spoke upon the Sabbath question, and many testified that they never heard the subject presented with such clearness. At half-past one my husband took the stand, speaking with freedom upon the reasons of our faith and hope. The gathering was large for the place, and the audience seemed charmed by the new and startling facts of truth brought before them. Men of repute from Peru who listened to the two discourses stated that an overwhelming array of argument had been presented in favor of the Sabbath which had knocked the last prop for the sacred observance of Sunday from beneath them.

At half-past two I spoke upon the subject of Temperance, taking for my text Revelation 3:21: "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."

The congregation listened with solemn interest as I dwelt upon the neglected duties of mothers in educating and training their children for the better life, and the necessity of fathers acting their part in teaching the children. Many fathers excuse themselves by saying that they have no time to devote to their children. But the time squandered daily in smoking might be made of highest value to their children in giving them important lessons and in becoming acquainted with them. Tobacco and liquor lie at the foundation of a large share of the crime and violence that is polluting our world. I pointed them to Jesus, their Redeemer, who commenced the work of redemption where the ruin began on the part of appetite.

After the meeting closed, Bro. Weber, a man of good repute in the city of Rochester, who attended our camp-meeting in Kokomo two years since, related his interesting experience, dating from that meeting. He stated that he had used tobacco for forty years, commencing its use when a child. His father and mother used it, and he thought it would cost him his life to give it up. But when I was speaking upon the evils of the indulgence of appetite for tobacco, strong convictions of the sinfulness of this indulgence forced themselves upon him, and he threw his tobacco from him with the determination never to taste or handle it again. He experienced a severe struggle, but through the strength of Jesus overcame the appetite so that it is now very offensive to him. This brother feels deeply grateful to God that he can stand forth, in the strength of his God-given manhood, free from the slavery of appetite.

E. G. White.

October 19, 1876

Incidents of the Michigan Camp-Meeting

This is the largest gathering of Sabbath-keepers we have yet seen. Although there has been a great amount of business to be done, it has been accomplished with efficiency and dispatch, no disagreeable

hindrances occurring to block the wheels. Very many excellent discourses have been given, presenting to the people the truths so important for this time.

On Thursday, after speaking from the third and fourth chapters of Malachi, we invited those who had made no profession and those who were backslidden and had lost their evidences of God's love for them, to come forward and seek the Lord by confession and repentance. About three hundred accepted the invitation. Opportunity was given them to express their feelings and desires. Many testimonies of confession were made with deep feeling. Fathers and mothers owned to a neglect of duty towards their children in not giving them the care and instruction which it was their duty to give. It touched my heart to hear the many testimonies from the lips of those who were babes in the truth. Some had kept but a single Sabbath, while others had observed two, four, or six. They were rejoicing in the truth, but were not satisfied with their present attainments, and expressed a determination to reach a higher standard.

My mother heart was stirred to see the children pressing in their testimonies, many lifting the cross for the first time. One of these was a boy ten years of age, and I have never seen persons of mature age manifest deeper soul-conflict than this tender child. His face was deadly pale, and indicated the deepest feeling; he had never before spoken on such an occasion, and could say but a few words; he wanted to be a Christian and to be saved in Heaven.

With what pleasure must the angels of God regard the efforts put forth, and the victories gained by these little ones over natural pride and timidity. With what tender care will they guard these lambs of the flock.

It was a solemn sight to see hundreds seeking the Lord with earnest determination. These people were not moving fitfully, but calmly and understandingly. There was a total absence of fanaticism and excitement; no shrieks, and nervous, spasmodic movements. But the Spirit of the Lord rested upon the people, and solemn, earnest prayer was offered to God in behalf of those who were seeking him.

After the meeting closed, a sister took me heartily by the hand, expressing great joy at meeting sister White again. She inquired if I remembered calling at a log house in the woods twenty-two years before. She gave us refreshments, and I left with them a little book, "Experience and Views." She stated that she had lent that little book to her neighbors, as new families had settled around her, until there was very little left of it; and she expressed a great desire to obtain another copy of the work. Her neighbors were deeply interested in it, and were desirous of seeing the writer. She said that when I called upon her I talked to her of Jesus and the beauties of Heaven, and that the words were spoken with such fervor that she was charmed, and had never forgotten them. Since that time the Lord had sent ministers to preach the truth to them, and now there was quite a company observing the Sabbath. The influence of that little book, now worn out with perusing, had extended from one to another, performing its silent work, until the soil was ready for the seeds of truth.

I well remember the long journey we took twenty-two years ago, in Michigan. We were on our way to hold a meeting in Vergennes. We were fifteen miles from our destination. Our driver had passed over the road repeatedly and was well acquainted with it, but was compelled to acknowledge that he had lost the way. We traveled forty miles that day, through the woods, over logs and fallen trees, where

there was scarcely a trace of road. I was feeble, and fainted twice on the way. We had no food. The brother who drove the team, tried to find some water; but there was none fit for use. He made efforts to obtain a little milk from the cows we met on the road; but they were too wild to be approached by a stranger.

As I was fainting with thirst, I thought of travelers perishing in the desert. Cool streams of water seemed to lie directly before me; but as we passed on they proved to be only an illusion. A goblet of water seemed just within my grasp. I eagerly reached out my hand to take it, but it was gone. My husband prayed for me that I might be sustained on that dreary journey. We could not understand why we should be left to this singular wandering in the wilderness.

We were never more pleased than when we came in sight of a little clearing on which was a log cabin, where we found the sister I have mentioned. She kindly welcomed us to her home, and provided us with refreshments, which were gratefully received. As we rested, I talked with the family and left them the little book. She gladly accepted it, and has preserved it until the present time.

For twenty-two years our wanderings on this journey have seemed indeed mysterious to us, but here we met quite a company who are now believers in the truth, and who date their first experience from the influence of that little book. The sister who so kindly administered to our wants is now, with many of her neighbors, rejoicing in the light of present truth and the family have worked their way from poverty to a competency in temporal things. We were sorry to be compelled to refuse the earnest entreaties of the sister and her friends to visit them and speak to the people.

We were interested in meeting quite a number of persons who had been converted to the truth by visiting the Health Institute as patients. The institute affords a wide field for missionary labor which we fear few appreciate. True, earnest, faithful workers in this branch of the cause will achieve great results.

One sister who was upon the ground had been confined to her bed for several years, being unable to have the charge of her family. She had expended much means, suffering many things of many physicians, but was rather made worse than better. The family became embarrassed financially through the necessary expense attending long sickness. At last, she visited the Health Institute, and was greatly benefited. Though she was at first much prejudiced against the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, her connection with our people, a more intimate acquaintance with them, and a more thorough knowledge of their views, resulted in her embracing the truth. She has recovered health, and has been enabled to take the supervision of her family and endure great taxation. The beams of truth which she received have enlightened her mind and quickened her understanding, until she can say with the psalmist, "Oh, how love I thy law." The light which she and her husband have received, they let shine forth to others. The benefit she received from treatment at the Health Institute has induced many others to visit that institution, of whom quite a number have been led to embrace the truth through the influences which were thrown around them there.

Thus the work moves on. Numerous instances similar to this might be mentioned. The Judgment alone will reveal the great good accomplished by this branch of the work. It may be a powerful agent in the

hands of God to bring many souls to the knowledge of the truth, if the workers connected with the institution are consecrated to God.

From the first, the conference meetings were good. There was a readiness to engage in devotional exercises, and the testimonies were characterized by fervor and an earnest determination to progress in the work of overcoming. Sabbath morning, the people were divided into three companies, each with an appointed leader, and three social meetings were held simultaneously. All were interesting and profitable.

Sabbath afternoon, we spoke on the subject of Christ riding into Jerusalem. The word seemed to reach the hearts of the hearers, and after we closed the discourse, we invited those to come forward who felt that they were sinners, and those who felt that their lives were like the pretentious fig-tree, covered with leaves, but destitute of fruit. Four hundred responded to the invitation.

E. G. White.

November 30, 1876

The Sabbath

[Ellen G. White series from The Spirit of Prophecy, Volumes II and III:

In the years 1876, 1877, and 1878 Ellen White prepared the chapters for the two books, The Spirit of Prophecy, Volumes II and III, devoted to the "life, teachings and miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ" and to the work of the apostles. These volumes were published in 1877 and 1878. Being judged as matter suitable for the Signs of the Times, the missionary journal of the church, most of the content of these two books appeared in articles published from 1876 to 1879, in what at times appeared to be random selection. Some of the chapters appeared in article form even before their book publication.

The publication of these materials began with the issue of November 30, 1876, with an article entitled "The Sabbath," which would later appear as chapter 15 in The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume II. There is evidence that the author as she did her writing had in mind the dual publication, and chose phraseology with the non-Adventist readers in mind.

These articles are all listed in the tables of contents of the respective Signs volumes in which they appear, but to avoid duplication of matter currently available elsewhere, and to save space in these volumes of facsimile reprints, the articles are not here reproduced. The wording is identical with the book printings, either the original or in the currently available facsimile reprints.]

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Nothing so distinguished the Jews from surrounding nations, and designated them as true worshipers of the Creator, as the institution of the Sabbath. Its observance was a continual visible token of their connection with God, and separation from other people. All ordinary labor for a livelihood or for worldly profit was forbidden upon the seventh day. According to the fourth commandment the Sabbath was

dedicated to rest and religious worship. All secular employment was to be suspended; but works of mercy and benevolence were in accordance with the purpose of the Lord. They were not to be limited by time nor place. To relieve the afflicted, and comfort the sorrowing is a labor of love that does honor to God's holy day.

The work of the priests in connection with the sacrificial offerings was increased upon the Sabbath, yet in their holy work in the service of God they did not violate the fourth commandment of the decalogue. As Israel separated from God, the true object of the Sabbath institution became less distinct in their minds. They grew careless of its observance, and unmindful of its ordinances. The prophets testified to them of God's displeasure in the violation of his Sabbath. Nehemiah says: "In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals."

And Jeremiah commands them: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers."

But they heeded not the admonitions of the inspired prophets, and departed more and more from the religion of their fathers. At length calamities, persecution, and bondage came upon them in consequence of their disregard of God's requirements.

Alarmed at these visitations of divine punishment, they returned to the strict observance of all the outward forms enjoined by the sacred law. Not satisfied with this, they made burdensome additions to those ceremonies. Their pride and bigotry led them to the narrowest interpretation of the requirements of God. As time passed they gradually hedged themselves in with the traditions and customs of their ancestors, till they regarded them with all the sanctity of the original law. This confidence in themselves and their own regulations, with its attendant prejudice against all other nations, caused them to resist the Spirit of God, and separated them still farther from his favor.

Their exactions and restrictions were so wearisome that Jesus declared: "They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders." Their false standard of duty, their superficial tests of piety and godliness, obscured the real and positive requirements of God. Heart service was neglected in the rigid performance of outward ceremonies. The Jews had so perverted the divine commandments, by heaping tradition upon tradition, that, in the days of Christ, they were ready to accuse him of breaking the Sabbath, because of his acts of mercy upon that day.

The grain was ready for the sickle when Jesus and his disciples passed through the corn fields on the Sabbath. The disciples were hungry, for their Master had extended his work of teaching and healing to a late hour, and they had been without food for a long time. They accordingly began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat, rubbing them in their hands, in accordance with the law of Moses, which provides that: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn."

But spies were continually upon the track of Jesus, watching for some occasion to accuse and condemn him. When they saw this act of the disciples, they immediately complained to him, saying, "Behold thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." In this they expressed their own narrow views of the law. But Jesus defended his followers thus: "Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was a hungered, he, and they that were with him? how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

If excessive hunger excused David for violating even the holiness of the sanctuary, and made his act guiltless, how much more excusable was the simple act of the disciples in plucking the grain and eating it upon the Sabbath day. Jesus would teach his disciples and his enemies that the service of God was first of all; and, if fatigue and hunger attended the work, it was right to satisfy the wants of humanity, even upon the Sabbath day. That holy institution was not given to interfere with the needs of our being, bringing pain and discomfort, instead of blessing. "The Sabbath was made for man," to give him rest and peace, and remind him of the work of his Creator, not to be a grievous burden.

The work done in the temple upon the Sabbath was in harmony with the law; yet the same labor, if employed in ordinary business, would be a violation of it. The act of plucking and eating the grain to sustain the bodily strength, to be used in the service of God, was right and lawful. Jesus then crowned his argument by declaring himself the "Lord of the Sabbath,"—One above all question and above all law. This Infinite Judge acquits the disciples from blame, appealing to the very statutes they are accused of violating.

But Jesus did not let the matter drop without administering a rebuke to his enemies. He declared that in their blindness they had mistaken the object of the Sabbath. Said he: "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." He then contrasted their many heartless rites with the truthful integrity, and tender love that should characterize the true worshippers of God: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant; there have they dealt treacherously against me."

Jesus was reared among this people, so marked with bigotry and prejudice; and he therefore knew that in healing upon the Sabbath day, he would be regarded as a transgressor of the law. He was aware that the Pharisees would seize upon such acts with great indignation, and thereby seek to influence the people against him. He knew that they would use these works of mercy as strong arguments to affect the minds of the masses, who had all their lives been bound by the Jewish restrictions and exactions. Nevertheless he was not prevented by this knowledge from breaking down the senseless wall of superstition that barricaded the Sabbath, and teaching men that charity and benevolence were lawful upon all days.

He entered the synagogue, and saw there a man who had a withered hand. The Pharisees watched him, eager to see what he would do with regard to this case—whether or not he would heal the man upon

the Sabbath day. Their sole object was to find cause for accusation against him. Jesus looked upon the man with the withered hand, and commanded him to stand forth. He then asked, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other."

He justified this work of healing the paralytic, as in perfect keeping with the principles of the fourth commandment. But they questioned him: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" Jesus made them the clear and forcible answer, "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days."

The spies upon our Saviour's words dared not, in the presence of the multitude, answer this question for fear of involving themselves in difficulties. They knew that while they would leave men to suffer and die rather than to violate their traditions by relieving them upon the Lord's day, a brute which had fallen into danger would be at once relieved, because of the loss that would accrue to the owner if he was neglected. Thus the dumb animal was exalted above man, made in the image of God.

Jesus wished to correct the false teachings of the Jews in regard to the Sabbath and also to impress his disciples with the fact that deeds of mercy were lawful on that day. In the matter of healing the withered hand he broke down the custom of the Jews, and left the fourth commandment standing as God had given it to the world. By this act he exalted the Sabbath, sweeping away the senseless restrictions that encumbered it. His act of mercy did honor to the day, while those who complained of him, were, by their many useless rites and ceremonies, themselves dishonoring the Sabbath.

There are ministers today who teach that the Son of God broke the Sabbath and justified his disciples in doing the same. They take the same ground as did the caviling Jews, although ostensibly for another purpose, since they hold that Christ abolished the Sabbath.

Jesus in turning upon the Pharisees with the question whether it was lawful to do good upon the Sabbath day or evil, to save life or to kill, confronted them with their own wicked purposes. They were following upon his track to find occasion for falsely accusing him; they were hunting his life with bitter hatred and malice, while he was saving life and bringing happiness to many hearts. Was it better to slay upon the Sabbath, as they were planning to do, than to heal the afflicted as he had done? Was it more righteous to have murder in the heart upon God's holy day, than love to all men which finds expression in deeds of charity and mercy?

Ellen G. White.