

Ellen G. White 1894 Sign Of The Times

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Christ Seeks the Lost through Human Agents

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The scribes and Pharisees had built up a wall of separation between their nation and every other people. They passed by the publicans and sinners, as though communication with them would bring upon them some moral defilement. Imagine their contempt of Christ when he received publicans and sinners and ate with them. The Lord desired to break down the wall of separation; for he loved the souls who had never known a better way. He is no respecter of persons, and willeth not the death of any sinner, but would that all men might come unto him and live.

In this age, as then, there are lost sheep to be sought and saved. There are many who need personal labor. No prophet, like John the Baptist, has cried out the message of warning to them. No one has pointed them to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” But this is not because the Lord has no interest in these souls who are ready to perish, represented as lost sheep. But the Lord is not chargeable with any neglect on his part. Look to Calvary and answer decidedly, No, no. The Lord has made every provision to save men in giving his Son. Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily. When he claimed the highest prerogatives, he did not make an empty boast. Yet when he was among men, he did not call together a concourse of people, and sound a trumpet before him, and command attention. The great Teacher came in simplicity, though he was the light of the world. He taught the people in plain, simple words, which all could understand. He said, “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.... My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.” “All things that the Father hath are mine.” With the familiarity and ease of eternal habitude, Jesus lays his hand on the throne of God.

In giving Jesus to the world God gave all heaven in one gift. Then why is it, when God has left nothing undone that could be done, that there are not more brought from darkness to light?—It is because the human will does not cooperate with the divine intelligences. If the Lord's will and way were carried out, humanity would be reached through humanity, and every lost prodigal would be brought home, and saved through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every man. Sin would no longer exist. But it is humanity that bars the way. It is for lack of the copartnership of man, because of rebellion, that the way is blocked up. The revelation of God's truth comes to us through human agents. Christ came to the world as the Son of Man. This was the only way in which he could reach humanity. Jesus enters into humanity, that through his power and grace humanity may become partaker of the divine nature. “Ye are laborers together with God.” Man must cooperate with Jesus Christ, and through earnest endeavor work out his own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Man works out what God works in, not by means of finite endeavor, but by the strength imparted through the divine

nature. Those who are building up a Christlike character, will not, cannot, withhold their interest from the work of aiding Christ in seeking and saving that which is lost.

The Jews looked upon the whole world as cursed, and Satan claimed the world. He claimed the publicans and sinners as his own subjects, but Christ came to dispute his claims and challenge his usurped authority. In this work man is brought into cooperation with God, and is to work as God works for the salvation of fallen men. What are we individually doing to let our light shine forth to others? It is the neglect of men in failing to cooperate with Jesus that leaves the world so long unreclaimed. Jesus has said of his followers, "As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." As Christ represented the Father, so he has commissioned his believing ones to represent him in character. We are to show forth his self-denial and self-sacrifice, and to establish his kingdom in righteousness. We are to speak the words that Christ has spoken, and do the works that Christ has done. The work of Christ was not to destroy, but to save. He gave his disciples lessons that are of the highest value; for through their words many are to come to the knowledge of Bible truth, and teach others also the lessons which they have learned. The disciples were to know that they were not simply combating the influence of finite enemies, but that they were also contending with demons. Light and darkness were in opposition, truth and delusion, good and evil, heaven and hell. Satanic supernatural agencies were united with evil men to corrupt and destroy.

The publicans and sinners, so despised by the Pharisees, were drawn to Christ, and their hearts were awakened to ask, "What is truth?" The Pharisees, closed their eyes and their ears lest they should see and hear and be converted from the error of their ways, and thus be saved. Heavenly intelligences watched the battle with awe and reverence. As those who are lost, and bound by Satan, struggle to burst the bands that enchain them, they are led to fly to Christ, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The sinful, repenting soul becomes hopeful, follows Jesus, and catches the words from his lips. Heaven looks upon the scene with rejoicing; but the scribes and Pharisees look on with lowering brow and with sneering, contemptuous words.

What a contrast is the attitude of the Pharisees to that of the angels! The angels look upon Jesus as the Commander of heaven, the Son of the highest, and see him contending with the prince of darkness. The prize for which they are battling is the human soul, for which Christ has come to die, that he may redeem the lost. It is well to contemplate the divine condescension, the sacrifice, the self-denial, the humiliation, the resistance the Son of God must encounter in doing his work for fallen men. Well may we come forth from contemplation of his sufferings, exclaiming, Amazing condescension! Angels marvel as with intense interest they watch the Son of God descending step by step the path of humiliation. It is the mystery of godliness. It is the glory of God to conceal himself and his ways, not by keeping men in ignorance of heavenly light and knowledge, but by surpassing the uttermost capacity of men to know. Humanity can comprehend in part, but that is all that man can bear. The love of Christ passes knowledge. The mystery of redemption will continue to be the mystery, the unexhausted science and everlasting song of eternity. Well may humanity exclaim, Who can know God? We may, as did Elijah, wrap our mantles about us, and listen to hear the still, small voice of God.

January 8, 1894

The Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment Unchanged

The commandment for Sabbath observance reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle; not thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

The Sabbath commandment is placed in the very bosom of the Decalogue, amid the unchangeable precepts of Jehovah. And yet from many pulpits of our land a contemptuous cry is raised against the Sabbath instituted by the Lord God of heaven, and it is stigmatized as "the old Jewish Sabbath." Let all who are seeking for truth remember that the Sabbath was instituted in Eden before there was a Jew in existence, and that the Saviour said, "The Sabbath was made for man." The fourth commandment was spoken with the other nine of God's moral precepts, amid the thunders and grandeur of Mount Sinai, and in the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary above, is the ark of God. It is called the "ark of the testament," and under its cover,—the mercy seat,—are the ten commandments that were written with the finger of God.

On the tables of the law, written with the finger of the infinite God, is the fourth commandment. Does the commandment read, "The first day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?"—No, it reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested [the first day?] the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day; and hallowed it." Thus it reads today in the sacred law as engraven by the finger of God, and thus it is preserved in the ark in the temple of God in heaven.

The institution of the Sabbath was made when the foundation of the earth was laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Like the other nine precepts of the law, it is of imperishable obligation. It is the memorial of God's creative power, the reminder of his exalted work. The fourth commandment occupies a sacred position in the law, and bears the same hallowed nature as do the other great moral precepts of God. God has stamped it with his divine authority as a law of his eternal government. No change can come to it, nothing can alter the thing that has gone out of his lips, or lessen in any degree its sacred obligation. The law of the Sabbath is placed in the very midst of the Decalogue, and walled in with the sacred immutability of truth, justice, and holiness.

The fall of Adam was a terrible thing, and the consequences of his sin so fraught with evil that language cannot portray it. By his disobedience of the divine law, the world was thrown into disorder and rebellion. Because of his disobedience, man was under the penalty of breaking the law, doomed to death. The only definition given in the word of God as to what is sin, is found in 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." The law of God is that standard by which character is to be measured in the judgment. Do those who are contending that the first day of the week should be observed instead of the day commanded by Jehovah, understand what they are doing? Do they realize that they are leading men to trample upon one of the precepts of Jehovah?

What significance has the Sabbath if its observance is transferred to the first day of the week? God gave it to men as a memorial of his creative work in six days and his rest upon the seventh. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you; everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Satan, the apostle, the rebel against the government of God, has proposed to obliterate the fourth commandment, which brings to view the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and, instead of the Sabbath, he designs to cause all men to honor a common working day. God blessed the seventh day, he rested upon it and sanctified it for man's observance, but Satan is determined to set aside the claims of the Sabbath, and cause men to accept a spurious sabbath. The excuse for refusing to observe the Sabbath of God's appointment is often made that it does not make any difference upon which day we rest, so long as it is one day in the seven. But it makes every difference upon which day you rest. Resting upon the day God commanded reveals the fact that you honor the Maker of heaven and earth; but disregarding that fact makes it evident that you do not honor God or obey his commandment to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Your non-observance of the memorial of creation shows that you place no merit upon the day that has been sanctified and blessed, and think that you will be excused if you observe the day that has been appointed by the Papacy, which has exalted itself above God and all that is worshiped.

You accept a common working day instead of the day that has been sanctified and blessed, but in thus doing you offer positive insult to the God of heaven. In holding to an observance commanded by the Papal Church, you exalt the opinions and traditions of men above the commandments of the God of heaven.

The Lord understood in just what lines the enemy would work in seeking to tear down his memorial, thus destroying from the minds of men the reminder of his creative work and rest. But to his children he has given this message,—that the Sabbath shall have such significance in their eyes that they will not be moved away from obedience to his requirements: "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.... It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." "And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God."

January 15, 1894

"This Man Receiveth Sinners"

“Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

The scribes and Pharisees prided themselves upon the idea that they were God's chosen people, and they were filled with self-righteousness. “Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not.” He did not flatter the Pharisees or exalt them in any way. He received the publicans and sinners whom the Jews heartily despised, and, because his lessons of humility, compassions, and love rebuked their selfishness and pride, they would none of him, but turned from him in scorn. They made great ostentation, wore long robes, and stood praying on the corners of the streets, but none of these pretensions to piety awed the great Teacher or drew from him one word of approval. They flattered themselves, but he did not flatter them. The teaching of Christ was against all vanity and pride, for these were abhorrent to the Most High. It is the humble and the contrite whose prayers are heard in heaven. The Lord declares that he knoweth the proud afar off. He says, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”

When the scribes and Pharisees saw the publicans and sinners following Christ and listening with living interest to his teaching, they could not tolerate either teacher or listeners. They hated Christ and said, “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” By this accusation they thought to make the false impression that Jesus loved the association of those who were sinful and defiled, and was insensible to their wickedness. To this reproach Jesus replied by the parable of the lost sheep. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The parable of the lost sheep places man in the position of one who is helpless and undone. All are lost unless they are transformed in character. The lost condition of the sheep necessitates the coming of the True Shepherd, that, at any cost to himself, he may seek and save those that are perishing. Those who are wise in their own conceit do not realize the position in which they are placed by this parable. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost. Doth not the shepherd leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it?

In giving his only-begotten Son to save us, the Lord God shows what is the estimate he puts upon man. To the question, What is the price of the soul of man? the answer is, The life of the only-begotten Son of God. And as Christ came to save man, high or low, rich or poor, white or black, are any to be treated with contempt? Satan has studied to lay in ruins the image of God, and, through intemperance and sin, obliterate all trace of his character in man. Christ came, clothing his divinity with humanity, that he might meet humanity and not extinguish humanity by divinity. He came to save the lost sheep, and became a servant in lowly ministry to lift up the lowly.

The science of salvation is a grand theme, and all the glory of restoring the image of God in man is to be laid at the feet of the Eternal. Holy angels have left the royal courts, and have come down to earth to encamp in the valleys in chariots of fire, a vast army, not to despise, not to rule, or require

man to worship them, but to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. Could human eyes be opened, they would see in times of danger when Satan goes forth as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, that heavenly beings encamp around the little flock who love and fear God.

The heavenly Shepherd left the ninety and nine to seek the lost one. However dark the night, however severe the tempest, the Shepherd goes forth, at every step calling by name his lost sheep, until he hears its terrified, faint, and dying cry. Then he hunts amid the dangerous places, crosses the tangled briers, and finds his sheep. He rescues it from peril, places it on his shoulder, and with rejoicing returns to the fold. At every step he cries, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." "And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Could we see the heavenly angels watching with intense interest the steps of the Shepherd as he goes into the desert to seek and to save the lost, what wonder would fill our hearts! "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons [in their own estimation], which need no repentance." It is he who is sick who feels the need of physician, and the mission of Christ to the world was to seek and to save those who were perishing. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

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A Representation of God's Love for the Sinner

In the parable of the shepherd seeking for the lost sheep is a representation of the tender patience, perseverance, and great love of God. As we contemplate the unselfish love of God, our hearts well up with gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving. We praise him for the priceless gift of his only-begotten Son. There is no animal so helpless and bewildered as is the sheep that has strayed away from the fold. If the wanderer is not sought for by the compassionate shepherd, it will never find its way back to the fold. The shepherd must take it in his arms himself, and bear it to the fold. This care on the part of the shepherd, and helplessness on the part of the sheep, represent God's care for the sinner and the condition of the soul that has wandered away from God. He is as helpless as the poor lost sheep, and, unless divine love comes to his rescue, he will never find his way to the Father's house.

There is no possible way in which, of himself, man may recover his purity. The natural powers are perverted. Jesus, the good Shepherd, says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." The Pharisees were ready to accuse and condemn Jesus, because he did not, like themselves, repulse and condemn the publicans and sinners. The Pharisees put their trust in the law, and yet Jesus declared they did not keep the law. They thought that the law would justify them, and they would not consider the compassion and mercy that Jesus presented in his lessons as necessary to be brought into their practical life. Jesus came to the world to erect the cross, and beneath it all publicans and sinners may find refuge, and the Pharisees also may find peace, but only on the same terms by which those thought to be the greatest sinners may come to Christ.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Christ never invited the wicked to come to him to be saved in their sins, but to be saved from their sins. Oh, what hope does this give the sinner, for there is a way whereby he may

return to his Father's house! The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon his pathway, making it the royal path of holiness. The scribes and Pharisees can be saved only by entering in at the door of the sheepfold,—through faith in Jesus Christ.

The mercy and compassion of Christ stand out in clear contrast beside the indifference of the Sadducees and the contempt of the Pharisees toward those they looked upon as inferior to themselves. Christ did not ordain the plan of salvation for any one people or nation. He said: "I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Christ is not only the propitiation for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. The value of the offering of Jesus Christ cannot be estimated; yet, by beholding the sufferings of the Son of God on Calvary, we may obtain some idea of the value at which God estimates the world. The value of the offering was deemed sufficient to save every soul from Adam's time down to the close of earth's history. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Salvation is proffered to all men. The Jews, the Greeks, the Gentiles, the bond, the free, all tribes and nations, may come to Christ.

But while heaven rejoices over the restoration of one lost sheep, the scribes and Pharisees looked upon Jesus with contempt, and the result of his expressed compassion and love led them to determine to kill him. When the Lord works through human instrumentalities, and they are moved with power from above, Satan leads his agents to cry, "Fanaticism," and to warn the servants of God not to go to extremes. Let all be careful how they raise this cry; for, while there is spurious coin, the value of the genuine is unreduced. Because there are many spurious revivals and spurious conversions, it does not follow that all revivals are to be held in suspicion. Shall we have no reason to rejoice on earth when angels rejoice in heaven? Will not those who claim to be children of God stand in harmony with the angels of heaven in their rejoicing? Let them not voice the words and reveal the contempt expressed by the Pharisees as they said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." We have abundant reason given by our Lord to make us afraid of sneering at his work in the conversion of souls. The manifestation of God's renewing grace on sinful man, pronounced in heaven as genuine, causing angels to rejoice, has by many through unbelief been termed fanaticism, and the messenger through whom God has worked has been spoken of as one having zeal not according to knowledge.

Let every desponding, distrustful soul take courage, even though he may have done wickedly. Read the parable of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son, and take courage. You are not to think that perhaps God will pardon your transgressions, and permit you to approach into his presence, but you are to remember that it is God who has made the first advance, that he has come forth to seek you while you were still in rebellion against him. With the tender heart of the shepherd, he has left the ninety and nine, and gone out into the wilderness to seek his wandering one. His lost sheep is precious to his heart of love, and he will bring back every wanderer to his Father's house who will let him do so. In the return of the lost sheep to the fold not only does the shepherd rejoice, but the angels also rejoice over the restoration of the wanderer more than over the ninety and nine who think themselves just persons.

Try to contemplate the rejoicing of heaven over the success of the Shepherd in finding the one that was lost, and in no case be intimidated by the indifference, the contempt, and scorn of the scribes

and Pharisees. Jesus said: "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

If diligent search was made by the woman who had lost a piece of silver only, should there not be persevering effort made by those who are seeking to save the human soul, and as much more diligent effort made as the human soul is of greater value than is the piece of silver? How is it that greater zeal is manifested in obtaining the common things of life than is manifested in saving the soul for whom Christ has died? Is not the saving of the lost a work that should arouse every dormant faculty of our being? If the ardor and enthusiasm encouraged as necessary to the success of attaining worldly things is not commendable in seeking the salvation of the lost, which has a twofold object,—to bless and to make us a blessing,—what is? Through conversion we are personally placed in vital connection with Jesus Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Every truly converted person carries about with him that which signifies and proves the power of Christianity upon the human soul. The search for the piece of silver was diligent; but of how much greater diligence should be our search for the lost, since every soul who lays hold of Jesus Christ by faith is capable of the highest achievements, and, if obedient and faithful, will have life that measures with the life of God, and live through eternal ages.

January 29, 1894

The Prodigal Son

"And he said, A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry.... Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my

friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

It was to answer the accusation of the scribes and Pharisees to the effect that Jesus chose the companionship of sinners that he spake the parables concerning the lost sheep, the lost silver, and the prodigal son, and in these presentations showed that his mission to the world was not to make miserable, not to condemn and destroy, but to recover that which was lost. This was the reason he did not exclude himself from those who were sinful. These were the very ones that needed a Saviour. The Pharisees felt that they had need of nothing to make them spiritually perfect. They were just in their own eyes, and felt no need of repentance, and they condemned Christ in his work of seeking to save those who felt themselves lost and undone.

The prodigal son was not a dutiful son, not one who would please his father, but one who desired his own way. He wished to follow the dictates of his own inclination, and was tired of counsel and advice from the father who loved him, and who only wished him to act in such a way that his happiness would be insured. The tender sympathy and love of his father were misinterpreted, and the more patient, kind, and benevolent the father acted, the more restless the son became. He thought his liberty was restricted, for his idea of liberty was wild license, and as he craved to be independent of all authority, he broke loose from all the restraint of his father's house, and soon spent his fortune in riotous living. A great famine arose in the country in which he sojourned, and in his hunger he would fain have filled himself with the husks that the swine did eat.

This was the result that followed this youth's impetuous course. He did not know that the best place in the world is home; for the home atmosphere had become disagreeable to him, because he could not be as independent as he desired. Any place looked better to him than home. Evil companions helped to plunge him deeper and deeper into sin, and a false excitement was kept up, and he imagined that he was happy in being free from all restraint. He had no one now to say: "Do not do that; for you will do injury to yourself. Do this, because it is right." But when his means failed, and he was obliged to take time to consider, he found himself without the bare necessities of life; and, to make his situation more trying, a famine had come upon the land.

Starvation stared him in the face, and he joined himself to a citizen of the place. He was sent to do the most menial of work,—to feed the swine. Although this to a Jew was the most disreputable of callings, yet he was willing to do anything, so great was his need. Miserable and suffering, he sat in the fields doing his task. Because he had been unwilling to submit to the restraint of home, he now had the place of the lowest of servants. He had left home for liberty, but his liberty had been turned into the lowest of drudgery.

Where now is his riotous joy? Stilling his conscience, benumbing his sensibilities, he had thought himself happy in scenes of revelry; but now, with money spent, with pride humbled, with his moral nature dwarfed, with his will weak and unreliable, with his finer feelings seemingly dead, he is the most wretched of mortals. He is suffering keen hunger, and cannot fill his want, and, under these circumstances, he remembers that his father has bread enough and to spare, and resolves to go to his father. He says: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Having made this decision, he does not wait to make himself more respectable. It seems that the only way to save his life is to return; for there is bread in his father's house, and he is perishing with hunger. "And when he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The father sees before him one who is on the verge of starvation, and with the marks of dissipation upon him; but this does not make him hesitate. He covers him with his own robe. And the son says, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;" but the father brings him into the house, and says to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

The home looks just as it did when he left it; but what a difference there is in himself. How could he have abused his father's love, and have chosen his own way? The father has no words of upbraiding to offer, and, though the son wept out his repentance, the father thought only of rejoicing, weeping with joy on the neck of his son. The father does not give him a chance to say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." The welcome he receives assures him that he is reinstated to the place of son.

Is not the reception of the prodigal son a representation of the way in which the Lord receives the repenting sinner? In the cross of Calvary mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Every penitent feels himself enfolded in the arms of the Heavenly Father. There is no taunting, no casting up of his evil course. He realizes that he is met by the Lord—"the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin."

"Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Mark the points in the parable: The elder brother coming from the field, hearing the sound of rejoicing, inquires what it all means, and is told of the return of his brother, and how the fatted calf has been killed to provide for the feast. Then is revealed in the elder brother selfishness, pride, envy, and malignity. He feels that favor to the prodigal is an insult to himself, and the father remonstrates with him, but he will not look upon the matter in the right light, nor will he unite with the father in rejoicing that the lost is found. He gives the father to understand that, had he been in the father's place, he would not have received the son back, and forgets that the poor prodigal is his own brother. He speaks with disrespect to his father, charging him with injustice to himself, while he shows favor to one who has wasted his living. He speaks of the prodigal to his father as "this thy son." Yet, notwithstanding all this unfilial conduct, his expressions of contempt and arrogance, the father deals patiently and tenderly with him. He presents before the elder son the facts of the case,

and vindicates his course of action toward the returned wanderer, and seeks to awaken tenderness in the heart of the brother.

Did the elder son finally come to see his unworthiness of so kind and considerate a father? Did he come to see that, though his brother had done wickedly, he was his brother still, that their relationship had not altered? and did he repent of his jealousy, and ask his father's forgiveness for so misrepresenting him to his face?

How true a representation was the action of this elder son of unrepenting and unbelieving Israel, who refused to acknowledge that the publicans and sinners were their brethren, who should be forgiven, and should be sought for, labored for, and not left to perish, but led to have everlasting life! How beautiful is this parable as it illustrates the welcome that every repentant soul will receive from the Heavenly Father! With what joy will the heavenly intelligences rejoice to see souls returning to their Father's house! The sinners will meet with no reproach, no taunt, no reminder of their unworthiness. All that is required is penitence. The Psalmist says, "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise." "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

February 5, 1894

God's Love Unmeasured

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." From Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, beam forth rays of life and light. Would you have Jesus lift upon you the health and light of his countenance?—Then turn your face toward him, and look and live. Talk of Jesus; dwell on his matchless charms; eat of the bread of life; take of the water of life freely. Do you desire to love God supremely and your fellow-men as Jesus loved them?—Keep your heart in meditation upon the spotless character of Christ. His divine heart was moved with compassion and love for suffering humanity. His love cannot be fathomed, except as we take in the sacrifice made on Calvary. Through the renunciation of all selfishness, we need to be able to comprehend what is the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, which passeth knowledge.

If we constantly cherish the love of Christ, we shall have the love that cannot be repressed. We shall love the atmosphere of light and love and truth and righteousness. We shall be constantly inquiring after truth, and, knowing that there is such a wealth of precious ore of truth to be found, we shall not grasp for thorns and thistles. Humbly and sincerely we shall search after divine knowledge,

realizing that all we can carry with us to heaven is that which is akin to heaven. We shall know that it is very poor policy to be cultivating ourselves in the art of seeing everything that is objectionable, for all the knowledge of God that we can here obtain we shall carry with us to heaven. We can safely cultivate purity, love, and devotion to God and our Redeemer. The love of God must be planted in the heart in this life, and it will enable us to have happiness, and joy, and peace, because the kingdom of heaven will be set up in our hearts. Heaven is to begin on earth. The word of God will reveal to us whatsoever is real and abiding, and these permanent excellences will find a place in our hearts, so that we may now have within us the perfection of heaven.

Can anyone think it possible that pride can exist in the heart and yet that heart have a place in the kingdom of God? It was pride that caused the fall of Satan. His heart was lifted up because of his beauty. All his wisdom and glory were the gift of God; but the very gift bestowed by the generous love of God was perverted to wrong use in exalting himself, as if his glorious endowments were something that he himself had originated. At that time no pride had been before manifested, and the results of evil had not been made manifest. Pride will never be admitted into heaven. Can we cherish envy in our hearts and yet be found in the kingdom of God?—No; envy cannot be transplanted into the kingdom of God. Satan originated this terrible evil, and its result was that Satan desired and sought to take the place of the only-begotten Son of God. It was because he could not have the place of Christ that Satan revolted in heaven.

Heart burnings, unhappiness, result where unlawful yearnings are cherished for the place and position of another. He who is full of envy looks upon the one he envies with dislike and seeks to show himself superior to his rival; unless he sees and repents of his sin, he will grudge against the one he envies, and all love of Christ will die out of his heart. Can one who cherishes envy be permitted to enter into the kingdom of heaven?—No; for envy brings evil surmisings, deception, pride, accusations, and enmity, and all these have been expelled from heaven. Unless we are divested of all that is evil, we shall not enter into the kingdom of God, but will find ourselves shut out of its gates.

What is it that will gain us an entrance into the kingdom of God?—A character after the likeness of that of Jesus Christ. The Lord God has given to the world all opportunity, all privilege, the grace of the Holy Spirit, the gift of Jesus Christ, in order that we might have a character like that of our Lord, and find abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. Christ's mission to the world made it evident that the human race was standing under the menace of incensed justice, on the verge of eternal ruin, in helplessness and ignorance. To our help Jesus came, bringing the fullest assurance of relief. What has the Father done?—“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The question has been asked, “Would not a lesser gift from God have been adequate for the redemption of lost man?” “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” The question is unanswerable, and it is not profitable for us to spend our time in making conjectures. All our thoughts and imaginations will not alter in the least any part of the plan of redemption devised from all eternity. God loved the world to such an extent that he gave full and complete evidence of the fact. He did not leave any chance for the tempter to say that he did not love us, for he gave a gift

whose value could not be estimated. Had he done less, Satan and his agencies would have sought to have inspired jealousy against God by intimating that he could have done more than he did. God so loved the world that he determined to give a gift beyond all computation, and make manifest how immeasurable was his love. The gift of God would be a wonder to all worlds, to all created intelligences, ever enlarging their ideas of what God's love was in its infinity and greatness. Contemplation of this love would uproot from the heart all selfishness, and so transform the soul that men would cherish generosity, practice self-denial, and imitate the example of God. God so loved the world that he gave heaven's best gift, in order that the most guilty transgressor should not be deferred from coming to Christ, however great his sin, and be enabled to ask for pardon at a throne of mercy.

Since God has given the greatest gift in his power, we are to render to him our whole heart. He has poured out to the world the treasures of heaven, giving with such largeness that there is nothing more to bestow, no reserve grace or power or glory, and we are to respond to this love by rendering willing service to Jesus, who has died for us on Calvary's cross.

At the time when sin had become a science, when the hostility of man was most violent against heaven, when rebellion struck its roots deep into the human heart, when vice was consecrated as a part of religion, when Satan exulted in the idea that he had led men to such a state of evil that God would destroy the world, Jesus was sent into the world, not to condemn it, but, amazing grace! to save the world. The unfallen worlds watched with intense interest to see Jehovah arise and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth, and Satan boasted that if God did do this, he would complete his plans and secure for himself the allegiance of unfallen worlds. He had arguments ready by which to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above; but at this crisis, instead of destroying the world, God sent his Son to save it. The apostle caught a glimpse of the plan, and he kindled into inspiration upon the great theme. Language cannot express his conception, but ever falls below the reality. John exclaims: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

Before the coming of Christ to the world evidences abundant had been given that God loved the human race. But in the gift of Christ to a race so undeserving was demonstrated the love of God beyond all dispute. This gift outweighed all else, showed that his love could not be measured. We have no line to measure it, no plummet by which to sound its depths, no chain by which to encompass it, no standard with which to compare it. All we can say is that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life." He gave his life for the sheep. The only-begotten Son of God accepts all the liabilities that fall upon the transgressor of the law, vindicates its unchangeable and holy character. The death of Christ removes every argument that Satan could bring against the precepts of Jehovah. Satan has declared that men could not enter the kingdom of heaven unless the law was abolished and a way devised by which transgressors could be reinstated into the favor of God, and made heirs of heaven. He made the claim that the law must be changed, that the reins of government must be slackened in heaven, that sin must be tolerated, and sinners pitied and saved in their sins. But every such plea was cast aside when Christ died as a

substitute for the sinner. He who was made equal with God bore the sin of the transgressor, and thereby made a channel whereby the love of God could be communicated to a fallen world, and his grace and power imparted to those who came to Christ in penitence for their sin.

The sum and substance of the arguments of Satan is that sin may be immortalized, that Christ abolished the law, and that evil doers may be in favor with God. But the death of Christ tells a different story; for he died to vindicate the claims of the law, to give to the world and to angels an unanswerable argument of the immutability of the law of Jehovah.

February 12, 1894

Co-operation With God a Necessity

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” I repeat the words of John, “Behold the Lamb of God!” We are to contemplate the character of Christ. We are to meditate upon the cross of Calvary; for it is the unanswerable argument of Christianity. The message we are to bear to the impenitent, the warning we are to give to the backslider, is, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” Those who bring the message to the soul may turn aside from the truth, but he who would be saved must keep his eye on Jesus. By beholding Christ he will learn to hate sin, that has brought to his Redeemer suffering and death. By beholding, his faith is made strong, and he comes to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” The sinner sees Jesus as he is, full of compassion and tender love, and by beholding the manifestation of his great love toward fallen man in his sufferings of Calvary, he is transformed in character.

While our salvation is wholly dependent upon Jesus, yet we have a work to do in order that we shall be saved. The apostle says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” The work that we are to do is not independent of what God is to do, but a work of cooperation with God. The power and the grace of God is to be wrought into the heart by the divine Worker, but some go astray here, claiming that man has a work to do that is wholly independent of any work of God. Another class take the other extreme, and say that man is free from all obligation, because God does the whole work—both the willing and doing. But the true ground to take is that the human will must be in subjection to the divine will. The will of man is not to be forced into cooperation with divine agencies, but must be voluntarily submitted. Man has no power of himself to work out his own salvation. Salvation must be the result of cooperation with divine power, and God will not do that for man which he can do for himself. Man is wholly dependent on the grace of Christ. He has no power to move one step in the direction of Christ unless the Spirit of God draws him. The Holy Spirit is continually drawing the soul, and will continue to draw until by persistent refusal the sinner grieves away the tender messenger of God.

In the heavenly councils it has been decided by what means and methods the grace of Christ shall prove effectual in saving the soul. And it is clear that unless the sinner consents to be drawn, unless he will cooperate with divine agencies, the end will not be attained. The work to be done is a united work. The divine and the human are to work together, and the sinner is to depend upon grace, while rendering willing obedience to the dictates of the Spirit of God. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

God has endowed men with reason and with intellectual faculties, but if these are untrained, left uncultivated, men will become like the savage heathen. The mind must be cultivated, and it is necessary that teachers present line upon line and precept upon precept, guiding and training the free-will moral agent so that he shall understand what it is to cooperate with God. God works in the human agent by the light of truth, and the mind, enlightened by truth, is capable of seeing truth in distinction from error. Open to the light of truth, free from prejudice, unbound by the opinions and traditions of men, the enlightened mind clearly sees the evidences of the truth, and believes it as from God. The man enlightened by truth will not call falsehood truth, and light darkness. The Spirit reveals to the mind the things of God, and to him who cooperates with God is the realization that a Divine Presence is hovering near. When the heart is open to Jesus and the mind responds to the truth, Jesus abides in the soul. The Spirit's energy works in the heart, and leads the inclinations toward Jesus. By living faith, the Christian places entire dependence on divine power, expecting that God will and do that which is according to his good pleasure. As fast as the soul resolves and acts in accordance with the light that is revealed, the Spirit takes the things of God and gives more light to the soul.

“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” The Spirit of God is not commissioned to do our part of the work, either in willing or doing. It is the work of the human agent to cooperate with divine agencies. As soon as we incline our will to harmonize with God's will, the grace of Christ is supplied to cooperate with our resolve. But it is not to be a substitute to do our work,—to work in spite of our resolutions and actions. Therefore, our success in the Christian life will not be because of an abundance of light and evidence, but will depend upon our acceptance of the light given, upon the rousing of the energies, and operating with the heavenly ministers appointed of God to work for the salvation of the soul.

If the sinner or the backslider settles himself in sin, the light of heaven may flash about him to no purpose, as it did about Saul when the bewitching power of the world's deception was upon him. Unless the human agent inclines his will to do the will of God, as finally Saul did, the light will shine in vain, and a thousand-fold more light and evidence would do no good. God knows when the sinner has sufficient evidence, and says to such, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.” “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

Paul had a terrible awakening when the light from heaven flashed upon him, and a voice said to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Paul answered, “Who art thou, Lord?” And Christ said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” And the Lord said, “Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” The Lord always gives the human agent his work to do. Paul was to work in compliance with the divine command. If Saul had said, “Lord, I am not in the least inclined to follow your directions in working out my salvation,” then, should the Lord have showered upon him a light tenfold as bright, it would have been useless. It is man's part to cooperate with the divine. Here is where the conflict is to be sternest, hardest, and most fierce—in yielding the will and way to God's will and way, relying upon the gracious influences which God has exerted upon the human soul throughout all the life. The man must do the work of inclining. “For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.” The character of the actions will

testify what has been the nature of the resolve. The doing was not in accordance with feeling and natural inclination, but in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. Follow and obey the leadings of the Holy Spirit; obey not the voice of the deceiver, which is in harmony with the unsanctified will, but obey the impulse God has given. This is what the heavenly intelligences are constantly working to have us do,—the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Everything is at stake. Will the human agent cooperate with divine agencies to will and to do? If a man places his will on the side of God's will, fully surrendering self to do his will, the rubbish will be cleared from the door of the heart, the defiance of the soul will be broken down, and Jesus will enter to abide as a welcome guest.

February 19, 1894

Romanism the Religion of Human Nature

There is great need that all who claim to be Bible Christians should take the Scriptures as they read. There is need of arriving at right conclusions as to what the Scriptures mean in their reference to the man of sin, who thought to change times and laws. He had no real power to change the time and the law of God, but he thought himself able to do this work; for he “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” He is an imitator of the first great rebel, the originator of sin. In heaven Satan thought to change the laws of God, and for this purpose he changed his character and his position in the heavenly courts, and influenced others until they united with him in the work of rebellion against God; but he did not succeed in changing the law of God. God did not alter or change his form of government to suit Satan's ideas, but made it manifest that the foundation of his government in heaven and earth is as unchangeable as is the throne itself.

When Satan could not induce all the angels to revolt against the law of God, he made the earth the scene of his rebellion, and through the man of sin seeks to carry out his diabolical purpose. Through the Papacy, the Roman power, the man of sin, the purpose of Satan is carried out among men; the law and the time of God are set aside. In this we see that Protestantism is giving encouragement to popery; and false systems of worship, against which our fathers manfully opposed themselves, imperiling even property and life, are fostered and cherished and encouraged to extend and gain wide influence. Protestants do not search their Bibles as they should, and do not heed the warning that has been given concerning the work of the man of sin. The Roman Church claims that the pope is invested with supreme authority over all bishops and pastors, and this claim of supremacy was once denied by Protestants. They took the position that the Bible, and the Bible alone, constituted the rule of faith and doctrine, that the word of God is the only unerring guide for human souls, and that it is unnecessary and harmful to take the words of priests and prelates instead of the word of God.

To the Romanist the Bible is a forbidden book, because it plainly reveals the errors of the Roman system; and whoever searches the Bible with an enlightened understanding, cannot long be in harmony with Romanism. He who searches the Bible to understand the truth, will find no authority in the word of God for the assumption of power on the part of popes and cardinals. There is no word of God that sanctions their assumed superiority or supremacy over their people, as there is no word to sanction the claim that Lucifer made in heaven of superiority over Christ. The claim of the Papacy

to superiority is made under the influence of the first great usurper, who so persistently urged his right to supremacy over the host of God. Through the Dark Ages,—that long night of ignorance and superstition,—the claim of the Papacy to superiority and supremacy was conceded by emperors and kings, although God had sanctioned no such concession, and raised up men to dispute the claim, and to break the Romish yoke from the church of God. Through his appointed agencies God summoned the church to reassert her independence, and in the strength of God she stood forth in the liberty wherewith Christ had made her free. She broke away from the papal yoke, and with the word of God in her hand, met the giant evil of Romanism, even as David met Goliath in the name of heaven, using his sling and a few pebblestones. The defier of Israel was slain before the man of faith; and while men cling to the word of the Lord, they cannot affiliate with the great system of error.

The Lord has pronounced a curse upon those who take from or add to the Scriptures. The great I AM has decided what shall constitute the rule of faith and doctrine, and he has designed that the Bible shall be a household book. The church that holds to the word of God is irreconcilably separated from Rome. Protestants were once thus apart from this great church of apostasy, but they have approached more nearly to her, and are still in the path of reconciliation to the Church of Rome. Rome never changes. Her principles have not altered in the least. She has not lessened the breach between herself and Protestants; they have done all the advancing. But what does this argue for the Protestantism of this day? It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy.

It is souls like Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, and the thousands of noble men who were martyrs for the truth's sake, who are the true Protestants. They stood as faithful sentinels of truth, declaring that Protestantism is incapable of union with Romanism, but must be as far separated from the principles of the Papacy as is the east from the west. Such advocates of truth could no more harmonize with “the man of sin” than could Christ and his apostles. In earlier ages the righteous felt that it was impossible to affiliate with Rome, and, though their antagonism to this system of error was maintained at risk of property and life, yet they had courage to maintain their separation, and manfully struggled for the truth. Bible truth was dearer to them than wealth, honor, or even life itself. They could not endure to see the truth buried under a mass of superstition and lying sophistry. They took the word of God in their hands, and raised the standard of truth before the people, boldly declaring that which God had revealed unto them through diligent searching of the Bible. They died the cruelest of deaths for their fidelity to God, but by their blood they purchased for us liberties and privileges that many who claim to be Protestants are easily yielding up to the power of evil. But shall we yield up these dearly bought privileges? Shall we offer insult to the God of heaven, and, after he has freed us from the Romish yoke, again place ourselves in bondage to this antichristian power? Shall we prove our degeneracy by signing away our religious liberty, our right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience?

The voice of Luther, that echoed in mountains and valleys, that shook Europe as with an earthquake, summoned forth an army of noble apostles of Jesus, and the truth they advocated could not be silenced by fagots, by tortures, by dungeons, by death; and still the voices of the noble army of martyrs are telling us that the Roman power is the predicted apostasy of the last days, the mystery of iniquity which Paul saw beginning to work even in his day. Roman Catholicism is rapidly gaining ground. Popery is on the increase, and those who have turned their ears away from hearing the truth are listening to her delusive fables. Papal chapels, papal colleges, nunneries, and monasteries

are on the increase, and the Protestant world seems to be asleep. Protestants are losing the mark of distinction that distinguished them from the world, and they are lessening the distance between themselves and the Roman power. They have turned away their ears from hearing the truth; they have been unwilling to accept light which God shed upon their pathway, and are therefore going into darkness. They speak with contempt of the idea that there will be a revival of the past cruel persecution on the part of Romanists and those who affiliate with them. They do not recognize the fact that the word of God fully predicts such a revival, and will not concede that the people of God in the last days shall suffer persecution, although the Bible says, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Popery is the religion of human nature, and the mass of humanity love a doctrine that permits them to commit sin, and yet frees them from its consequences. People must have some form of religion, and this religion, formed by human device, and yet claiming divine authority, suits the carnal mind. Men who think themselves wise and intelligent turn away in pride from the standard of righteousness, the ten commandments, and do not think it is in harmony with their dignity to inquire into the ways of God. Therefore they go into false ways, into forbidden paths, become self-sufficient, self-inflated, after the pattern of the pope, not after the pattern of Jesus Christ. They must have the form of religion that has the least requirement of spirituality and self-denial, and as unsanctified human wisdom will not lead them to loathe popery, they are naturally drawn toward its provisions and doctrines. They do not want to walk in the ways of the Lord. They are altogether too much enlightened to seek God prayerfully and humbly, with an intelligent knowledge of his word. Not caring to know the ways of the Lord, their minds are all open to delusions, all ready to accept and believe a lie. They are willing to have the most unreasonable, most inconsistent falsehoods palmed off upon them as truth.

Satan's masterpiece of deception is popery; and while it has been demonstrated that a day of great intellectual darkness was favorable to Romanism, it will also be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is also favorable to its power; for the minds of men are concentrated on their own superiority, and do not like to retain God in their knowledge. Rome claims infallibility, and Protestants are following in the same line. They do not desire to search for truth and go on from light to a greater light. They wall themselves in with prejudice, and seem willing to be deceived and to deceive others.

But though the attitude of the churches is discouraging, yet there is no need of being disheartened; for God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to his truth, who will make the Bible, and the Bible alone, their rule of faith and doctrine, who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They will value a pure gospel, and make the Bible the foundation of their faith and doctrine.

For such a time as this, when men are casting aside the law of the Lord of hosts, the prayer of David is applicable,—“It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law.” We are coming to a time when almost universal scorn will be heaped upon the law of God, and God's commandment-keeping people will be severely tried; but will they lose their respect for the law of Jehovah because others do not see and realize its binding claims? Let God's commandment-keeping

people, like David, reverence God's law in proportion as men cast it aside and heap upon it disrespect and contempt.

February 26, 1894

Put Away the Evil of Your Doings

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" The doing of these things is the keeping of the commandments of God; but the people to whom these words are addressed, though claiming to keep God's commandments, are yet transgressors of his law. The prophet is instructed by the Lord to give them a message of warning and reproof. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."

Though making high professions, they were not sincerely seeking to understand the plain "Thus saith the Lord." The Lord condescends to open before them the errors and deceptions which they were cherishing, while professing to be his worshipers. He says: "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifice upon me? ... bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; ... and when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." How much lifting and spreading forth of the hands in self-righteousness and self-importance there is, while at heart many of the professed workers for God are transgressing the principles of the law of God in their daily practices.

The Lord says to this class of professors: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Why is it that so many are deceiving their souls, apparently delighting in the service of God, and yet trampling upon his precepts? The law of God is a transcript of his character; it is the standard of righteousness. "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Man is required to render obedience to the revealed will of God in the smallest requirement of the law. Terrible results followed the transgression of the law when our first parents sinned. The flood gates of woe were opened upon our world. With the history of sin before us, how dare we

disregard and ignore any one of the commandments that God has given us? The law of God is the foundation of his government, and is exactly what is needed to preserve life and righteousness. Every principle of the law emanates from the Infinite God, and man will fail in his duty to God and his neighbor unless he believes and weaves the principles of the law into his life. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for it is through faith that we may render obedience to the law.

Man belongs to God, both by creation and redemption. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Man owes to God his life, and should therefore yield all his powers in submission to the will of God. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

The Lord has universal supremacy and sovereign authority over the human family. They are recipients of his mercies and bounties, and dependent upon him for life and protection. To them he says: "Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein; I am the Lord your God.... Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them; I am the Lord." "And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."

God has given to the world a clearly-defined revelation of his will, and he has shown the richness and fullness of his mercy and grace through Jesus Christ, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

In order that we may make no mistakes where our eternal interests are involved, the Lord has given us plain instruction as to what to receive as truth. He says, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We shall be in danger of being misled if we trust to ministers, or councils of men, or depend upon the interpretation that men may put upon the Scriptures. Whatever doctrine is brought to us, we should diligently search the Scriptures, as did the noble Bereans, to know for ourselves whether the messenger's exposition is in harmony with the sure word of prophecy. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." God has given us the precious endowment of reason and intellect, and we shall be held accountable for our mistakes if we do not use the mind in earnest study of the word of God. God has endowed us with capabilities whereby we may understand what is acceptable unto him. Our human ideas, our human wills, are not to take the throne, but the will of God is to be supreme.

(To be Continued.)

March 12, 1894

Whom Are We Serving?

(Continued from page 259, No. 17.)

“Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Professed Christians would do well to inquire what God they are serving. Are they serving the God that made heaven and earth, who gave the human race his law, in the bosom of which he placed the fourth commandment, requiring men to “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”? The seventh-day Sabbath is a memorial of the creative power of God, and is to be sacredly observed throughout all generations.

After Israel had been in bondage in Egypt, and through witnessing idolatry had almost forgotten God and the precepts which he had given, the Lord led them forth into the wilderness. He had them assemble about Mount Sinai, and there, amid awful grandeur, Jesus Christ, who was the founder of the whole Jewish economy, spoke the ten precepts of God to the people. Christ unites in himself both the law and the gospel; they are not divided. Those who are offering prayers to the God of heaven and earth will not refuse to be obedient to the plainest precept of the law. They will listen to the voice of Christ, and will “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” as the day on which the Creator of the heavens and the earth rested from all the work which he had done. They will not turn away from the holy commandment, and accept a spurious sabbath instead of the holy, sanctified day that God instituted in Eden as a memorial of his creative power. The Sabbath was given to man as a sign that was to show to whom the allegiance of the people was given.

In the counsels of the synagogue of Satan it was determined to obliterate the sign of allegiance to God in the world. Antichrist, the man of sin, exalted himself as supreme in the earth, and through him Satan has worked in a masterly way to create rebellion against the law of God and against the memorial of his created works. Is this not sin and iniquity? What greater contempt could be cast upon the Lord God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, than is cast upon him by ignoring the Sabbath, which he instituted, sanctified, and blessed, that it might ever be a memorial of his power as Creator? How dare men change and profane the day which God has sanctified? How dare the Christian world accept the spurious sabbath, the child of the Papacy? The Christian world has nourished and cherished the spurious sabbath, as though it had a divine origin, when the fact is that it originated with the father of lies, and was introduced to the world by his human agent, the man of sin. The false sabbath has been upheld through superhuman agency in order that God might be dishonored. It is a sign of Satan's supremacy in the earth, for men are worshiping the God of this world.

The Prince of Light and the prince of darkness are contending for the victory. When Jesus, the Prince of Life, came forth from Joseph's sepulcher, his triumph was assured. As he came forth from the grave, and proclaimed himself the resurrection and the life, the end of Satan's reign on the earth was made certain; but well may the hosts of heaven be astonished to see men exalting him who is the leader of the great rebellion against God. Those who are choosing to honor Satan by exalting the

spurious sabbath are making a choice similar to that which the people made when they rejected Christ, that Barabbas, a robber and murderer, should be given unto them.

But because the great majority of the world have accepted the spurious sabbath, it does not give it importance and sanctity in the eyes of heaven. The dishonor to God is none the less because great numbers accept the false sabbath and ignore the Sabbath of the Lord their God. The confederacy of evil in the earth has always been to outward appearance the largest confederacy. At a time of rebellion in Israel men of renown, men famous in the congregation, joined with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in their work of rebellion. In spirit and principle the whole congregation of Israel were one with the workers of iniquity. After the earth had opened and swallowed up the most prominent of the rebels, and a fire from the Lord had burst forth and consumed two hundred and fifty of the princes of Israel, the people were still full of unbelief and rebellion. They came to Moses and Aaron the next day, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." They persisted in stubborn resistance of light, and would not be convinced, even when God worked in a miraculous way to convince them of the truth. But large numbers on the side of error do not strengthen the cause of iniquity. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

The Lord hath a controversy with his people, and, although in his great mercy he bear long with them, yet if they persist in living in transgression of his law, they will not stand in the day of his rebuke. He has seen the backsliding and iniquity of his professed people. He has noted the unbelief, the hypocrisy, the pride, the selfishness, the disobedience to his law, and he will punish for these things. God cannot be in harmony with the people who will not obey his commandments who are wickedly departing from his precepts and by their example of disobedience at leading their children and their neighbor in the way of transgression. The professed church of Christ is strengthening the hand of sinners in their evil work by making void through their traditions, the commandment of Jehovah.

If parents had educated their children to reverence the law of God, as Christ enjoined that they should educate them, we should not see wickedness reaching so great proportions. Through disobedience the world is fast becoming as it was in the days before the flood and as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. The church has taken the world into her fellowship, and has given her affections to the enemies of holiness. The church and the world are standing on the same ground in transgression of the law of God. The church prefers to assimilate to the world rather than separate from its customs and vanities.

But God will bless all those who do his commandments. He will give grace upon grace to all them that fear him, and walk in the light of truth as they find it by diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures. There will be a remnant who will do the will of God. "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot

from the Sabbath from doing thy pleasure on my holy day and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

March 19, 1894

The Missionary's Pattern

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged; till he have set judgment in the earth.”

There is need for every soul to study the Pattern, Christ Jesus. Those who follow his methods of labor will have freedom in utterance and earnestness in manner. They will be inspired by the sacred themes of truth. Christ understood the needs of all classes, and was successful in preaching the gospel to the poor. He understood all their temptations. We need to study methods whereby we may preach the gospel to the poor and downtrodden and degraded of humanity. But let no one think that God will approve of a method which will require a man to act the part of a clown, or like a man who has lost his senses. Such methods as these are wholly unnecessary and inappropriate.

Among the Salvation Army workers such methods as these have been employed; but it is more necessary that they should study and preach the word than act in a sensational way in order to draw the attention of the people. It is the word of truth that, like a strong, golden chain, will bind men to God, where they will learn of the great Teacher. It is the word of God that is to test character. The Lord has precious, conscientious souls who have joined the Army; but they need to advance and receive other and higher truths of the word of God.

Those who are teaching the way to life have much to learn, and the Lord invites all who will to come to him and learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart. He declares, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Take your text from the word of God, and make use of the scenes of nature, and of events and objects about you, to make the meaning plain, and find your way to the hearts of the people, and angels of God will make a personal application of the truth to the hearts of those who are ignorant. You need not be formal or mechanical. You need not depend upon notes, neither need you be rough and uncouth, and use coarse language and slang expressions, thinking that in this way you will reach the uneducated classes. Look at the manner in which Jesus addressed the poor. His language was pure, but it was simplicity itself, and through the imagination and the heart he reached the hearts of the people. Boisterous gesticulation, jumping up and down, and pounding on the desk, is not after the order of Christ, and the good that has been accomplished has not been on account of these things, but in spite of them.

Personal labor is far more effective than is preaching, and yet this essential feature of the work has been strangely neglected. The ministers of different denominations do little personal labor; but we should not wait for needy souls to come to us. We should go forth to seek and to save that which is

lost. We should seek individual intercourse with the wealthy as well as with the poor; for generally the rich are poorer in spiritual knowledge and experience than are the poor. The sermons that they hear do not touch them, and laborers are needed who will dare not only to seek out the jewels from among the low and degraded, but who will also go to the rich, and bring to them a knowledge of the word of the Lord. There are some who have had a knowledge of the word of God who have once been in high position, but have become poor through misfortune and failure, and are obliged to occupy a position among the very poor. In circumstances of this kind some are seeking to keep alive the feeble flame that they have kindled at the divine altar. There are also souls who, through intemperance, have been brought very low, who are in misery hardly to be conceived of by those who have never acted the part of a true missionary. There are souls in the strongholds of sin who have nothing to give them a ray of hope, or inspire in them a spark of courage that they may live a better life.

Oh, that all who claim to be Christians might have a view of the misery, the destitution, of those who are low down in the scale of humanity, and might realize at the same time that these are souls for whom Christ died! God understands every woe. His heart is touched with human woe and sorrow, and it is time that all Christians should wear his yoke, and work in his line, identifying themselves with human sympathy in the way in which he identified himself with our fallen race.

Whatever may be your office, your position, your wealth, if you are a laborer together with Christ, you will seek out the needy and the distressed, the bereaved and afflicted, and will make their interests your own. You will possess the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial, which led Jesus to yield up his life as a sacrifice for man on Calvary's cross. You will carry forward his work, and walk in his footsteps, and will look upon all as the purchase of the blood of the Son of God. Jesus died for every son and daughter of Adam, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The love of Christ in the heart will be manifested in unselfish missionary labor, and will be more mighty to deal with the evil doer than will the sword and the courts of justice. These are necessary to strike terror to the heart of the law breaker, but the loving missionary can do more than this. The medical missionary can take up his appointed work, and relieve not only the physical maladies, but, through the grace and love of Christ, can lead the sinner to the great Physician, who can heal the soul of its leprosy of sin.

However much we may deserve rebuke, the heart will harden under reproof; but it will melt under the love of Christ. It is to manifest his love to the fallen that Jesus has enlisted every follower of his, that the transgressor may be brought back to allegiance to God. Jesus accepts all who will give themselves to his service, who will cooperate with heavenly agencies, as they seek to restore the moral image of God in man. The work we are given is to bid the sinner hope in God, and not feel that he is an outcast in the world, a discouraged, desperate sufferer, but that he is a prisoner of hope. Let your words to him be, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Present before him a love that cannot be measured, and bring the lost back to faith in God.

He who is actuated by the love of Jesus will see in every soul, whether rich or poor, a value that cannot be computed, in comparison with which the world sinks into insignificance. Oh, the love that God has revealed for the soul is infinite, beyond estimation! He who is a partaker of the divine nature will love as Christ loved; he will work as Christ worked, and will manifest sympathy and compassion. He will not fail nor be discouraged. This love can exist and be kept pure and refined and

elevated only by continual communion with Jesus Christ. All coldness and hardness of heart will pass away from those who come into the sunshine of Christ's presence; and those who abide in him, and let him abide in them, will naturally, willingly obey his injunction, "Love one another as I have loved you."

March 26, 1894

Christ's Victory Gained Through Pain and Death

Charged with an embassy of mercy, Christ came to the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He saw that rebellion had overspread his provinces, and that despite was done to God in every section and by every tenant of the earth. Man was in rebellion against God; but "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When sin first entered the world, God had promised a deliverer. He had said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." When Jesus came to the world, his own nation despised him, his friends denied him, his brethren did not believe on him. The unbelief with which he was met was indeed a bruising of his heel. Christ, the world's Redeemer, was buffeted with temptation, but it had been written of him, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." Through the very bruising of his heel by Satan, because of affliction, temptation, and sorrow, Christ was gaining the victory in behalf of the human family; for he triumphed over his enemy in not yielding to his temptation, and thus bruised the head of the serpent. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, and every pang of anguish he suffered, every temptation he resisted, as man's substitute and surety, was elevating the human family in the scale of moral worth, and was procuring for man deliverance from Satan's power and bondage. The character of Satan, through his efforts to overcome and destroy the Son of God, was developing before the universe, and was being made manifest in its true malignity before the unfallen worlds that had been created by Christ. Every time he stung the heel of Christ with his murderous fang, the serpent was making more sure his own discomfiture and ruin.

Could Satan have caused the Son of the infinite God to become in the least degree a partaker of his own hellish attributes, then Satan would have wounded the head of Christ, and in hellish exultation he would have triumphed over him, and the world would have remained his dominion, the human family his slaves. The synagogue of Satan would have been victorious, and man would have perished, without God and without hope. Satan could cause pain to the Son of God, but he could not force him to transgress the law of God. He could cause him to suffer, but he could not defile him. He did make the Saviour's life one of sorrow and affliction; but Jesus patiently endured grief, for he knew that through his conflict with the powers of darkness, the chains of Satan could be broken from the human family, and he would place them on vantage ground before God. With his human arm Jesus encircled the human race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite. To him was given power to unite whoever would consent to be drawn to him, to the Father's throne.

Jesus became the world's Redeemer, rendering perfect obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. He redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and threw the kingdoms of this world back into favor with God, uniting the earth, that had been divorced by sin from God, to the continent

of heaven. It was in the very sight of Heaven that Satan led on the Jewish priests and rulers, and made them his agents to stir up the passions of the murderous mob against the Prince of life. It was in the hearing of Heaven that the hoarse cry was raised against the Majesty of heaven, "Crucify him; crucify him." It was in the sight of Heaven that they scourged him, that they plaited the crown of thorns, that they mocked and derided him. But in these very scenes it was made manifest to angels and principalities what is the power of Satan over the human mind. It was made plain that under the dominion of the deceiver men became liars and murderers. The railings of the multitude reached the ears of God and holy angels. The hoarse cries, that sounded like the bellowing of wild beasts, made their record for time and eternity. Those who instigated the suffering that Jesus endured as a malefactor, will yet behold him in all his glory. They will see that He whom they derided and rejected and crucified, that He whom they set aside for a robber and murderer, is none other than the King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

In the scenes that transpired at the judgment hall, and at Calvary, we see what the human heart is capable of when under the influence of Satan. Christ submitted to crucifixion, although the heavenly host could have delivered him. The angels suffered with Christ. God himself was crucified with Christ; for Christ was one with the Father. Those who reject Christ, those who will not have this man to rule over them, choose to place themselves under the rule of Satan, to do his work as his bond slaves. Yet for them Christ yielded up his life on Calvary.

In the death of Christ on Calvary's cross, the temple seemed to be destroyed, the head seemed to have been bruised; but this was not so. Satan, in the very act of grasping his prey, demolished his own throne. Satan, evil angels, and evil men united in a desperate companionship, and thought to claim the victory, but it was in the death of Christ, in the cruel suffering and crucifixion, that the Son of God accomplished the very work for which he was ordained from before the foundation of the world. He died a victim to jealousy and hate, a victim to false religious zeal. But in his dying agony he was victor over the powers of earth and hell. He reinstated man in the position from which Satan had hurled him through temptation and sin, and, by his own perfect obedience to the law of God, placed him on vantage ground. In his death he broke the spell that had held millions in slavery, under perfect subjection to Satan's rule and jurisdiction.

A stronger than the strong man armed had come and overpowered the one who had seduced man, and led him away from allegiance to God. Against Christ evil angels and evil men had combined in an unholy confederacy of rebellion. They had made war on God and his government. But help had been laid upon One who was mighty to save, who could measure weapons with the apostate. Satan was next in power to Christ; he was highly exalted the covering cherub, and none but Christ could engage in battle with him, enduring successfully the temptations with which he had beset the human family.

Satan had come to Christ in the wilderness, representing himself as an angel of light; but though he attacked Christ in the moment of his greatest weakness, he was vanquished by the Prince of life. Thus, as man's substitute and surety, did he make it possible for every son and daughter of Adam to be an overcomer, to return to allegiance to God, and render perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. All this man is required to do, notwithstanding his weakness, his degradation and sinfulness; for moral power has been provided for him in Christ. Through faith in Christ man is made complete: for Christ gave his life in order that we might be rescued from the power of Satan.

Jesus measured weapons with the prince of darkness in the garden of Gethsemane, where the agony was so great that he sweat as it were great drops of blood. It forced from his pale and quivering lips a cry of agonizing prayer, when he besought his Father, saying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Three times he raised this prayer to God, but at last added the submissive words, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

He had said, "Destroy this temple [speaking of the temple of his body], and in three days I will raise it up." On the cross he received the wounds that will mark his form through the ceaseless ages of eternity; but those very wounds will be his glory, the insignia of his triumph over him who bruised his heel; for he shall bruise the serpent's head. On the cross he cried, "It is finished," and bowed his head and died. He descended into the grave; but after three days a mighty angel, clothed with the panoply of heaven, parted the darkness from his track, and caused the Roman guard to fall as dead men at his feet. The angel rolled back the stone from the sepulcher, and the Roman seal was broken, and Christ came forth from the prison of death, and, over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, proclaimed himself "the resurrection and the life." Through him it was announced that every son and daughter of Adam might be emancipated from their bondage to Satan, to sin and transgression; for, as man's substitute and surety, Jesus had won the victory. The world and its inhabitants were his inheritance, purchased at infinite cost, and every soul who believed in his name, might be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. When Christ rose from the dead, the victory was proclaimed in triumph by the loftiest order of heavenly intelligence, and joy, inexpressible joy, filled the courts of God.

April 2, 1894

"Look and Live"

"And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom; and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way." The Lord does not remove all the difficulties and trials and hardships from the pathway of his people. He would have them learn to put their trust in him, believing that the invisible God is their mighty helper. The children of Israel became accustomed to the presence of the pillar of cloud, that covered them as a canopy by day, and was as a pillar of fire by night. They came to look upon the cloud as a common thing. They did not appreciate the fact that they were favored with the presence of the only-begotten Son of God, who was equal with God; and, in spite of all their perversity, their murmuring and rebellion, he had done wonderful things for them in all their journeyings.

The Lord had said: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; than I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee." The one great object of the care and guardianship of Christ was the church in the wilderness. He said of Israel: "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Egypt was desolated with plagues and became a wasted land, in order that Israel might be freed from bondage; but the people did not appreciate the goodness and mercy and love of God. The Lord, their Redeemer, undertook to lead and guide them, but when he brought them into strait places, they were discouraged because of the way, and spake against God and Moses,

saying: "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died."

The Lord had fed them with the bread of heaven, even with angels' food; and yet they murmured against him. By his power he had held in check the wild beasts of the forests, and the reptiles of the wilderness, so that they had not hurt his people; but now he removed his restraining hand, and let the poisonous serpents do as they would have done all along the way had the Lord not restrained them. The real trouble that now came upon them served to bring them to their senses, and to awaken their paralyzed thoughts as to what course to pursue. "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.... And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Throughout the camp of Israel there were the suffering and the dying who had been wounded by the deadly sting of the serpent. But Jesus Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, and gave directions whereby the people might be healed. The promise was made that whosoever looked upon the brazen serpent should live; and to those who looked the promise was verified. But if anyone said: "What good will it do to look? I shall certainly die under the serpent's deadly sting;" if he continued to talk of his deadly wound, and declared that his case was hopeless, and would not perform the simple act of obedience, he would die. But everyone who looked, lived.

Jesus said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Christ is speaking to us now as certainly as he spoke to the children of Israel in the wilderness. He is the Healer of both body and soul. Our attention is now called to the Great Physician. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Just as long as we look at our sins, and talk of and deplore our wretched condition, our wounds and putrefying sores will remain. It is when we take our eyes from ourselves, and fasten them upon the uplifted Saviour, that our souls find hope and peace. The Lord speaks to us through his word, bidding us "look and live." "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

There is every reason why we should be encouraged to hope for the salvation of our souls. In Jesus Christ every provision for our salvation has been made. No matter what may have been our sins and shortcomings, there is a fountain open in the house of David for all sin and uncleanness. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This is the word of the Lord. Shall we accept it? Shall we believe on him?

David had been bitten by the fiery serpent,—he had been poisoned with the venom of sin,—yet hear the words that describe his experience after looking upon the uplifted Saviour: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.... I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.” “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit... The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”

April 9, 1894

Look not to Self but to Christ

It is in looking upon our sinful condition, and talking and mourning over our wretchedness, that distress becomes more keen, and pain accumulates. Let the sinner arise in the strength of Jesus, for he has no strength of his own, and let him assert his liberty. Let him believe that the Lord has spoken truth, and trust in him, whatever may be the feelings of the heart. Let the sinner say, I will look away from my own misery, from the wound of the serpent, to the uplifted Saviour, who has said, “Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out.” Look upon Jesus. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Let no one make his feelings his idol, and bow his soul down to worship and serve his sensations. “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” It is your privilege to believe that Christ has borne your sins; for God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. You are under the shelter of the sure refuge, under the cover of the atoning blood of the acceptable sacrifice.

All legalism, all the sorrow and woe by which you may encompass yourself, will not give you one moment of relief. You cannot rightly estimate sin. You must accept God's estimate, and it is heavy indeed. If you bore the guilt of your sin, it would crush you; but the sinless One has taken your place, and, though, undeserving, he has borne your guilt. By accepting the provision God has made, you may stand free before God in the merit and virtue of your Substitute. You will then have a proper estimate of sin, and the godly sorrow of true repentance will take the place of hopeless discouragement and grief, for you will turn from sin with grief and abhorrence.

Jesus says, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Do not think for an instant that any human being has a more loving heart, and a more tender compassion for you, than he who died on Calvary to save you. Do not turn from the divine to the human. The human messenger may bid you hope, on the ground that God's word bids you hope. Your Heavenly Father invites you to come to him as a little child to a loving parent, and say, Thou hast said: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

Christ is the friend of sinners. When the scribes and the Pharisees accused him of eating with publicans and sinners, Jesus said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If you feel yourself to be the greatest of sinners, then Christ is just what you need; for he is the greatest of Saviours. Lift up your head, and look away from yourself, away from the poisoned wound of the serpent, to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. What will all your groaning and the torturing of your soul avail? You may entertain thoughts that condemn you, but in them there is no salvation. Put away your thoughts, and receive the thoughts of God, through which your mind may be elevated, your soul purified and uplifted. The Lord says: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Why will you carry your burden of sin, when Christ has come to be your burden bearer? Roll your sins at the foot of the cross. Unload! unload! He takes away the sins of the world. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

You have been pronounced a sinner, and Christ has announced himself a Saviour. Accept the remedy God has provided for you in a sin-pardoning Saviour. How would you have felt had you been in the camp of Israel and seen the people groaning and shrieking in distress because of their swollen and painful wounds, when the brazen serpent was uplifted, and when by one look they might be healed? Would you not have exclaimed: "Why do they not look at the uplifted serpent? How strange it is that they do not perform the one simple act by which they might receive healing!" But is it not as inconsistent for you to refuse to look at the crucified Saviour?—Heed the invitation: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Why should the repenting sinner forsake his thoughts? It is because they are not in accordance with truth. He is tempted to believe that because of his sins God has given him up to the will of his enemy, and that there is no pardon for so great a sinner as he. But all these thoughts are dishonoring to God, because man is God's possession, both by creation and redemption. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him [as his personal Saviour, and accepts him as the only provision whereby he can be saved] should not perish, but have everlasting life." You are one of the whosoever may believe. But while you cherish unbelief, and permit feeling to govern you, your case will look hopeless to yourself. Forsake these unbelieving thoughts. God says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Poor, doubting, discouraged soul, I would address you as one of that world for whom God gave his Son. He loves you, and will save you if you will but receive the gift of his only-begotten Son. Moses prayed that God would show him his glory, "and the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." This is the character of the God in whom you are to put your trust. "God is love." Repeat this sentence whenever temptation presses

upon you. Remember that he is just and merciful, true and gracious, and will by no means clear the guilty. God can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He will accept you just as you are; for there is no hope of your becoming better until you come to Jesus for pardon and sanctification. Mourning and weeping will not purify you. You may mourn your life away in unbelief, and in bitterness of soul, but the power to cleanse the vilest sinner is vested wholly in him who can save unto the uttermost.

God does not ask you to feel that Jesus is your Saviour, but to believe that he died for you, and that his blood now cleanseth you from all sin. You have been bitten by the serpent, and as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness that the dying might look and live, so Christ was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Saving faith is simplicity itself. You must cry no more; you must cease to hang down your head as a bulrush. Look to the uplifted Saviour, and, however, grievous may have been your sins, believe he saves you. All the remedies and medicines of the world would have failed to cure one soul who had been bitten by the venomous serpent; but God had provided a remedy that cannot fail. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Be not among the number to whom the Saviour said, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Oh, how he longed to save them; for while we were yet sinners (not waiting for us to make ourselves good), Christ died for us.

Believe now that God loves you; for he hath declared it, and when Satan tries to fasten the burden of sin and horror upon you, take your Bible, and read, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You cannot repulse the enemy by relating your fearful doubts, by telling him that you are horrified by the thought that you are lost. All this is music in his ears. He wants to make you as miserable as he is himself, but you can answer him by proclaiming the promise that you believe in the Son, and therefore shall not perish. As you turn your eyes away to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, the controversy with the enemy will be ended for that season. You can repulse him by declaring that "Christ was wounded for my transgressions. He was bruised for my iniquities. The chastisement of my peace was upon him, and with his stripes I am healed."

Take the word of Jesus Christ as more sure and valuable than any word that can come from the human agent. Thank God with your whole heart and soul and voice that you are barricaded with the rich promises of his infallible word, so that the wicked one shall not touch you. God will give you the Holy Spirit, even though it may seem to you that it is too good to be true. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

April 16, 1894

Christ Came to Break Sin's Chain

[Sermon at Middle Brighton Camp Ground, Victoria.]

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

A great and infinite sacrifice has been made in our behalf. We are the objects of God's love, and he has shown to us that he identifies his interests with those of suffering humanity. As Christ has given himself for us, we should place a proper estimate upon the soul. He has given us heavenly endowments, done everything that a God could do, in order that we might not perish, but have everlasting life, the life that measures with the life of God. Can our finite minds grasp this great and wonderful fact?—Not unless we empty ourselves of vanity and break away from the bondage of Satan.

The mission of Christ to the world was to break the chain of Satan from the soul, and to set at liberty those that are bound. It cost an infinite price to deliver the captives of Satan from the captivity of sin. In the councils of heaven it was determined that Christ should die for the sins of the whole world. He laid aside his royal crown, his royal robe, clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might touch humanity, and yet he was not received by the world. Goodness, mercy, and love attended his steps. He healed the sick, he comforted the desponding, brought hope to the despairing, and preached the gospel to the poor. Those who listened to his teaching did not need to consult a dictionary to find out his meaning. His words were so simple that a child could grasp his meaning. He did not take a text and then give a discourse on science, though he could have opened the mysteries of science to the world. He could have told the world that of which they had not dreamed. He did not preach from a newspaper, but he bent his energies toward one object,—the salvation of the lost. He did not build so grand a house of worship that the poor were excluded from its doors, but he sought the great thoroughfares of travel, and sought out the people, that they might hear the gracious tidings he had to bear to them. He would lead the multitudes to the seashore, and, in a fisherman's boat, would put out a little from the shore, and there preach to the people who thronged his steps.

Ministers of the gospel who believe that the end of all things is at hand, preach the gospel in simplicity to the people, preach the truth as it is in Jesus. Christ prayed before leaving his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." When the truth is received and believed, it will have a sanctifying effect upon the heart and character. Jesus came to earth that he might transform the character and develop in man the moral image of God. Oh, we must not meet Jesus unready! We do not desire that you shall miss your way. If we knew the value of the human soul, we would not be indifferent to our own salvation or to that of others.

Jesus, the Prince of life, took the battle field to meet and to contend with the prince of darkness, and to dispute his claims. From the time of his birth until he hung on Calvary's cross he warred with the evil one in our behalf. His purity of character was a rebuke to the world, and men hated him because of his divine and holy character. He did not come to our world as an angel of glory, but as a man. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh. With his human arm he encircled the race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the infinite, linked man with God, and earth with heaven. Oh, who are there who are colaborers with Christ, who are feeding the starving flock of God?

We read concerning the mission of Christ as it was announced by himself in Nazareth, and can understand what is the character of the work that the follower of Christ must do: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the

prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." The work of Christ was to rescue those who were bowed down by the power of Satan, and to set them free from his yoke of bondage. Then why is it that so many choose to remain bound to Satan's chariot? Why is it that men do not accept of God's promises?—The reason is that Satan is presenting to every human intelligence the temptations he presented to Christ in the wilderness, and they are carried away with his delusions. They look on the things that are temporal, and lose sight of that which is spiritual and eternal; they do not realize the value of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They permit the business of this life to engross their attention and to take up their time.

Christ has sent forth an invitation bidding men to the marriage supper of the Lamb, but, as it is represented in the Bible, "they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." These matters of temporal interest were of more value in the minds of those who were bidden to the wedding than the eternal weight of glory.

On every side we see that it is the affairs of this life that are engaging the minds and affections of men. Christ came to break the spell of infatuation that Satan has wrought upon the human mind. He came to bring eternity to our view, in order that we should not lose heaven out of our reckoning, but extend our vision beyond the things of this life.

Many do not know God, they do not know Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. If they did, do you think man would engage in a business that would ruin his fellow-men? Would there be found in the world the public houses that now abound on every side? Would you see men in the possession of reason of going into public houses to sell it for a draught of liquor, and coming out madmen? Look at that man who has entered the public house and has come out again. Look at his bleared eyes, at his countenance, from which all intelligence has departed. His tongue is thick; his words are of a low, sensual character. His lips utter that which is degrading and profane. Nature protests that she has never made him what he is. He is the slave of habit, but Christ came that he might set at liberty those who are bound. The Lord declares, "Ye are laborers together with God;" but are these men who sell the vile poison which degrades men to a level below the brute creation, laborers together with God?

(Concluded next week.)

April 23, 1894

Christ Came To Break Sin's Chain

(Concluded.)

Fathers and mothers, are you laborers together with God? How are you bearing the weighty responsibilities that rest upon you? How are you educating and training your children? Are you from

their babyhood teaching them habits of self-control? Do you educate them to know that they cannot have everything they want? Are you teaching them to become missionaries for God, that they may go to the islands of the sea and proclaim the message of mercy to those who are in the darkness of error? Teach them that Christ, the precious Saviour, came to our world to save men from the transgression of the law of God. When God gave Jesus to the world, he gave all heaven in one rich gift. God made it manifest to the world, to angels, seraphim and cherubim, that his gift could not be excelled; for in the gift of Christ all was given.

Christ came to the world as a sin bearer. John exclaims, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Jesus takes our sins away, and then imparts his own righteousness. The whole world is lying in wickedness. We see on every side crime, murder, embezzlement, pleasure seeking, gambling, horse racing, and every manner of evil. Who is the leader in all this engrossing of the minds of men in evil? It is Satan, who soon expects to gather in the harvest of the whole earth. But when the judgment shall sit, and the books be opened, every man shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books according to his works. What preparation are we individually making to meet that great day? Are we seeking to remove temptation from the rising generation? Are we making the name of Christ a familiar one in our homes? God grant that you may educate your children for heaven.

Fathers and mothers, a sacred trust has been committed to you. You are to be godly, firm, temperate. Let no one find you smoking or drinking. Remember that you transmit these depraved appetites to your children. God wants you to keep before them the fact that there is a heaven to win, a hell to shun. He wants you to keep them pure from the vicious, vile habits of the world. Keep your children at their home, and if people say to you, "Your children will not know how to conduct themselves in the world," tell your friends that you are not so concerned about that matter, but that you do want to take them to the Master for his blessing, even as the mothers of old took their children to Jesus. Say to your advisers: "Children are the heritage of the Lord, and I want to prove faithful to my trust. The presence of God must be in my household, in order that as a family we shall present to the world evidences of his divine power. My children must be brought up in such a way that they shall not be swayed by the influences of the world, but where, when tempted to sin, they may be able to say a square, hearty no. They must be trained in such a way as to be able to say, 'I will cling to the promises of God.'" "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Tell your friends and neighbors that you want to see your family inside the gates of the beautiful city. Teach your children to know God; teach them that eternal life is of more value to them than the fleeting pleasures and honors of the world. Train them, mothers, from their earliest years in the principles of Christianity, in love, in truth, in genuine Christian politeness.

The wealthy classes are not excused from serving Christ, and from educating their children for the courts of heaven. What difference will it make with the judgment of your children if you have lived in palaces equal to that of Solomon? Is not Christ everything to us? and is it not necessary for us to be laborers together with God? We should tell our children that we desire them to join the army of the Lord. We should teach them to have beauty and loveliness of character. Jesus says, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Teach your children that the

beautiful flowers that God has caused to grow are the expression of his love for us. Clothe your children in simple garments, and take time to open the Scriptures to them.

It is a most grievous thing to let children grow up without the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God did not unfit Daniel to be one of the greatest statesmen in the proud court of Babylon. The God of heaven recognized him as his child. He would not defile himself with strong drink and with the rich food from the king's table. And God gave him wisdom. But would God have given him wisdom if he had not walked in his counsel? Satan does not give true wisdom to men. When Daniel and his fellows were examined by the king, they were found to be ten times better than all the astrologers that were in the king's court. The record declares: "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.... And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

We need the wisdom of God to carry with us through this life into the future, immortal life. We know not when our probation shall end. I have just read of a man who went out with his cart to his business, and in one hour he was killed. We hear of many who are cut off in a moment. We value every human soul, because God has given great opportunities to men, and in eternity alone can the length of the chain be measured by which you are to be saved. You can measure the love of God only as you look to Calvary.

What have you done with your intellect, in order that you may be complete in Christ Jesus? If mothers and fathers had learned of Christ, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, we should see families that would be symbols of the family of heaven. If God endowed them with wealth, they would not use it all for the adornment of their poor bodies, but would realize that God had given it to them in trust, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked.

The Bible is the garden of God. Are you discouraged? Are you bereaved? The word of God tells you not to sorrow as those who have no hope, for there will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, and when the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ proclaimed, "I am the resurrection and the life." A little longer, and we shall see the King in his beauty. A little longer, and he shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and we shall have a robe of purity, whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it. It is the garment woven in the loom of heaven, not to cover over our sins, for Jesus takes away the sin of the world, but to clothe us in the righteousness of Christ. I want to behold him until I shall be changed into his likeness; for by beholding we become changed. We should talk of the crown of life, of the heaven of bliss that awaits the faithful. May God help us to press the battle to the gate. He will place the crown of life upon our heads as we proclaim, "Worthy, worthy is the Conqueror." We shall exclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Do you want heaven? Then will you show the line of demarkation between you and the world, and hear at last the words of approbation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

April 30, 1894

Parents Should Be Christlike

The home circle should be an educating circle. Fathers and mothers should realize that they themselves should be in subjection to our Heavenly Father, in order that they may understand how to educate and train the children to be under discipline, and in subjection to parental authority. Parents have brought children into the world, and the children have no voice or part in the matter. Parents are under most weighty responsibility to so educate and train these children that they shall not miss the way leading to eternal life. Parents make a most terrible mistake when they neglect the work of giving their children religious training, thinking that they will come out all right in the future, and, as they get older, will of themselves be anxious for a religious experience. Cannot you see, parents, that if you do not plant the precious seeds of truth, of love, of heavenly attributes, in the heart, Satan will sow the field of the heart with tares? He will pre-occupy the field, and sow the seeds of stubbornness, of selfishness, of love, of pleasure, and turn the mind into channels of pride and sinfulness.

As parents, we shall do well to consider the case of Abraham, "the father of the faithful." He was a representative man, and his example in the home life is worthy of imitation. The Lord said of him, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Abraham was selected by God to introduce into society a higher standard than that found in the world. He was to cultivate home religion, and cause the fear of the Lord to permeate his household. He who blesses the habitation of the righteous, said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." There would be on his part no betraying of sacred trusts, no indulgence of sin in excusing his children in evil ways. This sinful indulgence of children is the veriest cruelty that could be practiced toward them; for it confirms them in evil.

Children are the heritage of the Lord, and should be trained and disciplined in such a way that they will form characters which the Lord can approve. Both parents and children are under the government of God, and are to be ruled by him. Fathers and mothers should combine their influence and authority and affection, and rule their homes after the direction that God has given us in his word. They are not to rule by impulse. There is to be no oppression on the part of parents, and no disobedience on the part of children. We are not to reach the standard of worldlings, but the standard that God himself has erected. Parents should inquire diligently what God has said in his holy word; for the word must be the rule from which there can be no turning aside. The motto of parents should be, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

It is very delicate work to deal with human minds. The discipline necessary for one would crush another; therefore let parents study the characters of their children. Never be abrupt and act from impulse. I have seen a mother snatch something from the hand of her child which was giving it special pleasure, and the child would not understand what to make of the deprivation. The little one burst forth into a cry, for it felt abused and injured. Then the parent, to stop its crying, gave it a sharp chastisement, and, as far as outward appearances were concerned, the battle was over. But that battle left its impression on the tender mind of the child, and it could not be easily effaced. I said to the mother: "You have deeply wronged your child. You have hurt its soul, and lost its confidence in you. How this will be restored I know not." This mother was very unwise; she followed her feelings, and did not move cautiously, reasoning from cause to effect. Her harsh, injudicious

management stirred up the worst passions in the heart of her child. To act from impulse in governing a family is the very worst of policy. When parents contend with their children in such a way, it is a most unequal struggle that ensues. How unjust it is to put years and maturity of strength against a helpless, ignorant little child! Every exhibition of anger on the part of the parents confirms rebellion in the heart of the child. It is not through one act that the character is formed, but by a repetition of acts that habits are established and character confirmed. To have a Christ-like character it is necessary to act in a Christlike way. Christians will exhibit a holy temper, and their actions and impulses will be prompted by the Holy Spirit.

It takes far less time and pains to spoil the disposition of a child than to imprint upon the tablets of the soul, principles that will result in habits of righteousness. Let parents be careful never to correct their children in anger. Never lay your hand upon a child when you are provoked and filled with passion. In so doing you will make him partaker of your own impulsive, passionate, unreasonable spirit. You may ask, "Shall I never punish my child by the use of the rod?" It may be necessary to whip a child at times. But every other resort should first be tried before you cause your child physical pain. If you are a Christian father or mother, you will reveal the love you have for your poor, erring little ones. If you do have to punish your child, you will manifest real sorrow for its affliction. You will bow before God with the child, and, with a heart full of sorrow, will ask the Lord to forgive the erring little one, and not permit that Satan shall have control of his soul. Present before the little ones the sympathizing Redeemer. Speak his own words to them, telling them that Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Your prayer, uttered in contrition of soul, will bring angels to your side, and the child's heart may be all broken in penitence, and thus the victory be gained, and there be no necessity of using the rod at all.

But if you take a child and correct it in the heat of passion, you pursue a course that may make a demon of your child, and then you may wonder why it is that your children have such unlovely traits of character, when you have so faithfully tried to break their stubborn wills. Here is where so many make a great mistake, in thinking that it is necessary to break and destroy a child's will. What you are to do is to guide and discipline and train the will by precept and example. In order to do this you must first learn how to control your own hasty temper, and subdue your own will, in order that you may mould and fashion the character of your child. If you act out your hasty temper, and show an undisciplined will before your child, you will certainly educate him to imitate your words and actions, and you have no reason to wonder why your children are so bad. It is your manner of training that is ruining your household.

Have you love for your child? Do you cultivate affection for the little ones you have brought into the world, and express that love in your words and manners? If your child is playing with something that is not a proper article for him to use as a toy, do not snatch it from him; but get him to exchange it for something that will be proper for him, and that will give him as much pleasure. Let your children have evidence that you love them, and that you want to make them happy. The more unlovely they are, the greater pains you must take to win their confidence and love; and when they realize that father and mother will use every justifiable means to make them happy, the barriers will be broken down. What a victory is gained when it is possible to mould the character of your children after the character of Christ! It should be the constant aim of parents to develop the capacities of their children in such a way that they will be fitted to honor God and bless humanity.

May 7, 1894

Self-Discipline Necessary to Parents

It is the work of parents to educate and discipline themselves, in order that they may educate and discipline their children. Let parents remember that they have transmitted to their children their own hereditary tendencies. Let them deal sharply with themselves as they see themselves mirrored in the dispositions of their children. Let parents open the door of their own hearts to Jesus, that his love and grace may take possession of the soul, and bring their will and ways into conformity to Christ's will and ways; then they will be able to impart divine instruction to their children.

It is a mistake for parents to notice every little defect in the manners of their children. They should not criticise them continually, but when they see wrong traits of character developing, they should make most strenuous efforts to correct the wrong by strengthening traits of an opposite nature. If you roughly lay hold on these disagreeable developments, and battle with them concerning their objectionable traits, you will be in danger of causing two evils to exist in trying to eradicate one. When children are inclined toward evil, seek to draw their minds away from the things that will mar them, and turn their attention in a different channel.

If you would train a precious pink, or rose, or lily, how would you minister to it? Ask the gardener by what process he makes every branch and leaf to flourish so beautifully, to develop in symmetry and loveliness. He will tell you that it was by no rude touch, no violent effort, for this would only break the boughs, but by little attentions oft repeated. He moistened the soil and protected the plants from the fierce blasts and from the scorching sun, and God, by his miraculous power, caused the plants to flourish and to blossom into loveliness. Parents should follow the method of the gardener in dealing with their children, and if the grace of Christ is in the heart, parents will seek in various ways to educate and train their children, to fashion their characters after the divine model. Parents should not be satisfied until they see the image of the divine in the characters of their children. They may give God all the glory for their success, because it has been the grace of Jesus Christ that has made the fathers and mothers wise to train their children.

That cannot be a happy home where love is not cultivated between husband and wife, between parents and children. If parents have been self-centered, and have trained their children in an atmosphere where love was not manifested in affectionate words and actions, then change the atmosphere of your home as quickly as possible. Let husbands love their wives, and let the wives see that they reverence their husbands. The plan of salvation was devised in order to transform the natural character, and fashion it after the divine image. When the grace of Christ is received in the heart, it will soften whatever is harsh, and subdue that which is coarse and unkind. Courtesy will be expressed in the affairs of home life. Let father and mother remember that they themselves are but grown-up children. Though great light has shone upon their pathway, and they have had long experience, yet how easily are they stirred to envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings! Because of their own mistakes and errors, they should learn to deal gently with their erring children.

Just as you conduct yourself in your home life, you are registered in the books of heaven. He who would become a saint in heaven, must first become a saint in his own family. If fathers and mothers are true Christians in the family, they will be useful members of the church, and will be able to conduct affairs in the church and in society after the same manner in which they conduct their

family concerns. Parents, let not your religion be simply a profession, but let it become a reality. When truth is brought into the inner sanctuary of the soul, it has a wonderful and powerful effect upon the life. It will expel the love of self, indulgence of self, hastiness and petulance of temper, sensitiveness, and pride. These are the things that drive Christ from the heart, and when they are manifested in the life, the professors of religion cannot experience that noble joy that makes the servant of Christ free. He who professes to love the truth, and yet does not bring it into practical life, is bearing a heavy yoke. He admits the principles of truth to be right, and yet fails to carry them out in his actions, and thus cuts off his influence. He is subject to various caprices of his own natural character, and robs God of the service for which he was purchased by the precious blood of Christ.

Until Christianity is planted in the heart, it cannot control the life, for it is the evil in the heart that must be corrected. It is not enough to have a form of godliness without holiness to the Lord, for it is like cleansing the outside of the cup while impurities remain within. A belief of doctrines, however pure they may be, will not save a soul from death, unless they are brought into contact with the life. The heart must be purified through obedience to the truth.

Parents, you need to study your Bibles in order to know how to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. You cannot continue to indulge in your fitful manner of managing your children, and yet be accounted as true and faithful before God. You must watch for the souls of your children as those that must give an account. You should consider it your duty before God to educate your children in some useful employment. They cannot be permitted to spend their lives in amusing themselves simply, without being exposed to temptation. You should train your children to orderly habits, teaching them to bear responsibilities according to their years. You should train them also in habits of economy, instructing them to bind about their wants and restrict their desires for indulgence in dress and holiday pleasures.

Parents who profess to believe the truth should earnestly strive for the salvation of their children, teaching them, both by precept and example, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is with God, who looks upon the heart, that we have to do. Have the parents given the whole heart to God? Have parents appreciated the countless blessings he has bestowed? Have they educated themselves in presenting gratitude offerings to God in response for all his blessings until their affections are set on things above, and not on things on the earth? The heart is the citadel of the whole man, and, until the heart is wholly on the Lord's side, the enemy will find his stronghold there, and no human power can dislodge him. The Lord alone can do this work.

There are many professed Christian parents whose souls are preoccupied with so many other things that there is no room in the soul temple for the presence of Jesus. They have given to their idols the devotion that is due alone to God. The door of the heart is closed against the truth, and Christ is misrepresented in spirit, in character, and in actions. Their children are unconverted, wayward, and pleasure loving, and no recommendation to the truth. Should some of these youth be cut down with disease and have no opportunity to repent, they would be lost, forever lost. They are indulging in worldly follies and pleasures, and this will not give their souls a fitness for the society of heavenly angels. Souls are perishing because they have not an experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Many sit under the sound of the gospel, but they do not take it as the truth, because parents keep practical religion apart from their lives. The glad tidings that should awaken every soul is of none effect to them. They are pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away

the sins of the world, but they say, There will be time enough tomorrow, and the bewitching power of sin holds them firmly in its grasp. As they cannot serve Christ and the world at the same time, they choose the service of sin and receive its wages.

My brethren and sisters, will you not face heavenward? Will you not open the chambers of the mind to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness? Will you not open the door of the heart, and welcome Jesus in? There is healing in his wings. He will create the kindness and love in your hearts that should be cherished and exhibited in your family, and this love will not only embrace your own household, but will flow out to those around you in the church and the world. We do not plead for a manifestation of what the world calls courtesy, but for that courtesy which everyone will take with him to the mansions of the blessed. Oh, what rays of softness and beauty shone forth in the daily life of our Saviour, and were revealed in all the associations which he cherished! There never was so perfect an illustration of genuine courtesy as that which was exemplified in the life of Jesus. He bids parents to come unto him and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart. He says to the children, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Send them not to the rabbis, send them not to the Pharisees, but take the little children to Jesus for instruction and discipline.

May 14, 1894

The Family Circle the School of Christ

The family institution is a divine ordinance. Parents stand in the place of God to their children. How grievous in the sight of heaven is the neglect of parents to train their children for the future immortal life. Christians should look upon children as the younger members of the Lord's family, intrusted to the parents and to the church to be trained up as children of God, to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Christian family is to be a school of Christ, where parents are to be the visible teachers, but Christ himself the great invisible teacher. The lessons which Christ imparts to the parents they are to repeat to their children line upon line and precept upon precept. Patiently, tenderly, and lovingly their steps are to be guided in the narrow path of holiness. Parents are not to compel their children to have a form of religion, but they are to place eternal principles before them in an attractive light.

The mother is to teach the children through their earlier years, and in order to fulfill her great responsibility, she needs to be moulded and fashioned after the similitude of the character of Christ. She is never to use her influence fitfully, unwisely, arbitrarily, simply because it is in her power to do so. She must ever remember that she must render up an account to God for the way she has done her intrusted work. The father should see to it that the mother is not overburdened with the care of many children. Children are not to be crowded upon her so that her physical strength and training capabilities are taxed. Men and women should carefully, conscientiously consider, with an eye single to the glory of God, what is involved in bringing children into the world. When mothers bring forth children in rapid succession, the burdens of caring for and training them are so heavy that they become discouraged, and are not able to accomplish the work that they should in educating their numerous and fast-increasing flock.

A mother is but a human being, and the husband and father of the family should unite his efforts with hers in building up a proper family discipline. If he neglects to do his part, failure is registered in

the books of heaven against his name, and he will have to give an account of himself before the great white throne. Many fathers think family discipline a light matter, and it does not enter their mind that they have a part to act in cheerfully training and governing the children. The father frequently manifests passion and impatience, and alienates the hearts of his children from him, and yet he often charges the blame of this upon the poor management of the mother. Let Christian parents take heed how they deal with the younger members of the Lord's family. The father and mother should always be at agreement, not working counter to each other, in order that right impressions may be made on the minds of their children. Let parents seek wisdom of God; for he has said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

It is the privilege of parents to rear their children in a divine atmosphere. As soon as the little ones are intelligent to understand, parents should tell to them the story of Jesus, that they may drink in the precious truth concerning the Babe of Bethlehem. Impress upon the children's minds sentiments of simple piety that are adapted to their years and ability. Bring your children in prayer to Jesus, for he has made it possible for them to learn religion as they learn to frame the words of the language. Let children hear from the lips of their mother words of gentleness, purity, and truth. Let her maintain her authority, permitting no disobedience on the part of her children. Command your children and your household after you (as did Abraham) to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. Parents must keep their hearts and minds in the love of God, and bring their children to the altar of prayer, where day by day the household may offer up supplication and thanksgiving.

When parents become old, and have young children to bring up, the father is likely to feel that the children must follow in the sturdy, rugged path in which he himself is traveling. It is difficult for him to realize that his children are in need of having life made pleasant and happy for them by their parents. Many parents deny the children an indulgence in that which is safe and innocent, and are so afraid of encouraging them in cultivating desires for unlawful things that they will not even allow their children to have the enjoyment that children should have. Through fear of evil results, they refuse permission to indulge in some simple pleasure that would have saved the very evil they seek to avoid, and thus the children think there is no use in expecting any favors, and therefore will not ask for them. They steal away to the pleasures they think will be forbidden. Confidence between the parents and children is thus destroyed. If fathers and mothers have not themselves had a happy childhood, why should they shadow the lives of their children because of their own great loss in this respect? The father may think that this is the only course that will be safe to pursue; but let him remember that all minds are not constituted alike, and the greater the efforts made to restrict, the more uncontrollable will be the desire to obtain that which is denied, and the result will be disobedience to parental authority. The father will be grieved by what he considers the wayward course of his son, and his heart will feel sore over his rebellion. But would it not be well for him to consider the fact that the first cause of his son's disobedience was his own unwillingness to indulge him in that in which there was no sin. The father thinks that sufficient reason is given for his son's abstaining from his indulgence since he has denied it to him. But parents should remember that their children are intelligent beings, and they should deal with them as they themselves would like to be dealt with.

It is true that Christ is to be the model for children. He was subject unto his parents; but Christ is also the father's example, and his tender love should be shown by his human agent. The father should be

enabled to say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." Christ is the model of perfection, both in outward manner and inward grace, for he was meek and gentle of heart. He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. He enjoyed seeing children and youth happy. He never spoke an unkind, discourteous word. Even in his denunciations of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, keen and searching though they were, there was no manifestation of an irritated temper. Divine grace alone can correct our objectionable tendencies.

When circumstances arise that tempt and irritate us, we should manifest love and sympathy, and cultivate patience under every provocation to anger. Under trying circumstances parents may think it right to manifest sternness; but this is the time when they will need to apply the oil of grace in order to prevent friction in the family. Harshness of temper must be softened and subdued by the love of Christ, in order that parents may be able to deal wisely with their children. When, by the wrong course of some members of the family, a most difficult combination of things comes into existence, which is hard to harmonize, different manifestations of mind will make themselves apparent in those who are to be reproved. Some will be excessively sensitive, others manifest a cold, proud reserve, others be nervous and timid, and others still be excessively irritable. Under such circumstances there will always be need of forbearance, patience, and love. Let all by repentance, forgiveness, and love seek to bring all the sunshine that is possible into the home life, that alienation may be healed, and the family come into unity.

The Christian must modify his stern traits of character through the grace of Christ, and cultivate that which is gentle and peaceful. Great harm is done to the cause of Christ when Christians permit their unholy traits of character to misrepresent the gentle, courteous spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Old age at times expects too much of inexperienced youth, and youth expect too much of the aged. Let all take Christ for their example, who never spoke a hasty, discourteous word, or performed a rude action. It is just as much the sacred duty of the aged to grow old gracefully, mellowing in disposition in the autumn of life, as it is for the youth to represent the graces of the character of Christ. Manners are the expression of character, and divine grace can do everything to sanctify the character. Therefore, "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

May 28, 1894

Delusions of the Last Days

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." Before the last developments of the work of apostasy there will be a confusion of faith. There will not be clear and definite ideas concerning the mystery of God. One truth after another will be corrupted. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." There are many who deny the preexistence of Christ, and therefore deny his divinity; they do not accept him as a personal Saviour. This is a total denial of Christ. He was the only-begotten Son of God, who was one with the Father from the beginning. By him the worlds were made.

In denying the miraculous incarnation of Christ, many turn from other truths of heavenly origin, and accept fables of Satan's invention. They lose spiritual discernment, and practice that which is

brought to them and impressed upon their minds through the agency of Satan. As the convict is branded and defaced by a hot iron, so their consciences are seared and marred by sin. They proclaim their own righteousness, and exalt themselves before the people in order to gain confidence and to draw to their side those who have not received the love of the truth. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Spiritualism is about to take the world captive. There are many who think that Spiritualism is upheld through trickery and imposture; but this is far from the truth. Superhuman power is working in a variety of ways, and few have any idea as to what will be the manifestations of Spiritualism in the future. The foundation for the success of Spiritualism has been laid in the assertions that have been made from the pulpits of our land. The ministers have proclaimed, as Bible doctrines, falsehoods that have originated from the arch-deceiver. The doctrine of consciousness after death, of the spirits of the dead being in communion with the living, has no foundation in the Scriptures, and yet this theory is affirmed as truth. Through this false doctrine the way has been opened for the spirits of devils to deceive the people in representing themselves as the dead. Satanic agencies personate the dead, and thus bring souls into captivity. Satan has a religion, he has a synagogue and devout worshipers. To swell the ranks of his devotees he uses all manner of deception.

The signs and wonders of Spiritualism will become more and more pronounced as the professed Christian world rejects the plainly revealed truth of the word of God, and refuses to be guided by a plain "Thus saith the Lord," accepting instead the doctrines and the commandments of men. Through rejecting light and truth many are deciding their destiny for eternal death; and as men reject truth, the Spirit of God will gradually withdraw itself from the earth, and the prince of this earth will have more and more control over his subjects. He will show great signs and wonders as credentials of his divine claims, and through Spiritualism will work against Christ and his agencies.

The Scriptures positively forbid intercourse with evil angels on the supposition of communion with the dead. Through this deception Satan can educate souls in his school of falsehood, and make of none effect the lessons that Christ would teach, which, if practiced, would result in the eternal life of those who obey. Satan is seeking to form a great confederacy of evil by uniting fallen men and fallen angels. But the Lord says: "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a-whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God."

The great power that attends Spiritualism has its origin in the great leading rebel, Satan, the prince of devils. It is through his artifice that evil angels have been able to substitute themselves for the dead, and through lying hypocrisy they have led men to have intercourse with devils. Those who commune with the supposed spirits of the dead are communing with those who will have a

corrupting, demoralizing power upon the mind. Christ commanded that we should have no intercourse with sorcerers and with those who have familiar spirits. This class are represented in the Gospel as among those who shall perish in their iniquity,—“the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.”

For years Spiritualism has been growing in strength and gaining in popularity by advocating a certain kind of faith in Christ, and thus many Protestants are becoming infatuated with this mystery of iniquity. It is little wonder that they are deluded, when they persistently retain the error that, as soon as the breath leaves the body, the spirit goes immediately to heaven or hell. Through the hold this doctrine has upon them the way is prepared for the delusive working of the prince of the power of the air. Satan personated the serpent in Eden, regarding this creature as best adapted for his line of temptations. Satan has been increasing in skillful methods by constantly practicing upon the human mind. It is his one purpose to complete the work which he began in Eden, and work the ruin of mankind. Through his mysterious workings he can insinuate himself into the circles of the most educated and refined, for he was once an exalted being, in a high position of responsibility among the heavenly hosts. It is a mistake to represent him as a monstrous being with hoofs and horns, for he is still a fallen angel. He is capable of uniting the highest intellectual greatness with the basest cruelty and the most degrading corruption. If he had not this power, many would escape his snares who are now charmed with his attractive representations and taken captive by his delusions.

As the Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from the earth, Satan's power will be more and more manifest. The knowledge that he had through being in connection with God, as a covering cherub, he will now use to subordinate his subjects who fell from their high estate. He will use every power of his exalted intellect to misrepresent God and to instigate rebellion against Jesus Christ, the Commander of heaven. In the synagogue of Satan he brings under his scepter, and into his counsels, those agents whom he can use to promote his worship. It is not a strange matter to find a species of refinement, and a manifestation of intellectual greatness, in the lives and characters of those who are inspired by fallen angels. Satan can impart scientific knowledge, and give men chapters upon philosophy. He is conversant with history, and versed in worldly wisdom.

Almost every phase of talent is now being brought into captivity to the prince of the power of darkness. Worldly minded men, because they wish to exalt themselves, and have separated from God, do not love to retain God in their knowledge, for they claim to possess a higher, grander intellect than that of Jesus Christ. Satan envies Christ, and makes the claim that he is entitled to a higher position than the Commander of heaven. His self-exaltation led him to despise the law of God, and resulted in his expulsion from heaven.

Through the Papacy he has manifested his character, and brought out the principles of his government. Of this power the apostle Paul says: “Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.... For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.... Shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming, even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of

unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

The confederacy of evil will not stand. The Lord says: “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces.... Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary.”

Satan will use his agencies to carry out diabolical devices, to overpower the saints of God, as in times past he used the Roman power to stay the course of Protestantism; yet the people of God can look calmly at the whole array of evil, and come to the triumphant conclusion that because Christ lives we shall live also. The people of God are to advance in the same spirit in which Jesus met the assaults of the prince of darkness in the past. The evil confederacy can advance only in the course which Jesus has marked out before them; every step of their advance brings the saints of God nearer the great white throne, nearer the successful termination of their warfare. The confederacy of evil will finally be destroyed; for the prophet says, “Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Even of him whose heart was lifted up because of his beauty, who corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness, the Lord says: “I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.”

June 4, 1894

Satanic Delusions to Increase

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” Prior to and at the first advent of Christ, religious teachers set forth strange ideas that were so mingled with portions of truth that they were full of deceptive power, and led souls away from God, although they still preserved the appearance of being his true worshipers. We find a similar condition of society in these last days, and those who depart from the faith, mingle with their belief diversities of human opinion. The Bible is brought into criticism. Is it because the Scriptures are inconsistent and contradictory that ministers differ so widely in their interpretation?—No, the trouble is that men are doing today as they did in the time of Christ, and are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Religious teachers are in the same condition as were the Pharisees of whom he said, “Ye are both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God.” The very men to whom these words were spoken were presumed to teach and interpret the Scriptures to the people.

Are the Scriptures vague and inconsistent? Is there any foundation for the conflicting opinions and various sentiments and doctrines that find credence in the religious world? If so, then we may entertain doubts of their divine origin; for it is not the inspiration of God that leads people to come to diverse opinions. Those who undertake to interpret the Bible, have corrupted the word of God and wrested the Scripture from its true meaning, by seeking to harmonize the truth of God with the inventions and doctrines of men. The Scriptures are perverted and misapplied, and the gems of truth are set in the framework of error. These teachers are blinded, and cannot clearly discern what is the true meaning of the Scriptures.

In the time of the apostles, teachers of this character sought to insinuate themselves among the teachers of truth. They tried to mingle the chaff with the wheat, and their theories were called "strange doctrine;" but the Lord would have us distinguish truth from error. The apostle exhorts us to "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Peter, John, Jude, and Paul had to contend with men who sought to unsettle the unstable, and who made the word of truth of none effect. Those who were filled with vain philosophy and impressed with science falsely so called, were prejudiced against the truth.

Human inventions please the carnal mind, and pacify the conscience as it clings to sin. It was not palatable to men to see and practice the faith that works by love and sanctifies the soul. Sin was not forsaken and despised, and in order to excuse it a means had to be devised by which the edge of the sword of truth might be blunted; so men brought in human reasonings and assertions. If men had permitted the word of God to do its work upon the heart and intellect, they would have distinguished and separated the spurious from the true. If they had received the Scriptures in their simplicity, they would not have given themselves up to worldly pursuits, to fulfilling their temporal hopes. But they made of none effect the word of God through their traditions, and wrested the Scripture from its true meaning. The Lord says that the word of truth is able to make men wise unto salvation. It is a safeguard and shield, and protects men from the delusions of the enemy. "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light; for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

Jesus, who gave his life to save men, has given us a warning as to what shall come to pass in the last days. The disciples came to him privately to ask him concerning the end of the world, and Jesus said: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many," Satanic delusions and deceptions will increase as we near the end of earth's history. Jesus warned his followers as to what should take place just prior to his coming. He said: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as

the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.”

The deceiving power of Satan will continually increase to the very end. Through his agencies he will do great wonders, “so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do, ... saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Our world is fast approaching the boundary line when probation will no longer be granted.

A long-suffering God bore with the inhabitants of the world in the time of Noah; but at last he declared to his servant saying, “My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” “And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; and God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

The condition of society today is similar to what it was in the time of Noah; and if Jesus was among us, he would say, “Can ye not discern the signs of the times?” “And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.”

“Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” The world is given up to the pursuit of temporal affairs, as men were in the days of Noah. They are eating, drinking, planting, building, marrying, and giving in marriage. These things are all lawful in themselves, but it is the carrying of them to excess that is sinful. The world has had great light, and has been greatly favored, and yet the people of the world come short of living up to their responsibilities. The warning Christ gave to the cities that had been most highly favored and had not repented, applies to the world in this day: “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.”

June 11, 1894

Harmony With Apostate Powers a Sign of Enmity to God

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” These are the chosen of God; they are those to whom Christ addresses the words: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

The people of the world are so engrossed in temporal affairs that eternal realities seem of subordinate importance to them. They cannot distinguish truth from error. In spirit and in practice they are repeating the history of the Jews, and in these last days the chosen of God who keep his commandments will be objects of contempt, both to those in high position and those in the common walks of life. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

In this age of the world there are those who live in the midst of the corrupt society of the world to whom the Lord says: “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.... These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth: I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come, and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

We are to know the meaning of the words: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” The enmity that exists in the heart against evil has no natural existence, but is an enmity that has been created through the agency of the Holy Spirit. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” The natural man is in transgression, and his nature is in harmony with that of the first transgressor. There is no natural enmity between fallen men and fallen angels; both are partakers of the same spirit through indulgence in evil. It is according to the law of the synagogue of Satan that in the controversy of the evil against the good, fallen men and fallen angels shall unite in a desperate companionship. From the beginning Satan has worked continually to dethrone the Creator, and whatever may be the divisions among evil men and evil angels, there is no division in their opposition to God. They are banded together as with iron cords to oppose the Creator and Redeemer of man. Satan is determined to utterly deprave human

nature through making of none effect the commandments of God. He originates traditions, and through his maxims he succeeds in assimilating to his own nature the nature of those who do not yield allegiance to the law of God.

The harmony of nature between Satan and evil men is the key to all religious persecution from the day when Cain killed Abel to the present time. The same principle that actuated Satan in the courts of heaven to war against God is now working in the children of disobedience, and actuates them to manufacture spurious commandments that contradict the statutes of Jehovah. It is the power of apostasy that exalts religious potentates to the place of God. The false is honored above the true; and thus it is that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is trampled in the dust, while the spurious sabbath is exalted by earthly powers.

The origin of false commandments may be clearly discerned by the principles which underlie them. All that is not in accordance with the known and expressed will of God, is at enmity with God, and has its origin in the synagogue of Satan. The will of God is expressed in his law, and sin is the transgression of the law. Those who disregard the commandments of God, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men, are working in Satan's line, and are in harmony with the great leader of apostasy. When the Jews were claiming Abraham for their father, while not doing the works of Abraham, Jesus said to them: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Light is shining amid the moral darkness in this age of the world. The Holy Spirit is working on the hearts of men to convince them of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment to come. But those who refuse the light, and accept the excuses that Satan may frame as reasons why they should not obey the truth, will manifest Satanic enmity against those who obey God rather than man. Those who steadfastly follow the practice and customs of the world in the very face of light and truth, will obstinately oppose the commandments of God, and render unswerving loyalty to him who first rebelled against God, and was expelled from the courts of heaven; but in the face of the enmity of the world, those who truly believe in Christ will take him for their example in all things. Jesus says, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." The beloved disciple said: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself so to walk, even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning."

Are the world keeping the law of God?—No; but, although they do not keep the law, yet the professed Christian world unite with the opposers of truth in placing contempt upon those who keep the commandments of God. There is open war both in the professed Christian church and in the world against those who keep the fourth commandment and render obedience to all the moral precepts of Jehovah. The fourth commandment reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made

heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Let every soul who reads this commandment understand that it is to be observed exactly as it is written. It is not to be misapplied or wrested from its true meaning. The man of sin thought to change the time and the law of God; but no power in heaven or earth could change that which had been written by the finger of God, and placed in the ark of the testimony under the mercy-seat.

In holy vision John was taken into the heavenly sanctuary. He says: "The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened." The sanctuary that Moses was commanded to make was to be after the pattern of the heavenly sanctuary. In the ark were placed the ten commandments which had been written by the finger of God. The law that was placed in the ark on earth was a copy of the law that is contained in the ark of the testament in heaven, and the precepts of Jehovah are immutable. The ten commandments constitute the moral standard of character. God requires on the part of man perfect conformity to his law, and a curse is pronounced against everyone who continues not in all things written in the law to do them.

The human race do not stand in the righteousness of character which Adam possessed at his creation. Although neglect to keep the requirements of God is sin, and the wages of sin is death, yet there is no claim made that man may have eternal life except through the obedience and righteousness of Jesus Christ, who is the representative and head of all humanity. The sinner can find hope only through dependence upon the perfection of Christ. We are to avail ourselves of the merit of the sinless offering that was made through the death of the only-begotten Son of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

(Concluded next week.)

June 18, 1894

Harmony With Apostate Powers a Sign of Enmity to God

(Concluded.)

God has made provision in Jesus Christ that we shall keep the commandments of God. In this age of the world the powers of apostasy are seeking in every way to entice men into disobedience. The very work that Satan did in Eden he is doing today. He persuaded Adam and Eve that God had withheld some great good from them, and, while insinuating that God had not their welfare at heart, he pretended to have a deep interest in their advancement. Satan's falsehood prevailed; he succeeded in winning their confidence through promising them a greater breadth of knowledge than they had yet attained, even declaring that they should be as gods. God had placed upon them a very slight test. They were simply prohibited from partaking of one tree in the midst of the garden. Yet a violation of this one slight prohibition resulted in the fall of the human race. Though the action might be accounted small, yet it was disobedience and transgression; and; when weighed in God's

balances, it was seen to be a most heinous sin. Adam's disobedience to God was the result of unbelief and ingratitude, and led him to take his position on the side of the great apostate, in giving credence to Satan's statements rather than to the word of God.

The history of Adam's transgression is before the human family, and is written for our admonition and warning, that we may realize how terrible is the sin of violating the least commandment of God.

We have full light upon the fact of how the Lord regarded Adam's transgression, and yet men presume to violate the fourth commandment. After the Lord created the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day, and sanctified the day of his rest, and bade men observe the day of rest throughout all generations. And yet men are repeating Adam's transgression, and are entering into a confederacy with Satan to war against God, in trampling upon the Sabbath institution. The church and the world are choosing Satan for their god and sovereign, and setting aside the God that made heaven and earth and all things that are therein.

Man lost his righteousness through transgression, and "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Through the righteousness of Christ, our substitute and surety, our obedience to God's commandments is made acceptable. Christ clothed his divinity with humanity, and endured the test upon the point of appetite, ambition, and love of the world, thus making it possible for man to keep the commandments of God through his imputed righteousness. Through faith in Christ, man becomes partaker of the divine nature, and is complete in him, as long as he walks in the light. But when light has come to a soul that has been in darkness in regard to the binding claims of the law of God, and the transgressor refuses to walk in the light, he is guilty before God, and is charged with apostasy. He chooses that sin shall have dominion over him, and therefore the penalty of the law is upon him. By his continued transgression he reveals the fact that he is at enmity with God, that his heart is carnal, and not subject to the law of God. He repeats the transgression of Adam, accepts the insinuations of the fallen foe, takes his place on the side of the man of sin, and exalts Satan above God. In refusing the light, he becomes one with the ranks of apostasy, and chooses to act with the confederacy of Satan.

It was necessary that Christ should take upon him our nature, in order to prove the falsity of Satan's statements. The apostate cast contempt upon the law of God, and declared that it was impossible for men to keep God's commandment, which had been preordained in the counsels of heaven. Therefore Christ became man's representative and surety, thus demonstrating to heavenly intelligences, to unfallen worlds, and to the human race, that, through cooperation with divine agencies, humanity could be pure and holy. By partaking of the divine nature they could meet the demand of a perfect and holy law. Of Christ it is written: "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

Adam failed to obey the commandments of God. Shall the sons and daughters of Adam continue in transgression, and also fail to obey? No one can enter into life who persists in disloyalty, since Christ was given to our world that he might save his people from their sins. When the young man came to Christ, saying, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." It was not possible for the young man,

or for anyone, to keep the commandments of God except through the merit of Jesus Christ. Without the shedding of the blood of Christ there could be no remission of sin, no imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the believing sinner. Christ endured the penalty of sin in his own body on the cross, and fulfilled all righteousness. The merit of the righteousness of Christ is the only ground upon which the sinner may hope for a title to eternal life; for Christ hath given himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, as a sweet-smelling savor. An infinite price was paid for man's redemption, not that he might be saved in his sins, not to make void the law of God. Paul says: "Do we then make void the law of God through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." For though "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight," yet the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is witnessed by the law and the prophets.

How strange it is that the church and the world are joined together in a confederacy to do a work that God has especially prohibited! They disobey the commandments of God with impunity. The prohibition of God in the Garden of Eden was disregarded by Adam and Eve, and the most terrible consequences resulted. The Lord is placing the same test upon the human family today, and proving them by bringing to their attention the Sabbath, which is a memorial of God's creative power. In this memorial God testifies to the world and to heavenly intelligences that he made the world in six days, and rested—on the first day?—No, but on the seventh day. The same instruction comes to us today as when the Lord spoke to the children of Israel, saying, "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations."

The Lord sends messengers of truth to the people; but when he brings words of stern truth to bear upon their consciences, there are many who are in no way pleased or grateful. The message of truth disturbs them in their ease-loving service of God, and they do not like the rugged, thorny path that is pointed out to them. They do not wish to separate from the world, to practice self-denial and self-sacrifice, and to attain unto the likeness of Christ. They desire to live at peace, and glorify self, and do not wish to identify their interest with that of Jesus Christ. They count that separation from the pleasures of the world, separation from the world's careless neglect of piety and devotion, is too heavy a cross for them to bear.

In rejection of light the hearts of men are hardened, and they finally unite with the agencies of apostasy in a work of compelling the conscience of those who do not agree with them, in persecuting and putting to death those who love God and keep his commandments. But the Lord says to his chosen people: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.... And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.... Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

The remnant people of God are to endure persecutions. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." They are to give the warning message against the power represented by "the beast." The prophet says of this power, which represents the Papacy: "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The remnant church of God are to give the warning of the third angel to the world: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation."

The church of God, despised and persecuted by the world, are educated and disciplined in the school of Christ. They walk in narrow paths on earth; they are purified in the furnace of afflictions. For Jesus' sake they endure opposition, hatred, calumny. They follow Christ through sore conflicts; they endure self-denial, and experience bitter disappointments; but their painful experience teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they look upon it with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of his glory. In holy vision the prophet saw the triumph of the people of God. He says: "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

June 25, 1894

One Cause of Suffering

Why is it that there is so much suffering in our world? One reason is that the rich do not fulfill their God-given responsibilities, and, as good stewards of the grace of God, make distribution for the wants of the poor. Men have perverted their God-given powers, and think only of how they may accumulate wealth. There are thousands of rich people who have every luxury, and do not know what to do with their possessions. They make their bodies idols, and heap treasure upon themselves. The rich and the poor have been represented in the Bible in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Those who do not deal out their bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out into their houses, are committing the sin of Sodom. The iniquity of Sodom was pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, neither did they strengthen the hands of the poor and needy. The Lord says, "They were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good."

Idleness is sin. To every man and woman God has given his or her work, and all are to employ their time in doing good to others. Through luxury and haughtiness, hard-heartedness and inconsiderate thoughtlessness are developed in the character, and these are found in a large degree among those who hold high positions in the world. Those who have an abundance have little sympathy for the hungry, the naked, and the homeless.

What true satisfaction can persons have who load their bodies with costly jewels, while there are thousands destitute, shivering in their nakedness, crying to God in their hunger and distress! Oh, that those who deck themselves with jewels, and make idols of themselves, might see how they appear in the eyes of their Creator! Oh, that they might realize how the Saviour, who has died for them, looks upon them, witnessing every extravagance, and contrasting it with the destitution of the poor, who cry unto him, and who cry not in vain! Not one who decks himself with jewels and costly array will stand before God guiltless. No one can turn from the truth, violate justice, give up integrity, neglect the poor, and yet flatter himself that he has not forsaken God. All idolatry of self dishonors God, and he who dishonors God fails to benefit humanity. The eternal principles of right and wrong are violated. Needless expenditure of means, indulgence in extravagances, the putting on of gaudy trappings, and decking the body with flashing jewels, is an evidence that the soul has turned from God to self, and at the last day the poor will rise up in judgment and condemn those who have lived for the gratification of selfish desires. The sentence will be passed that, while many were in nakedness and starvation, the rich sinners were squandering money to gratify pride and ambition, and by so doing degraded themselves.

A man may be lifted up because of his wealth to sit among princes; but if he has not a living connection with the Lord Jesus Christ, he has a cheap mind, for he has lost eternity out of his reckoning. In the sight of God he is accounted of the earth, earthy and degraded, the slave of lust and ambition. He has sold himself to his riches, which will soon pass away. He has bowed himself down to an idol that can no more bless him than can the gods of wood and stone. All ungodly gain brings with it a hidden curse, and all well-gotten gain is intrusted to the man as so much capital to be employed in doing good to others. Rich men have the responsibility laid upon them of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, educating the fatherless, and helping the widows in their necessity. If they neglect this work, they neglect Christ in the person of his saints.

The destiny of souls will be decided by that which we have done or left undone. Jesus says: "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The larger the intrusted wealth, the greater the responsibility. He who had large supplies yet who failed to succor the needy, will have large retribution. Justice will come upon the possessor of wealth if he has selfishly withheld it from those who needed its benefit. The condemnation that will come upon him who had great gifts will be that it was in his power to do good, to relieve the suffering, and he failed to do it. If men would keep the commandments of God, they would practice mercy and the love of God. Man would be upright in his dealings with his fellow-man; but he who serves not God

places no restrictions upon his ambitions, and gives himself up wholly to covetousness, and thus he ruins his soul. He becomes miserable and discontented and unsatisfied, because he would grasp more of the world's wealth than he can get in his possession; and thus the more the covetous rich man has, the more miserable he becomes.

Those who would be happy, who would be a blessing to the world, must make the Bible their standard of character, and work in Christ's lines. Can it be possible that those who have riches and who spend money only for the gratification of self, have Bibles? If they have, do they read them? Have they read of the foolish rich man, who was abundantly blessed of God? Why?—In order to test and prove him, and make it manifest that he was not a character that could be trusted with eternal riches. What did the rich man do?—Just what many today are doing. Instead of opening his eyes to see the suffering around him, instead of opening his ears to hear their cry of distress, instead of appropriating his goods to supply their deficiencies, he said: "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But what decision does the Lord make in regard to this disposal of matters?—"But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

What will be the reward of those who spend their money in extravagance? These persons have souls, which Christ has purchased with his own blood, and if they are saved at all, they must be saved through God's appointed way. Their bodies may be weighed down with jewels, with gold and silver, but will this enhance their value in the sight of God? Will this purchase for them the crown of eternal life, that fadeth not away? Will this buy for them the exceeding and eternal weight of glory, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, that hath not entered into the heart of man, that God hath prepared for them that love him? God has prepared indescribable glories for them that love not gold, not display, not extravagance, not luxuries and ornaments, but that love him. Those who love God with all their hearts, and their neighbor as themselves, will reap the eternal reward.

But not only in the world is the love of riches prevalent, but even in the church gold and silver have been made an idol of. There are many who profess the Saviour's name who have not helped the poor, nor strengthened the needy, nor regarded him who was ready to perish. The people of God are commissioned to be laborers together with God. Have the offerings of the church been made in proportion to the fields that cry for help? Has the love of Christ constrained those who profess his name to give to advance the gospel message in home and foreign mission fields? To every soul the reward will be, not according to profession, but according to what has been done. Actions will measure the love you have for Christ and for perishing souls. Christ will say to you, whatever has been your course, "Inasmuch as ye have done it [or did it not] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

July 2, 1894

Duty of the Rich Man to His Neighbor

The following clipping will show the way in which some of those who have great possessions recklessly squander means for the gratification of pride and ambition, and forget that they must also give an account to God for the entrusted talents he has given them:

One of the most significant economic events in some time was the Astor-Willing wedding in Philadelphia last week. To use one of Dr. Holmes' expressions, the impression which its descriptions left upon the mind was not that it was brilliant with gold, but heavy with bullion. Here are a few sentences from the account of it in one of our New York papers; "The Willing mansion was changed to a palace of roses.... No bride or bridesmaids ever wore more expensive dresses.... The day's ceremonies may be estimated to have cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000.... Probably never before have bridal gifts been so numerous and costly.... The tiara of diamonds which was the groom's gift to the bride is probably unsurpassed by any in America.... The elder Mr. Astor's gift to his daughter-in-law was a double bowknot of diamonds, from which is hanging a huge brilliant, and a diamond necklace and crescent of diamonds and sapphires four inches long. The present of the groom's mother was five diamond stars, each as large as a silver half dollar, inclosed in a massive box of solid silver, and eight silver dishes, each about three feet long, modeled after her own service....

"The wedding presents represented \$2,000,000. So much then for the day. Now as to the young people's start in life: Preceding their trip to Europe, Mr. Astor and his bride will spend about three weeks cruising in Mr. William Astor's yacht Nourmahal, in Florida waters. Despite the fact that her furnishings were scarcely worn and almost new, the boat was refurnished out and out with the most costly and magnificent furniture that money could secure. The complement of officers is fifty-two men, not including servants and personal attendants. It takes from \$8,000 to \$10,000 per month to keep her in service, besides the cost of food and wines." Twenty-five thousand dollars for the day's ceremony, two million dollars worth of presents, a cruise in a half-idle yacht costing ten thousand dollars per month to maintain. When we read this we are reminded of Thackeray's description of the extravagance of the prince regent during the Napoleonic wars. If he had been a manufacturing town, or populous rural district, or an army of five thousand men, he would not have cost more. The nation gave him more money, and more and more. The sum is past counting.

Looked at soberly, the sums lavished upon our American commoners are as disgraceful to our institutions as were the squanderings of the prince regent to those of England. If the scandal is less, it is because the disastrous concentration of hereditary wealth has as yet awakened less serious thought among us than the disastrous concentration of hereditary power had awakened in England. In the case of the Astors, quite as much as of the prince regent, the enormous sums expended are the gift of the nation, obtained without compensating services on the part of the recipients. The burden upon the labor of the country is as great, the benefit of the comfort or culture or character of the recipients is as small.

The Lord Jehovah is the Benefactor of the universe. He is of tender compassion, full of goodness, and his love is toward suffering humanity. The Psalmist says: "The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." The only begotten Son of God, who was the exalted Commander of heaven, who received the adoration of the angels, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he left the royal throne, departed from the heavenly courts, laid aside his royal robes, and for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. He announced his mission in Nazareth, saying: "The Spirit of

the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Did Christ make a mistake in not seeking for worldly popularity, in not making a great display?

In the clipping presented in this article the question of why there is so much suffering in the world is in a great part answered. Why is there so much hunger, nakedness, ignorance, and degradation?—It is because the word of God is disregarded, the law of God is transgressed. The Lord Jesus, who knew the value of man, gave his life to redeem him from the slavery of sin and Satan. He has lifted his voice in warning to the sons of men. He says: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Men are not careful to be the doers of the words of Christ; and this is why so much sin, misery, and want prevail in the world. He says again: “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”

“And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou has answered right; this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out twopence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.”

Jesus marked out in a plain way the line of conduct that we all should pursue. We are to love God supremely, and our neighbors as ourselves. The question asked by the lawyer is of importance to

each one of us, and the answer is plain and decided, so that no man need walk in darkness, because he has the light. The whole duty of man is comprised in keeping the first four and the last six commandments. The Spirit that prompts men to reveal in life the love of God will also make a man an obedient member of the heavenly family. If men love worldly things, name, position, wealth, or any object that leads them to forget God, they love that which makes them idolaters. Nothing should be permitted to so hold the affections that God is thrust out of the mind. The second commandment will be easily disobeyed if the first is not kept. Supreme love of God will sanctify the affections, and the fruit of love to God will be love to mankind. Those who have been tested and proved on this matter of loving others as themselves, will be pronounced meet for an inheritance with the saints in light. They will not become exalted, as did Lucifer in the courts of light. They will not create rebellion in heaven, because another has a brighter crown than they have. Heaven will be the home of the pure and undefiled, and those who reach that home of joy will feel rich, receiving a reward that they do not in the least feel that they deserve.

July 9, 1894

Failure of the Rich in Bearing the Test

Jesus has said, "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth." Who is with Christ in the manner in which they treat the poor and suffering? Jesus has said again, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." "So shall ye be my disciples." In what contrast to the manner of Christ in his humiliation is the manner of those who exalt themselves, and have no care for the needy around them! The rich people of the world are called the great ones, but what does the Creator call them? Thousands and even millions of dollars have been expended in extravagant display, by those who do not know what to do with their abundant means, while at the same time thousands are starving for bread, thousands living in comfortless homes, who are naked and destitute. The souls of the poor are just as valuable in the sight of God as the souls of the rich. The riches of the world belong to God, and he does not estimate men by the amount of money they possess. God intrusts money to men in order that he may see what use they will make of it.

Those who expend their money for self-gratification are only living on husks. What comfort can they take in looking upon their decorated persons, when the poor are all about them, suffering for the necessities of life? How can they desire to load themselves down with treasures, which are necessary neither for comfort, health, or happiness, when, if they distributed their treasures in a wise way, they might make many comfortable who cry in want and suffering, who are dying for the want of proper food and shelter? The cry of the destitute enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. He will call for an account from everyone who has shut up the bowels of mercy and compassion.

The Lord has imparted his goods in abundance, and if men and women possessed the attributes of Christ's character, they would not heap up for themselves treasures, and fail to provide homes for the orphans, schooling for the poor, and food and clothing for the needy. What will rich men do in the judgment when they have failed to be good stewards of the grace of God? "Then shall he also say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was ahungered, 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 ahungered, 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."

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. He that is the way, the truth, and the life, has illuminated the track that leads heavenward. He came to our world to identify his interest with that of suffering humanity, to demonstrate before the world the goodness, mercy, and love of God to fallen man. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The requirement of God concerning those that shall enter the pearly gates, is that they be like Jesus, that they bear his image, and have his mind. They are to imitate his example, and live his life.

Being and doing good is essential to Christian character. No man liveth unto himself. All who win the precious boon of eternal life, will exemplify in life the life of Jesus Christ. They will follow in his steps who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil, who cheerfully gave his life a ransom for a lost world.

Conformity to the world and worldly attachments are forbidden by the word of God. Paul says: "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." The Holy Spirit with the cleaver of truth has separated men from the world, that they may go forth as missionaries for God into all the highways and byways of life. They are not only to seek and to save those that are lost, but they are also to minister to the wants of suffering humanity. Jesus says to them: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." This is the reason that they that will be rich, lay up their treasures on earth. They love the world, and the love of the Father is not in them. They decide to risk the consequences of disobeying Christ's words and fully resolve to lay up treasure upon earth. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth."

To lay plans for the gaining of worldly treasure simply that you may be rich and heap up treasure upon earth, is not laying plans in harmony with God's will. Selfishness and sin are at the bottom of all such gain. Such men do not love God with all the heart and their neighbors as themselves. Many of the human family are perishing about them, and, though it is in their power to confer blessing upon them, they withhold the good they could do to them, and fail to supply the necessities of those who want. But the cries of orphans and widows come up before God. Their tears are all registered in the books of heaven; and those who have had the opportunity to help, and yet refused the aid they might have given, are charged in the ledger of heaven with robbery toward God, and are sentenced as those who have oppressed and defrauded the poor.

How many have failed when they have been tested with wealth! Many have professed the name of Christ, and have apparently lived as Christians, until their circumstances have changed and they have

come into the possession of property. Under the test and proving of God, they have failed to bear the additional responsibility as God would have them, and have not acted as wise stewards. Many who have previously been earnest Christians, have begun to backslide from the time they have received a legacy, or have been successful in some business enterprise that has brought them into possession of greater influence and wealth. Their selfishness has been exhibited in a failure to pay their tithes. When in poorer circumstances they have paid to God his own, but when the tithe amounted to a large sum, when they had a greater talent whereby they might trade for the Master, they began to rob God of his own, and place the tithes of the Lord to their own account. They have been foolish enough to think that by this manner of dealing with God they were enriching themselves. Some have felt greatly troubled over their sin, and have confessed their misdoing, and resolved to pay to the Lord his own. But when they have reckoned up the amount they owed him, Satan suggested that it was too large a sum to be put into the treasury of the Lord, and again they have yielded to his suggestions. They have deceived themselves with the thought that they would by investing it have a larger sum at last to place to the Lord's account. The only safe way is to deal with the Lord as he has directed in his word. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

July 16, 1894

"This Do, and Thou Shalt Live"

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

With breathless attention the large congregation awaited Jesus' answer. The priests and Pharisees hoped to find something against him, and listened, that they might take advantage of his words, and interpret them in such a way as to bring upon him condemnation. But Christ, the true searcher of hearts, understood the intents and purposes of his enemies. He turned the matter over to the lawyer who had asked the question, saying, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" The Jews accused Jesus of making too little of the law, but he turned the question of salvation the lawyer had asked to the keeping of God's commandments. And the lawyer said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

The lawyer had asked a plain, decided question, and the answer is equally plain and decided. The scribes, priests, and Pharisees could find nothing by which to put him on trial for his life, except through the testimony of false witnesses, who accused him of violating the law. They had thought to entangle Jesus by having the lawyer ask this question, but the answering of it is required at the questioner's hand. Christ knew that the lawyer was not satisfied with the position and works of the Pharisees, and, by the answer that he made to his own question, it is evident that he had been studying the Scriptures with a desire to obtain their real meaning. He had a vital interest in the matter, and asked in sincerity, "What shall I do?" The answer of the lawyer, commended by Jesus, and coming from one well instructed in the law, placed Jesus in such a position that the priests and Pharisees could not find occasion against him. In answering the question, "What is written in the law?" the lawyer passed over all the mass of ceremonial and ritualistic ordinances as of no value, and presented only the two great principles on which hang all the law and the prophets, and Jesus

commended his wisdom, and said, "This do, and thou shalt live." Jesus presented the law as a divine unity, and showed that it is not possible to keep one precept and break another, but that man's position in the courts above will be according to his obedience to the whole law.

In his sermon on the mount Jesus had presented the truth concerning his estimation of the law. He had said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For ... except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The views entertained by the scribes and Pharisees are still in vogue in the world, and men think that by a partial obedience to the law, they will be cleared from sin; but Jesus taught that if any man offended in one point, he was guilty of breaking the whole law. The commandments are connected one with another as links in a chain, and if one link is broken, the chain is worthless. It is impossible for a man to obtain eternal life and break the commandments of Jehovah. Men cannot obey one commandment without rendering obedience to all the commandments. We are to regard the whole law as holy, just, and good. The first four precepts reveal the duty of man to God, and the last six reveal the duty of man to his fellow-man. On these two great principles hang all the law and the prophets; and when they are carried out in the life, they constitute the righteousness of their keeper.

In all the instructions of Jesus, he presents before us the character of God. We are called upon to love God with undivided heart. We are not to render to him a formal service, a barren faith, to acknowledge his superior power in a casual way, but we are to render to him praise and thanksgiving, and make it manifest that we are under his rule and dominion. He will accept nothing but the whole heart, the supreme love. There must be nothing that will draw the mind away from him. Anything that interposes itself between God and the soul, assumes the form of an idol. Every other thing that can attract the heart is inferior to God, and no man can serve two masters whose interests are at variance. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Jesus found himself surrounded by scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, and the lawyer asked him, "Who is my neighbor?" To this question Jesus presented a parable that laid bare the sanctimonious pretensions of priests and Levites. With fearlessness and fidelity he exposed the false doctrine of those who taught the traditions of man, and disregarded the commandments of God. He illustrated what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves. But he also showed that this love will never be exercised by those who do not keep the first four precepts of the law. Where love to God is practiced, natural self-idolatry will not exist. No man can love God supremely unless he loves his neighbor as himself. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Love to God is the golden chain that binds the ten precepts of Jehovah together.

To answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus presented the parable of the good Samaritan. He knew that the Jews included only those of their own nation under the title of neighbors, and looked upon the Gentiles with contempt, calling them dogs, uncircumcised, unclean, and polluted.

But above all others they despised the Samaritans. They cursed them, and would have no dealings with them. Jesus himself had been taught, both by precept and example, thus to regard this hated people, and the lawyer had been educated by the same kind of teaching. Yet Jesus said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

In journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho the traveler had to pass through a portion of the wilderness of Judea, and the road led through a wild, rocky ravine. It was here that robbers attacked the traveler, stripped him of all that was valuable, wounding and bruising him, and leaving him half dead by the wayside. As the sufferer lies thus, a priest passes by, but merely glances at the wounded man; and, as he does not wish to be put to the trouble and expense of helping him, he passes by on the other side. Then a Levite passes. Curious to know what has happened, he stops and looks at the sufferer; but he has no feeling of compassion to prompt him to help the dying man. He does not like the work, and, as he thinks it is no concern of his, he too passes by. Both these men were in sacred office, and claimed to know and to expound the Scriptures. They had been trained in the school of national bigotry, and had become selfish, narrow, and exclusive, and they felt no sympathy for anyone unless he was of the Jews. They look upon the wounded man, but cannot tell whether he is of their nation or not. He might be of the Samaritans—and they turn away. Had they not read of Job, who said, "The stranger did not lodge in the street; but I opened my doors to the traveler"? Had they not read of Lot, when the two angels came to Sodom, how he bowed himself to the ground, and said, "Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways"?

Jesus, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud and fire, had taught them a very different lesson from the lesson they had received from bigoted and exclusive teachers. The merciful Saviour of the Gospels was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; and, had they read the Scriptures correctly, and practiced the teaching he had given, they would have pursued a very different course of action from the one they did pursue. The weightier matters of the law were judgment, mercy, and love. The stranger was to be treated with kindness, and it was to be understood that strangers were under God's special protection. Directions had been given to Moses for the children of Israel to this effect: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help him." And was not a man better than an ox?

(Concluded next week.)

July 23, 1894

"This Do, and Thou Shalt Live"

(Concluded.)

In the parable Jesus presented a stranger, a neighbor, a brother in suffering, wounded and dying. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! But, though priests and scribes had read the law, they had not brought it into their practical life. They had read: "For The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward; he doth execute the judgment of the

fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” “And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.”

In speaking of the manner in which the priest and the Levite treated the wounded man, the lawyer had heard nothing out of harmony with his own ideas, nothing contrary to the forms and ceremonies that he had been taught were all the law required. But Jesus presented another scene: But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out twopence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.”

After Christ had shown up the cruelty and selfishness manifested by the representatives of the nation, he brought forward the Samaritan, who was despised, hated, and cursed by the Jews, and set him before them as one who possessed attributes of character far superior to those possessed by those who claimed exalted righteousness. The Samaritan manifested the pity and love that the priest and Levite gave no evidence of possessing. He gave a demonstration that he had a heart that could feel for suffering humanity, that he had nobility of soul to show mercy to one whom he knew not, that his love was of the right quality, flowing out in disinterested benevolence, and making him treat the wounded stranger as he would desire to be treated were he placed in similar circumstances.

Everyone who claims to be a child of God should note every detail of this lesson. The wounded and bruised sufferer was a man, and the Samaritan showed himself to be a man. He did not stop to consider whether or not this man would be pleasant or disagreeable, whether he was a Jew or a Gentile. He knew that he was in need of help from humanity. “Thy neighbor” does not mean one of the church or faith to which you belong. If our names are upon the church book, we should represent the mercy, compassion, and tenderness of Jesus Christ, with no thought as to race, color, or class distinction. The Samaritan realized that there was before him a human being in need and suffering, and as soon as he sees him, he has compassion upon him.

He takes off his own garment with which to cover his nakedness, and uses the oil and wine he has provided for his own comfort to heal and refresh the wounded man. He forgets that he may be in danger of similar treatment from robbers by tarrying in the place, and places the man on his beast, and moves slowly along, with even pace, so that the stranger may not be jarred and made to suffer increased pain. He brings him to a comfortable inn, takes care of him through the night, watching his case carefully, and in the morning, as the suffering has improved, he ventures to leave him to the care of the inn keeper. He hands him a sum of money, bidding him care for the stranger, and saying that if he spends more than he has provided, he will repay him on his return.

The Samaritan followed the impulse of a kind and loving heart. Christ so presented the scene that the most severe rebuke was placed upon the unfeeling actions of priest and Levite. But this lesson is

not only for them; but for Christians of this day, and is a solemn warning to us that for humanity's sake we may not fail to show mercy and pity to those who suffer. Like Judaism, Christianity has become perverted, and selfishness and cold formality have quenched the fire of love, and dispelled the graces that would make fragrant the character. Holding up before the lawyer the course of the Samaritan, Jesus said to him (for he was no pretender), "Go, and do thou likewise." There are many who are sentimental, and who are ready to weep over any tale of woe, but who do not manifest real love in doing for the needy those things that should be done. But those who have read this lesson, and have been benefited, will be able to distinguish real love from sentimentalism.

In the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus presented his own love and character. The life of Christ was filled with works of love toward the lost and erring. In the man bruised and wounded and stripped of his possessions, the sinner is represented. The human family, the lost race, is pictured in the sufferer, left naked, bleeding, and destitute. Jesus takes his own robe of righteousness to cover the soul, and whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. The Lord Jesus gives no encouragement to the idea that one is superior to another, and justifies no one in cherishing feelings of contempt or even indifference toward his fellow-men. The law of God is the standard to which all must attain, and sinful man can obey that law only by the merit and grace of Jesus Christ, who has died for his salvation.

July 30, 1894

Accountability of the Rich

There is a work that must be done for the wealthy, to arouse them to a realization of their relationship to men and their accountability to God. They must be awakened to the fact that they are to give an account to Him who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Those who are rich are put under responsibility to labor for others in the love and fear of God. But many of the rich trust in their riches, and do not realize the danger in which they are placed. God has something to give them of vastly more value than gold or silver or precious jewels. The soul needs to be attracted by the things that are of enduring value. They need to understand the value of true goodness. Jesus says unto them, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He asks them to exchange the yoke of their own manufacturing for his yoke, which is easy, and for his burden, which is light. He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He is calling: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out."

Those who will listen to the voice of Christ, will recognize the voice of superior goodness, the voice of the True Shepherd. Oh, that the wealthy might feel their responsibility to be faithful stewards of the means which God has intrusted to their care! Oh, that they might understand that they must be agents for God, if they would meet his approval! Oh, that they might know that they were standing upon holy ground, and might be distinguished workers, engaging with Christ in the grand work of elevating those whom Christ died to save!

The Lord has intrusted to human beings capabilities of talent and influence; he has intrusted to men an abundance of money, not to be lavishly spent in selfish ways, for the gratification of unholy desires, but for the performance of their part in the great work of redemption. He has intrusted riches to the wealthy in order that they may bless humanity, by relieving the wants of the suffering

and needy. This is the work that has been committed to them, and in doing this work they are not to feel that they have done some wonderful thing. Many endow some large institution, or give large sums to the church, and fail to relieve the distress of the suffering poor right about their doors. But the rich are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help those who are in trying circumstances, those who are wrestling with all their power to keep themselves and their families from the pauper's home.

God does not mean that the misery which we see about us in the poverty of the masses, shall exist. He does not intend that one shall have all the luxuries of life, and that others shall cry for bread. All the means intrusted to men over and above what is required to supply their own necessities, is intrusted to them for the blessing of humanity. If those whom God has made stewards, love God, they will love those who are formed in his image. Stewards of this character will not give with a patronizing air, as though they had done something for which they should be praised and honored; but they will realize that they are but trading on their Lord's goods, and that in the judgment they will have to give an account of the way in which they have employed their Lord's capital. They will understand that they are laborers together with God.

Jesus, the world's Redeemer, laid off his royal crown, laid aside his kingly robe, clothed his divinity with humanity, and left his high command. He was adored and worshiped by the angelic hosts, and yet for our sake he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. He came to give us, not the perishable treasure of houses and land and gold, but that which is enduring and imperishable, even eternal riches. Will men then refuse to be laborers together with God? Will they refuse to take their part in the work of redeeming lost humanity? In every large city there are men, women, and children who do not receive as much consideration as do the beasts. In England I saw poor children who were clad in dirty rags, who were half starved, whose countenances were stamped with vice and degradation. People live in damp, dark cellars reeking with filth, and children are born and brought up in these vile holes of misery. From earliest infancy through life, they see nothing but that which is unlovely, degraded, and vile. There is no view of nature's loveliness to attract the eye, and they hear the name of God only in oaths of horrible profanity. In places of this kind children are left to come up as they may. They are moulded and fashioned by the low precepts and wretched examples of those around them. Disagreeable surroundings greet their sight, impure words fall upon their ears, and the fumes of liquor and tobacco fill their atmosphere. Brought up in immoral degradation, it is no wonder that they turn out to be thieves, beggars, and murderers.

They subsist upon insufficient food, of a character unfit for the human stomach, and from these abodes of misery, piteous cries are sent up to heaven by those who know not how to pray. At the same time that this dreadful wretchedness is in existence, those to whom God has intrusted means are adding farm to farm, building house to house, and mansion to mansion, and even providing palaces for their dogs, and hiring servants to care for them. Dogs are fed and cared for in a luxurious way, while human beings are left in destitution, misery, crime, disease, and death.

Is it a wonder that our Lord exclaims, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God"? Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, became poor for our sake. He penetrated into the very inner circles of life. He sought to call the attention of men to the fact that, while they were devoting themselves to their busy activities, they were neglecting their eternal interests. He sought to impress upon them the fact that God had given them endowments of talent, means, and influence to be

improved and increased, that they might grow in efficiency, and be better able to be laborers together with God.

God has made human beings his almoners and agents, to distribute the benefits of his providence. They are to use wisely his intrusted talent of means, as well as the endowment of his grace in other directions. Men are required to engage with heavenly intelligences in restoring, reshaping the human character. The rich are to help the poor. It is not according to God's plan that the rich should give to the rich. It is the oppressed, the downtrodden, the discouraged, the hungry, the naked, the suffering poor, whom Jesus says "ye have always with you." We need to take closer views of eternity, and by doing this we shall not be unfitted for our work in this world; we shall not be disqualified for taking a Christlike part in the affairs of society.

The gospel of Christ is not only to be believed, but it is to be acted upon. We are to be doers of the word; and in doing or not doing according to the instruction of Christ, we are deciding our eternal destiny for life or death. God does not desire fitful service, emotional spasms of religion. We are to act from principle, to have a firm, abiding trust in Christ. If Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, it will be made manifest in the development of our character and actions; for there will appear the likeness of Christ in our life. We shall represent the Father and the Son to the world. The command is given, "Work while it is day; for the night cometh, in which no man can work."

Jesus calmly asks, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" If we employ these hours realizing our accountability to God, acting as serious, candid agents for God, keeping eternity in view, we shall live in such a way as to secure the eternal inheritance, and by our precept and example shall bring souls to Christ. But we have no time to devote to the indulgence of self in sin, no time for selfish pleasure seeking. Time is golden. We have characters to form for eternal life, and angels of God are watching what progress we are making. Angels are weighing moral worth. Oh, that we all might realize the value of time! A ruler exclaimed, when the physician told him that he could live but a few minutes, "A kingdom for an hour's time." He had been granted year after year. He had had twelve hours of the day. Was not the time granted him that he might secure his eternal interests? Now is the appointed time, now is the day of salvation. Oh, may none put off the day of repentance and reformation! Now is the accepted time.

Jesus Christ has engaged to save every soul who will believe in him as a personal Saviour. He has engaged us in his service, and has pointed out to us the work that he expects us to do. He has given us a glimpse of eternity, in order that we may realize that temporal things are of little moment beside that which is eternal. Something higher than the affairs of this life is to engage our attention, and call forth the energies of our being, that we may glorify our Redeemer. Christ calls upon us as human agents to cooperate with heavenly agencies in the work of saving the world. Not one is to feel that he can use his time as he chooses. Heavenly requirements are not to be ignored. It is the universal tendency of men to subordinate the eternal realities to temporal matters, to make the claims of the future, immortal life subservient to the commonplace affairs of this fleeting life. But the Lord has said: "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The god of this world claims the service of men, and seeks to keep them in continual slavery to his will. But Christ, the uplifted Saviour, calls to men in authoritative tones, saying, "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [of secondary importance] shall be added unto you."

August 6, 1894

The Ten Virgins

Seated upon the Mount of Olives, which was over against the temple, with his disciples around him, Jesus seeks to make clear in a prophetic discourse the deeper mysteries of the kingdom of God. Through his favorite medium, by parables, he endeavors to imprint upon their minds the special truths connected with his second coming to our world. The sun has set behind the mountains, and the heavens are curtained with the shades of evening. A dwelling house is lighted up brilliantly, as though for some festive scene. The lights shine from the open spaces, and an expectant company wait around, indicating that a marriage procession is soon to appear. In many parts of the East wedding festivities are held in the evening. The bridegroom goes forth to meet his bride, and bring her to his home. By torchlight he will bring her along the streets from her father's house to his own, where a supper is prepared for the guests invited to the wedding.

Lingering near the bride's house are ten young women, in attire suitable for the occasion. Ten was the usual number who were chosen as bridesmaids. Each of the bridal attendants has a lamp and a small vessel for oil. Their lamps are lighted, and as hour after hour of waiting goes by, they grow weary of watching, and, one after another, they fall asleep. About midnight the sleepers are awakened with the cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." They exchange their slumbers for life and activity. They spring to their feet. The wedding procession is in sight, with the brilliant torches shining, and they can hear the joyous music as they approach. The ten virgins seize their lamps, and begin to trim them to go forth; but five of the watchers have been wise and five foolish. Five have neglected to fill their vessels with oil. They have not expected the bridegroom to tarry so long, and have not prepared for the emergency. They are in distress, not because they see that their lamps are going out, but because they know that there is nothing in their vessels by which to replenish them. They address a piteous appeal to those who have provided themselves with oil; but they are denied, for the wise virgins have only enough to fill their own lamps, and they are bidden to hasten away and buy oil from the dealer. And while they are away on this errand, the bridegroom comes. The wise virgins, with lamps trimmed and burning, join the procession, and go in to the wedding, and the door is shut.

Soon after the door is shut, the foolish virgins come, knocking for admittance to the banquet hall, but they meet with an unexpected answer to their call. The Master of the feast says, "I know you not." There is no evidence given that the foolish virgins did obtain oil, but there is abundant evidence that they did not enter into the marriage feast, but were left standing outside in the empty streets in the blackness of the night.

Jesus used the parable of the ten virgins to represent the condition of the church before his coming, and the question that concerns each one of us is, Are we among the five wise or the five foolish virgins? Without going into the details of the parable, we may ask ourselves, What is our condition before God? Those that were wise went in to the wedding. We shall make it manifest what is our true condition by our conduct and conversation. Jesus has warned us as to what should be our

position at this time. He says, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

He who relaxes his vigilance because he knows not the day nor the hour when his Lord shall come, who becomes careless, and neglects to have his vessel filled with oil (the grace of Christ), will be found unprepared, and will not go in to the wedding. How solemn is the oft-repeated warning that our Lord has given to watch! He says, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." If a much-loved friend in the last hours of his association with us should give us counsel, warning, or instruction, how carefully would we treasure his words, how faithfully would we follow his instruction, and give attention to his cautions! Christ is our best Friend, for he has purchased us at infinite cost, and has made us his sons and daughters, and these soul-stirring words have been uttered by him for our benefit. Shall we not regard his claim upon us, and give him our service and our sympathy? If we do this, we shall not be neglectful of his warning, "Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at evening, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you [my disciples] I say unto all, Watch." "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."

Now is the time to look to it that we have on hand an abundant supply of the oil of the grace of Christ. It was the wisdom of the wise virgins in supplying themselves with oil that made the difference between their fate and that of the foolish virgins, who had neglected to keep oil in their vessels with their lamps. In the Scripture, oil is used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wise virgins are those who have faith and love and patience, whose experience day by day is nourished by the Holy Spirit. They do not conform to the world in careless inattention. They do not put off their daily preparation, but follow Jesus wherever he leads the way. God is not pleased with a flickering faith. It is compared to a lamp that is going out. He is pleased with those whose experience is like that of a lamp that is burning brightly. His followers are to shine as lights in the world. Christ's servants are to keep their lamps trimmed and burning, that they may add their light to the light of others who are following Christ. Those who are not daily desirous of gaining a living, daily experience in the things of God, will not meet his approval, but will be found with those whose lamps are going out, and will not be prepared to go in to the marriage supper of the Lamb. We cannot be ready to meet the Lord by waking up at the last minute, when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," gathering up our lamps, from which the oil has burned away, and thinking then to have them replenished. Our only hope is daily to love God, to love the truth, not for the sake of its clear arguments, but for truth's sake alone. We must bring the truth into our hearts and minds, and every day be living, shining lights, learning daily more and more of Jesus. Our conversation must be in heaven, from whence we look for our Lord Jesus Christ. We should talk much of his coming; then we shall be constantly receiving the grace which cometh from above, from the Source of all spiritual power.

The time is far spent. It is too late now to sleep the careless sleep of indifference. It is time now to rejoice greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice. It is time to sing of the marriage supper of the Lamb. The question for us to settle is, Which class shall we be among, the wise or the foolish? God help us to be among the wise. "Blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

"The watchmen on the mountains

Proclaim the Bridegroom near;

Go meet him as he cometh

With hallelujahs clear.

"The marriage feast is waiting;

The gates wide open stand;

Up, up, ye heirs of glory,

The Bridegroom is at hand."

August 13, 1894

A Solemn Lesson

The solemn fate of the five foolish virgins, presented in the parable of the ten virgins, is recorded to warn those who, while professing the faith of Christ, have become cold and backslidden.

The five foolish virgins represent the careless, indolent, self-satisfied professor of religion. They have a calm expectation of entering heaven sometime, yet they have not purified their souls by obeying the truth. They understand the theory of truth, but have no vital connection with God. They trust to feeling, and neglect to search the Scriptures. They are satisfied to walk in the sparks of their own kindling. We are all exhorted to be diligent, that we may make our calling and election sure. But I am greatly troubled, fearing, yes, knowing, that there are many who profess the truth who are not testing their lives and characters by God's great moral standard of righteousness. They are careless; they have not the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps. They are cherishing hidden sins, which no human eye can see. They know that they are not pure, and without spot, and should diligently seek God, that they may cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the sight of God.

There are many ideas in the world as to what is sin. The deist says that sin is dishonesty, a lack of patriotism, honor, and manliness. Those who have little idea as to what constitutes religion will tell you that sin is murder, adultery, robbery, and crime. But what does the word of God define it to be? John writes, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." Without the law we have no knowledge of what sin is. Those who have no respect for the law will be deceived by entertaining hopes of entering heaven.

But a knowledge of the law is not enough. He who accepts the law, who acknowledges the claims of the law, who yet feels satisfied with himself, and has no experience in being born again, will fail of keeping the law, and will come under its condemnation. God's law not only covers every deed of outward life, but also penetrates to the intents and purposes of the heart. The man who will meet Christ in peace will be the man who follows in his footsteps, who takes him for his example and righteousness. Jesus said, "I have kept my Father's commandments." He was perfect, pure, spotless.

His life was the embodiment of all that was noble and holy, and whoever obeys Christ, fulfills the law of God, meets every claim upon him, treats every being as the purchase of the blood of Christ.

He who does not yield to the claims of the law of God, sets himself above God, breaks away from God's rule of right, and becomes disloyal, as did the great deceiver in the beginning. Would that some who claim to be commandment keepers could see how their cases stand in the register above. Oh, that all who are falling short of the principles of righteousness might realize that they do not meet the broad, far-reaching claims of the law of God upon them! Repentance for sin is the first step in conversion. Repentance is an intense hatred of sin in all its forms. Phariseism permits of self-complacency, and those who are self-righteous, appear to have a form of piety, but at heart they are corrupt. They may talk of their hope of heaven, when, in fact, they have not taken the first step toward heaven.

We are not under a system of mere requirements, mere justice, and unsympathizing rigor. The penalty of transgressing the law has fallen upon our Substitute and Surety, and for a time has been suspended, so that the guilty do not feel its weight; but the object of this suspension is not to teach us that its claims are over, its exactions set aside, but to attract us to holiness, to obedience. Nothing is changed except the manner of bringing men to obey the law. Obey its claims we must. The first step toward obedience is repentance. We are to see the excellence of its requirements by beholding the wrong of disobedience.

He who is truly repentant, he who is regenerated, hates sin. All manner of selfishness is distressing to him. Indifference to God on the part of those around him grieves him. He is not led to exalt self in the performance of his duty, but abhors self. "I abhor myself" is the language of the godly of all ages, who have had a clear view of the purity and holiness of Christ. But those who are but superficial Christians seek to exalt self by depreciating others. The clearer the views of the character of Christ the more humble will be our views of self. Like Job, Isaiah, Daniel, David, and Paul, we shall feel that our comeliness is turned in us into corruption.

Those who are represented by the foolish virgins have not this sense of their own unworthiness. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. The same principles of truth are presented in the parable of the two builders,—one built upon the rock, and the other upon the sand. Jesus says: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

It is not a matter of little consequence to us as to how we hear and how we treat the truth of God. To misunderstand the truth, to fail to appreciate it, because we do not cherish light that comes to us, will tend to make us careless in our character building, and we shall have our foundation laid upon the sand. The wise builder builds upon the Rock Christ Jesus, no matter what may be the inconvenience. He builds not upon human but upon divine merit, accepting the righteousness of Christ as his own, and as his only hope of salvation. The foolish builder built upon the sand, and through his carelessness, or prejudice, or through the deceptions of the natural heart, he cherishes a

self-righteous spirit, and places human wisdom in the place where God's wisdom should have the supremacy; and how terrible are the consequences!

There are many unwise builders, and when the storm of temptation comes and beats upon them, it is made evident that their foundation is only sliding sand. They are left in gross darkness, without faith, without principles, and without foundation. The five foolish virgins had a real interest in the gospel. They knew what was the perfect standard of righteousness; but their energies were paralyzed with self-love; for they lived to please and glorify themselves, and had not the oil of grace in their vessels with which to replenish their lamps. They were often distressed by the enemy, who knew their weakness, and placed darkness before them in the semblance of light. Truth, precious, life-giving truth, represented as oil, appeared to them as unessential, and Satan took advantage of their blindness, ignorance, and weakness of faith, and they had a fluctuating experience, based on uncertain principles.

All who wait for the heavenly Bridegroom are represented in the parable as slumbering because their Lord delayed his coming; but the wise roused themselves at the message of his approach, and responded to the message, and their spiritual life was replenished. Their spiritual discernment was not all gone, and they sprang into line. As they took hold of the grace of Christ, their religious experience became vigorous and abundant, and their affections were set upon things above. They discerned where was the source of their supply, and appreciated the love that God had for them. They opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts. Their lights were trimmed and burning, and sent forth steady rays in to the moral darkness of the world. They glorified God, because they had the oil of grace in their hearts, and did the very work that their Master did before them,—went forth to seek and to save those who were lost.

August 20, 1894

The Bible to Be Understood by All

“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.” “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth upon him.”

By searching the Scriptures we are to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. The Bible has not been given for the benefit of ministers only; it is the book for the people; it is the comfort of the poor man. It is a great mistake for ministers to give the impression to the people that they should not read the Bible because they cannot understand its sacred teachings, and should be content with the interpretation given by those whose business it is to proclaim the word of God. Ministers who thus educate the people are themselves in error. The Bible and the soul were made one for the other, and through the agency of the word and the Holy Spirit, God moves upon the heart. To him who receives the love of the truth, the word of God is as a light that shineth in a dark place, pointing out the path so plainly that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein. He realizes that “the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

The uneducated man, in earnest desire of soul, may in his humility and simplicity reap from the Bible far greater consolation than the learned or more exalted and honored man. He may never be able to present to another the same evidences of the inspiration of the word that a learned man could, but he can bear in his life and character a testimony of strength, showing forth in his outward demeanor the evidence of the power of the truth. God means that the poor and uneducated should have his word as a sure light and guide in the path of righteousness. If they are sincere, and desire earnestly to know the will of God, they will not be left in darkness. It is the privilege of everyone to be wise for himself in reading the Scriptures. No man can safely trust his soul to the minister, or to men who are learned and talented. Jesus charged the priests and rulers, who were regarded as learned in the Scriptures, as being ignorant both of the Scriptures and the power of God. Those to whom God has intrusted talents are responsible for the use of their gifts, and should study the Bible as a book that may be understood. A single text has proved in the past, and will prove in the future, a savor of life unto life to many a soul. As men diligently search, the Bible will open out new treasures of truth, that will be as bright jewels to the mind.

If the poor and unlearned are not capable of understanding the Bible, then the mission of Christ to our world was useless; for he says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." The command to search the Scriptures, Christ addressed not only to the Pharisees and scribes, but to the great multitude of the common people who crowded about them. If the Bible is not to be understood by every class of people, whether they be rich or poor, what would be the need of the Saviour's charge to search the Scriptures? What profit would there be in searching that which could never be understood? What would be the consistency of this command, if the searching of the Scriptures would not dispel the clouds of error, and would not lead men to an understanding of the revealed will of God to man?

Let everyone who has been blessed with reasoning faculties take up the neglected Bible, and search the Scriptures, that he may understand what is the will of God concerning him. In this book heavenly information is given to men. The Bible has been addressed to everyone,—to every class of society, to those of every clime and age. The duty of every intelligent person is to search the Scriptures. Each one should know for himself the conditions upon which salvation is provided. Satan has interposed his shadow between your soul and the bright beams of light that shine from heaven to guide you to the portals of bliss. Through his confederacy of evil angels and evil men, Satan has wrought in such a way as to bury up the truth under the rubbish of human traditions, customs, and practices.

In Christ's day, as in our day, the people were looking to the educated men, to the scribes and Pharisees, to explain to them the meaning of that which the God of heaven had revealed. These teachers had departed from God, and were following their own understanding, and did not follow the ways of the Lord. They thought they must interpret the Scriptures in a way that would harmonize with their course of action. They were seeking the praise of men, and departing more and more from the plainly revealed way of the Lord, following the traditions of men's devising. Of them Christ declared, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The Pharisees and the religious teachers so misrepresented the character of God that it was necessary for Christ to come to the world to represent the Father. Through the subtlety of Satan,

men were led to charge upon God Satanic attributes; but the Saviour swept back the thick darkness which Satan had rolled before the throne of God in order that he might intercept the bright rays of mercy and love which came from God to man. Jesus Christ revealed the Father in his true character to the world, representing him as full of mercy, love, and light. Christ took upon him humanity in order that the light and radiance of divine love should not extinguish man. When Moses pleaded, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," he was placed in the cleft of the rock, and the Lord passed by before him. When Philip asked Christ to show them the Father, he said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He revealed the Father to Philip as he had revealed him to Moses when he passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Jesus proclaimed himself to the world as the perfect representation of the Father, and invited the love and confidence of the world to be centered in the Father. He said: "I am in the Father and the Father in me." "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.... Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake."

In plain language the Saviour taught the world that the tenderness, the compassion, and love that he manifested toward man, were the very attributes of his Fathers in heaven. Whatever doctrine of grace he presented, whatever promise of joy, whatever deed of love, whatever divine attraction he exhibited, had its source in the Father of all. In the person of Christ we behold the eternal God engaged in an enterprise of boundless mercy toward fallen man. Christ clothed his divinity with humanity, that his humanity might touch humanity, and divinity reach divinity.

August 27, 1894

The Christian's Faith Not to Be Prescribed By Men

Among the different denomination there seems to be a determination developing to bind the consciences of their members. They are building up barriers about their own sects, and forming a purpose to listen to nothing outside of their own doctrines. They are restricting themselves from hearing anything new, or any doctrine presented by any other people than those who belong to their own church. But it would be well for them to inquire from what origin this determination arises, and who has sent forth this order? Certainly the Lord has made no such restrictions, for he has his message, and his messengers are to go forth and present it to the people, in warnings, reproofs, and instruction in righteousness; and he has given the people directions as to what they shall do. The apostle says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

Ministers of popular churches are many of them softening down and diluting the plain word of truth. They are obscuring the light, and changing the message, in order to accommodate it to the prejudices, and adjust it to the opinions and habits, of the people. Thus they cater to the taste of the world-loving members of the church. But while they are so free to change the truth of God, on the other hand they advise their members to exercise the greatest caution lest they hear the message of God from the messengers he chooses to send to the people.

Oh, let there be no cautioning of the people on the danger of studying the word of God! Let there be no concealment of truth, no measures taken to evade or ignore truth. Let no one entertain the

erroneous idea that the people of this or that denomination are in need of no more light. Open the door of the heart, place yourselves in a position where you may catch new revelations of the character of God. Light comes from the very throne of God. When some familiar truth presents itself to your mind in a new aspect, when a text of Scripture suddenly bursts upon you with new meaning like a flash of light that scatters the mist, and you see the relation of other truths to some part of the plan of redemption, God is leading you, and a divine Teacher is at your side. Will you not then open the door of your heart to receive more and more of the heavenly illumination?

It is by contemplation of heavenly things that the soul is brought into fellowship and communion with the Spirit of God, and the soul that is teachable, that is continually seeking for fresh rays of light, will be blessed with brighter and brighter views of divine things. But there are many classes of religious teachers who seem to be determined to close every avenue whereby fresh rays of light from heaven may come to the people. They would bind the members of their churches by certain rules and regulations that forbid them to go to other places of worship, or listen to messengers outside of a certain class of teachers. In this way men and women are led to give up the liberty that God has ordained for them, and they fail to improve the mind and gather up the divine rays of light which emanate from sources outside their own church.

“Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.” We are God's property, and are to honor and glorify God. But we do not honor and glorify God when we become the servants of men, when we consent to have our liberty restricted by men or by councils of men. We have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, in order that we may be just and generous to our own souls. I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God, that you break every band that would restrict your liberty in Christ. God has light to impart to all his children that is of a more radiant character than any we have received, and you have no right to bind yourself in such a way as to shut yourself away from the light. You have no right to do after the inventions of any society of men, who would circumscribe the limit of your thought, and cause you to become a mere mechanical Christian.

You have many things to learn, and much to unlearn. You will have to sit at the feet of the great Teacher and learn of him concerning themes that are higher and nobler than the themes which now engage your attention. I am free to address you who have shut yourselves away from the light, because I know that a higher Teacher than man is calling you. You have lost much in your religious life, because you have failed to improve the opportunities that have been presented to you from the Father of lights. Fresh rays of light from heaven are always given that the character may be transformed, that the soul may be able to contemplate truth in a new relation. When Jesus is welcomed into the heart, he will refine and mould and fashion the character. Those who receive him more fully, will not have less energy in their religious life, but their religion will be of a higher, holier type than ever before. They will work in such a way that their usefulness will be increased. God would have his professed children reach a higher standard, and ever go on, still reaching up to that which they have not attained. They should cherish every divine inspiration, for as his property he requires this of them.

No man or woman is to bind himself in such a way as to become a slave of men in any way. No man or set of men have the right of laying out to others what they shall or shall not do in religious matters, or in any way prescribing their faith. A voice speaks to us to which we are bound to listen. It is the voice of Christ, who says, “Follow me.” He says, “He that followeth me shall not walk in

darkness, but shall have the light of life." The Christian is never to be tame and dull. Those who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ, will work in the Master's vineyard, and the heavenly fire of the soul will ever be kept burning. Our security is in Christ, in studying the guidebook he has given. Those who are studying the ways and methods of men and following their customs, are deceived if they think that they are following the directions of God in the matter.

Jesus says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The service of Jesus does not consist in outward show simply. It is not a matter of form and ceremonies, of parade, exclamation, gestures, noise, and a display of the commonplace passions. Pure religion consists in keeping the heart and mind in communion with the great Leader, Jesus Christ. It consists in having the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit. The indwelling Holy Spirit will give life and tone and style that will not be after the inventions of men, not in imitation of any earthly, human leader, but after the Pattern, Christ. Religion does not consist in playing upon words, in uncouth gestures; bodily exercise profiteth little in this matter. There is no divine eloquence in this kind of exercise.

The religion of Jesus Christ is ever to be distinguished from all other religions by its holiness of character. In true religion will be found great truths clearly defined in words, and inwrought in the life of its professors as a principle from the divine Author. In true religion the Holy Spirit will work in connection with human agents, confirming the truth of God. Every part of the service of Christ will be characterized by decorum and reverence. The truth of Christ cannot be confined to a certain range, yet it will be active to create for its environment, manners and habits and practices that will be in harmony with its Author. Everything will be done decently and in order. Wild methods and strange freaks and confusion are not authorized by the God of order. The methods employed by the church of Christ should be such as will win souls from allegiance to the prince of darkness, and cause them to take their stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel.

Some may say that these methods of reaching men will not avail to reach those who are poor and low down in the scale of humanity. But this matter must be regarded in an altogether different light by those who would be soldiers in the army of Christ. Do not cherish the error that you must follow after a pattern presented to you by some man. Study your Bible more, and let the habits and practices of men have less and less of your attention. Do not dishonor your God by thinking that it requires but little knowledge of what saith the Scriptures, to be a useful worker in his cause. You are to study the manner of the great Teacher, and keep his example ever before you. No human being is to be your Pattern. The Lord of heaven is to be the Teacher and Pattern for everyone who would win souls to God.

September 3, 1894

Try the Spirits

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

In this age of the world we see every grade and degree of skepticism. There are rank infidels, those who believe in the lying wonders of Spiritualism, and those who reject the claims of divine truth. All these are placed among the class that John has written of, and are controlled by the spirit of antichrist. Ignorance of the character of God, pride of understanding, and the love of sin, are the source of infidelity. Men deny the divinity of Christ, cast away the Bible, and thus seek to free themselves from personal accountability to God. They bring the Bible into conflict with "science, falsely so called." These doubters can start inquiries which the most humble and pious Christian would be perplexed to know how to answer. But because their queries cannot be answered, is no evidence that the Bible is not true. A little child has asked questions in regard to God, the soul, and the future, that the most learned could not answer. The truth of God's word will be revealed to those who are of a lowly heart, who will comprehend its duties and obey its precepts. It is pride of opinion that leads to skepticism, and to the denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Skepticism has its origin in love of sin, love of ambition, and self-exaltation.

Jesus, the world's Redeemer, is the channel through which all our blessings come, and those who refuse to acknowledge him as the divine Son of God, virtually say, "I will not have this man to rule over me." Those who are self-willed, puffed up with pride and self-importance, while they will not give up their wills to be in harmony with God's will, yet will accept the delusions of false prophets, and be led to refuse to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God. Skeptics and infidels may profess to be doing good work, but they are greatly deceived. They are trampling upon the blood of the covenant, and counting that which should have sanctified them as an unholy thing. There are many who have not taken the ground that infidels take, and yet they are in the first stages of infidelity. They question everything that is of a divine character, seeking to bring down everything to the level of that which is common and natural. Their minds are like a sponge, and absorb every suggestion of unbelief. They pass these suggestions to others, and thus sow the seeds of skepticism, and what they sow they will reap. When a believer seeks to answer one question started by a skeptic, he will propound another and another. The only way to do is to let skeptics alone until they truly desire light. Let those who engage in controversy with these wily opponents remember that they are not meeting men, not wrestling "against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The confederacy of evil is seeking to poison human minds with error, and obscure the light of truth.

Skeptics think that they can mingle their darkness with light, and thus confuse the believer in the Bible. It is not because they have so great a depth of reasoning that they do not believe, but because they are ignorant both of the Scriptures and power of God. The truth of God will be assailed by the cavils of infidelity. It is considered a special proof of intellectual greatness to be bold in denying the divinity of Christ; but this is not a proof of intellectual greatness, but is an evidence that the mind is bound about with earthliness so that it does not comprehend spiritual truth. God does not require men to believe the Scriptures without giving them abundant evidence of their truth, and the evidences of Christianity would overwhelm the most gifted man who diligently sought for truth, and was willing to consecrate himself to its promulgation. Those who do accept the evidences of God's word will have an experience that will be as a barrier against infidelity, for they will be translated out of darkness into the precious light of faith, hope, and assurance. The converted soul can say, I needed help, and I found that help in Jesus. He has met every want, satisfied the hungering of my soul, and the Bible to me is the revelation of Jesus Christ. He can say to the infidel, "You ask me why I believe in Jesus? and I answer, Because he is to me a divine Saviour. The Bible to me is the voice of

God. I have the witness in myself that the word of God is true, and that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God. I am following no cunningly devised fable.”

When men pour contempt upon Christianity, tell them what you know by experience. The beings of the celestial world are amazed when those whom Christ has purchased with his own blood, whom God has invited with the voice of mercy, turn into a jest the messages of the gospel, and deny the divinity of their Redeemer. They are building upon a sandy foundation, with threads and fragments of human reasoning, but their theories will vanish like dew when the glory of the Lord is revealed. Believers do not claim that every question and objection which Satan can invent and instill into the minds of men can be answered in so many words. Men will be given sufficient evidence on which to found their faith; but if they are determined to doubt, they will stumble on the dark mountains of unbelief. They will show that they have never submitted their proud hearts to Jesus Christ, and make an excuse for not doing so the fact that with their finite minds they cannot solve all the difficulties which they imagine are in the Bible.

Spiritualism is a dangerous phase of infidelity, and we should not go into the assemblies of Spiritualists prompted by motives of curiosity. In so doing we are placing ourselves on Satan's ground, and cannot expect help from God unless he has a work for us to do to speak some message to those who are ignorant and deceived, and immediately leave the assembly. “They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” The erroneous doctrine that the soul is immortal is almost universally received by the world, and the belief that the dead go immediately to heaven gives Spiritualism a deep hold upon the people. Believing this doctrine men have nothing with which to shield themselves from the errors of Spiritualism. Through evil spirits they receive communications, and accept them as messages from their lost loved ones. Satan and his agents personate their dead friends, and thus impart to them Satanic delusions. But God has given us a rule whereby to test what is truth. The prophet says: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” “He that is of God heareth God's word.” “We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.[”] “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

September 10, 1894

Parents and Children to Be Agents for God

The father is priest in his own household. Whatever may be the character of his business, it is not of so great importance that he be excused in neglecting the work of educating and training his children to keep the way of the Lord. In the morning his first duty should be to conduct family prayer, offering up supplication and thanksgiving to God. Parents should make the seasons of prayer as interesting as possible, selecting scriptures that can be understood by the children and youth. They

should pray with fervency, but not to such a length as to make the seasons of prayer tedious. Educate your children by your own practice to pray in a clear, distinct voice, lifting up their faces, and offering up their simple petitions, or repeating the Lord's prayer.

The religious service of the home should not be governed by circumstances. Prayer should not be offered occasionally, and, when a large day's work is to be done, neglected, as though it was of no especial consequence. Prayer means very much, and we should come to God offering up thanksgiving before him. "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.... O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

The Lord has committed to parents a special and important work, of which they have a very faint realization. At the birth of every child they are to hear the voice of God saying to them, "Take this child and train it for me." This work of training is to be continued through babyhood, childhood, and youth. Those who are parents need to awake from their deathlike slumber, that they may have a realization of what are their God-given responsibilities. Let them make straight paths for their feet upward and onward toward heaven, and lead their children in safe paths. To a great extent the simplicity of pure godliness is a matter of the past.

To train children to walk in the narrow path of purity and holiness is thought an altogether odd and old-fashioned idea. This is prevalent even among parents who profess to worship God, but their works testify that they are worshipers of mammon. They are ambitious to compete with their neighbors, and to compare favorably, in the dress of themselves and their children, with the members of the church to which they belong.

Children derive life and being from their parents, and yet it is through the creative power of God that your children have life, for God is the Life-giver. Let it be remembered that children are not to be treated as though they were our own personal property. Children are the heritage of the Lord, and the plan of redemption includes their salvation as well as ours. They have been intrusted to parents in order that they might be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that they might be qualified to do their work in time and eternity. If parents are negligent in doing the solemn work committed to them, they will have to meet their account at the judgment seat of Christ.

Parents, you cannot serve God and serve Baal at the same time. The standard of the world is not to be your standard. The world is under the leadership of the prince of the powers of darkness, and you cannot afford to follow its fashions and customs. Your duty is to practice God's word, and do the work that he has given you to do according to his will. God will cooperate with parents who love, fear, and honor him, respecting and obeying his commandments. Is it any marvel that society is forgetful of God, and desires not to know the way of God, when professed Christians to a large extent follow the imagination of their own heart? They are filled with vanity, and educate their children for the world. Influenced themselves by Satanic agencies, what can be expected of their children? They inspire them with their own spirit, with their own desire to be in favor with the world. They partake with the world in love for pleasure, in desire for the gratification of pride, and the desire for display. In place of being partakers of the divine nature, they imbibe Satan's deceptions and illusions. Thus their influence in the home is to mould the character of their children

after the standard of the world. Though they have a form of godliness, yet their influence is wielded for the ruin of their family.

What an account will such professed Christian parents have to render in that great day when every case shall be decided! These world-loving parents profess Christ, and have their names registered in the church books, but in works they deny him. Shall not parents who truly desire to love God be partakers of the divine nature? Shall they not exert in the home an influence altogether different from that of these hypocritical professors? Shall not the love of Christ be in them as a well of water springing up unto eternal life? Shall it not be made manifest that Christ abides in the soul temple by the spirit, word, and action of the parents who realize their responsibility before God? Shall they not pour into the minds of their children that which the Lord Jesus has abundantly given them of his Holy Spirit? Shall not his love, his purity, his patience, his meekness and lowliness of heart, his perseverance, integrity, and zeal be made manifest in the character of godly parents?

The Word of God

Let parents seek to mould and fashion the intellect and affections of their children in accordance with the word of God. Let them train them in such a way that their children shall be fashioned after the similitude of Jesus Christ. Here is your work, parents, to develop the characters of your children in harmony with the precepts of the word of God. This work should come first, for eternal interests are here involved. The character building of your children is of more importance than the cultivation of your farms, more essential than the building of houses to live in, or of prosecuting any manner of business or trade. Parents should carefully study their children, in order that they may correct wrong tendencies and encourage from their earliest years right principles and proper habits. The doing of this will not require any violence or harshness in your management, but you may manifest an abundance of love. Selfishness and self-indulgence must be cultivated out of the character of your children, by revealing to them Bible requirements in the most interesting way. Unite them with yourselves in works of kindness and tender regard for the suffering and destitute. From their earliest years let them be your helpers in benevolent enterprises, and educate them in habits of self-denial and self-sacrifice for the good of others. Thus you will guard them from habits of extravagance in recklessly spending money for selfish gratification.

The work that rests upon parents cannot be evaded or ignored without peril to themselves and their children. Parents should bring principles of truth into their own life, and perfect a Christian character in order that they may present before their children such an example as will command their respect and admiration. Let parents so live that their children will have confidence in their judgment, piety, and devotion. In this way they may train their children to be missionaries from their earliest years. They may be taught to have firm reliance upon God, and may be trained by precept and example to fear to offend their Creator, to love to keep his commandments. Children should be trained to trust in God as their very best friend.

Let parents seek to impress upon children and youth the blessedness of serving God. The Psalmist says: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments."

The Importance of the Work

The word of God abounds in precious jewels of truth, and parents should bring them forth from their casket and present them before their children in their true luster. Parents, you think you have no time to do all this work; but if you do not train your family, Satan will supply your deficiency and educate them after his own Satanic order. Better to neglect anything of a temporal nature, to be satisfied to live economically, to bind about your wants, than to neglect the work of training yourselves and your children in the way that God would have you. In the word of God you have a treasure house from which you may draw precious stores, and as Christians you should furnish yourself for every good work. Look upon the family circle as a training school, where you are preparing your children for the performance of their duties at home, in society, and in the church. Seek to cultivate every power of mind and body in order that the whole family may be soldiers for Christ. Teach your children to love truth because it is truth, and because they are to be sanctified through the truth, and fitted to stand in the grand review that shall ere long determine whether they are qualified to enter into higher work, and become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.

Fathers and mothers, awake to your God-given responsibilities. Let your lamp be trimmed and burning, sending forth clear, distinct rays into the home circle, and your light will reach beyond yourselves to your neighbors. The father represents the divine Lawgiver in his family. He is a laborer together with God, carrying out the gracious designs of God, and establishing in his children upright principles, enabling them to form pure and virtuous characters, because he has preoccupied the soul with that which will enable his children to render obedience not only to their earthly parent, but also to their heavenly Father. Like Abraham, he will command his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. To do the words of God means to work earnestly in the home. But parents who are doers of the commands of Christ will find that the beams of the Sun of Righteousness will brighten the darkness, and the love of Christ make smooth the rough paths.

Our world is becoming as it was in the days of Noah. Parents have neglected to purify and make precious the material that God has given them in their children, and, instead of adding them to the army of the Lord, they have given them to the world. In neglecting to train them for Christ, children have developed characters after the order of Satan. The Lord will cleanse the earth the second time of its moral pollution by the fires of the last day. Parents, will you not cherish the faith that works by love and purifies the soul? If you do this, everything is gained. Your children will be imbued with the spirit you cherish, and a light will shine forth extending from the home like a genial atmosphere. Your influence will be like a heavenly radiance that shines from the throne of God in clear, strong rays, to light the moral darkness that pervades the world.

September 17, 1894

Parents and Children to Be Agents for God—No. 2

The Lord God of heaven has never left the world without a witness. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Sadness comes to my soul as I consider how abundant have been the resources that have been open to the church, and yet how tardy has been the appropriation of the light of heaven, how feeble

have been the rays that have shone forth into the world. God has appointed to the church a sacred mission. He has said, "Ye are the light of the world." The light of the church has grown dim as the moral darkness of this degenerate age has increased. The people of God should increase in light and power. It is something more than a profession that distinguishes the children of obedience from the children of disobedience. The children of God should manifest genuine piety, Christian zeal, earnest self-denial and self-sacrifice. They should wage aggressive warfare in proportion to their opportunities and privileges.

The church should realize that infinite resources are at her command. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" The church must be as was Abraham, who "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able also to perform. And therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

As living agencies we are to enter into a moral cooperation with God. The weakest, feeblest child of God has his or her appointed work, and it is because there is so large a number who are not doers of the word of Christ, but hearers only, that there is not greater progress and growth in the church. Many do little except to study their own pleasure and convenience, to gratify their own likes and dislikes; yet, according to the several ability, everyone has a certain work to do. Many do not lay hold of the work they could do, because it does not please their taste, and so they do nothing. There are duties that look commonplace and cheap to them, which lie directly in their pathway; but, because they are not inviting, they do not take them up. If they loved God supremely, and their neighbors as themselves, they would take up these little duties, which God designed should test their fidelity. They would keep their souls in the love of God by seeking out their friends, and would devise some plan whereby they might reach their hearts. With an eye single to the glory of God, they would seize the opportunities which are brought within their reach, and be instant in season and out of season. They would seek on every occasion to do good to those who need help. Satan will seek to blind the eyes of the understanding, so that we shall not take up the responsibilities that lie in our pathway, and be faithful in the little services which God has enjoined upon us. The faithful child of God, though he may have been apparently one of the weakest, has wrought much good by humble service.

For a period of time the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, was only a Babe in Bethlehem, and could only represent the babe in its mother's arms. In childhood he could only do the work of an obedient child, fulfilling the wishes of his parents, in doing such duties as would correspond to his ability as a child. This is all that children can do, and they should be so educated and instructed that they may follow Christ's example. Christ acted in a manner that blessed the household in which he was found, for he was subject to his parents, and thus did missionary work in his home life. It is written, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

It is a sad thing when parents grow cold in their spiritual life, and, because of waning piety and want of devotion to God, they do not realize the high responsibility that devolves upon them to patiently and thoroughly train their children to keep the way of the Lord. Parents should not permit business cares, worldly customs and maxims, and fashion to have a controlling power over them, so that they neglect their children in babyhood, and fail to give their children proper instruction as they increase in years. Children need to be trained to do useful things, and their duties should be made as pleasant as possible. Parents should give them pleasant words of instruction and approval in useful work, but they could not do a worse evil to their children than to gratify their selfish desires, and leave them to follow their inclinations, thus giving them the impression that they are to live to please and amuse themselves. They should not be left to choose their own society, and be given money to spend according to their youthful wisdom. Children need parents who shall educate and discipline them, pruning away the natural and selfish tendencies. Children need parents who do not feel they have the right to govern their children by impulse and passion. Children are the heritage of the Lord, and unless parents give them such a training as will enable them to keep the way of the Lord, they neglect solemn duty. It is not the will or purpose of God that children shall become coarse, rough, uncourteous, disobedient, unthankful, unholy, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. The Scriptures state that this condition of society shall be a sign of the last days.

We need in our churches children and youth who are trained to work upon the "Christian Endeavor" principle. The beginning must be made at home. Parents, who are the responsible agencies in the home life, should set their children a godly example, learning daily lessons of duty and obedience to God's requirements. They should themselves become missionaries. They should consecrate themselves entirely to God, remembering that the greatest work that devolves upon them is to train their children to be Christlike, faithful soldiers. This should be the essential work of their life, and, by training their children, they will be constantly repeating the lessons they have learned in their youth, and thus the wise, God-fearing parents will diffuse an influence from their own home circle to that of others that will act as did the leaven that was hid in three measures of meal. Home missionary work is the highest service that parents can render to God.

Parents should let nothing interfere with the character building of their children. Those who have been training their children in an improper way need not despair; let them become converted to God, and seek for the true spirit of obedience, and they will be enabled to make decided reforms. In conforming your own customs to the saving principles of God's holy law, you will have an influence upon your children. You will have the righteousness of Christ, and will obey the precepts of God's law, and recognize the spirit of the law as an expression of the character of God. It is of the greatest importance that the attributes of his character be brought into your character, that you may train and educate your children to be obedient to God's commandments, and thus secure happiness in this world, and life eternal in the world to come.

In educating your children, you should rely upon a "Thus saith the Lord." Let them never hear an irreverent expression from your lips, nor catch the sound of a harsh, passionate word. Be what you wish your children to be. Parents have perpetuated by precept and example their own stamp of character to their posterity. The fitful, coarse, uncourteous tempers and words are impressed upon children, and children's children, and thus the defects in the management of parents testify against them from generation to generation. This is the reason that iniquity abounds, the reason that many will have to meet a terrible account in the day of judgment. Let there be most deep and thorough

repentance before God. Seek God for grace, for spiritual discernment to discover the defects in your management of your children and exercise repentance toward God for your neglected work as home missionaries.

September 24, 1894

Tested by the Law

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” Lucifer disputed the justice of this requirement in heaven, and thought its existence altogether unnecessary. He said in his heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.” He had been made beautiful, he had been highly exalted in heaven, and his heart was lifted up because of his beauty; he had corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness. Of him it had been said:

“Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold.... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.” “Thus saith the Lord God: Because thine heart was lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God.... I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.... I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.”

Under the symbol of the king of Tyrus, the Scriptures give us a description of the character and destiny of the first great rebel against the law of God. He who knows the end from the beginning, had his laws and commandments before the world was created, and Satan chose to question his claims before the angels of heaven, because the law set forth the Omnipotent as the only true and living God, and forbade the worship of any other being. The authority of God was backed up by the requirements of his law, which was to hold jurisdiction over all created intelligences. The will of God was to be recognized in his requirements and acknowledged as supreme in the heavenly universe.

It is the prerogative of God alone to prescribe the duty of men and angels. The will of God is a perfect will, and must be obeyed as it is set forth in his holy law, because every requirement is just, and is set forth by infinite wisdom. The law of God should be obeyed even though there were no authority to enforce it, and no rewards for its obedience. The highest interests of men and angels are conserved in obeying the law of God. God's will expressed in his law is the supreme will, and no invention, no device of men can take its place. Obedience to the commandments of men instead of to the commandments of God will be as abomination in the sight of God; for what God requires is essential to the highest good of his subjects, and is therefore essential for the glory of God.

Through the obedience of his commandments it is the purpose of God to remove from the heart every species of selfishness. He would barricade the soul from all indulgence in perverted appetites,

and expel from the heart all rebellion and ingratitude. Can it be possible that any of us should wish that God would abolish his commandments, when it is for our happiness and life to obey them? What blessing or advantage would man gain by doing away with the commandments of God? Were he to abolish the first commandment, the authority of God would not stand as supreme, as the authority of the only true and living God. What advantage would accrue to man should he gain reputation, learning, wealth, and honor, and yet be one who, while receiving benefits from God every hour, ignored God, and did not conform his practical life to the precepts of Jehovah? Knowledge, power, education, reputation, or wealth is not to be permitted to come in between the soul and God. The Lord must hold the first place in our affections; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God gave his Son to the world in order that men might be redeemed from transgression and sin.

Through faith in Christ as our personal Saviour, we receive moral power by which we may surrender every faculty to the service of God. With a full sense of our obligation to God, we may devote every intrusted ability to the service of Christ, and bring every power under the control of the will of God. In doing the will of God we are assured of developing characters after the divine similitude.

Religion is a practical matter, and calls for a daily devoting of all we have and are to God. All worldly business is to be done as a part of religion, and is to redound to the honor and glory of God. Every amusement is to be considered in this light, and it is to be regarded as injurious or useful only as it respects the glory of God. If those who would indulge in amusements can find commands whereby they may be justified in them as doing the will of God, they will be justified in believing that they are promoting the glory of God and the good of society. We are required to render perfect obedience to the rule laid down by the apostle, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." He who ever keeps this rule in view, and lives according to its requirement, will form a character after the divine likeness; for in this way men will become holy, blameless, and without rebuke.

We are living under the scrutiny of the whole heavenly host, and the angels are watching to see whether we improve the opportunity to do good unto all men, and especially unto those that are of the household of faith. To love God supremely and to love our neighbor as ourselves, will require from us to be continually in the spirit of humble prayer, relying alone upon God for our sufficiency. The only character that is of value in the sight of God is that character which is free from every taint of selfishness. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Selfish living, indulgence in self gratification, will bring no true happiness in this life, and give no hope of a future, immortal life. But to him who by patient continuance in well-doing, seeks for glory, honor, and immortality, God will render eternal life.

Faith does not make void the law, and though there are persons who insist that through faith in Christ they are freed from obligation to keep the law, yet the teaching of prophets and apostles contradicts their position. "Faith without works [obedience] is dead." Men's characters are estimated according to their works. James says, "Show me thy faith without thy works [if it were possible], and I will show thee my faith by my works." Faith in the great plan of redemption without corresponding works is not reckoned as faith. Christ our Redeemer did not suffer the penalty of the law for our sins in order to deliver us from obligation to keep God's commandments. Christ suffered

the penalty of the law, which was death, in order to give to man another trial, to provide for him another probation, and allot to him another opportunity of proving loyal to the authority of God. Every soul is to be tested, for he is held responsible for obedience to the divine law, and, although Christ has died for man's transgression, those who continue in disobedience will suffer the penalty of their sin. The condition upon which men will be offered the benefits of salvation is through repentance toward God, because of transgression of his holy law, faith in Christ, by which he receives power from on high to become an obedient subject of the government of God. Those who would be saved must take Christ as their personal Saviour, and become not only hearers, but doers of his words. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

October 1, 1894

What Manner of Persons Ought Ye to Be?

God is the Governor of the universe. He has put everything under law. Everything in the natural world is under law, from the tiniest flower of the garden to the mighty cedars of Lebanon. The beasts of the fields obey God's law. The ocean obeys his mandate, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." When God speaks to man, his voice is to be heard, and his word is to be obeyed. Man is an intelligent being, and has a mind by which to understand God's will, and a conscience by which to feel his accountability. He has a heart with which to love the law of God, which is holy and just and good. But God compels no man to do him honor, and to render obedience to his law. Compulsion is the work of Satan and his agents.

As intelligent creatures we may know and do the will of God, or we may stubbornly refuse to submit our finite will to the will of the Infinite. This responsibility that is placed upon us should fill us with a sense of awe. The requirement of God to us is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." On these two principles hang all the law and the prophets; and it is for our present and eternal interest to have a proper understanding of the far-reaching principles of the law of God. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," and "sin is the transgression of the law." Sinners must know what is sin before they can have a desire to be rid of sin. It is a matter of eternal interest that we do not misconceive this vital question. When appeals are made in the pulpits of our land, and sinners are invited to repent and to be converted, it is the privilege of the sinner to inquire, What is sin? This we must know, for it is at the peril of our souls that we continue in sin. The apostle gives us light on this subject, and says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law."

Christ was manifested to take away our sins, and in him was no sin. But were the law abolished, as some claim, we would have no need of a Saviour to take away sin, for "where there is no law, there is no transgression." "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came [home to the conscience], sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which [if obeyed] was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment,

deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is [a yoke of bondage, against me, and something to be trampled underfoot because it points out my sins?—No.] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

But though we are carnal, we are to reckon ourselves “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.... But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.... But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning.”

In order that there might be no mistake, and no excuse for disobedience, the apostle makes it very plain as to what commandments are to be regarded,—“an old commandment which ye had from the beginning.” In this reference to the law of Jehovah he carries the mind back to the commandment which is a memorial of the creation of the world, when by his work on the six days, and his rest on the seventh, God laid the foundation for the Sabbath. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, God placed the fourth commandment in the bosom of the Decalogue. In this commandment a special charge is given to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” Then follow the reasons for this special charge: “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

In the fourth commandment we have the fact set forth that the Maker of heaven and earth is the true God. “But the world in its wisdom knew not God.” There is much wisdom in our world, but men, proud in their knowledge, do not employ their wisdom as did Daniel. They do not behold the beauty, the majesty, the justice, the goodness of God. They do not see the wisdom and holiness of his truth in his law, which is the transcript of his character.

If those who believed in God during the old dispensation were enjoined to arise and shine, how much greater is the obligation today to arise and shine, when our light is brighter, and shines with clearer and more steady rays. Our obligation to shed forth light is as much greater than was the obligation of the people of ancient times, as our light is more clear and definite. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The disciples of Christ are to make him known to the world. We have reasoning faculties, and as our capacity increases as we improve upon the talents that God has given us, we should gather up the divine rays of light that

patriarchs, prophets, and apostles have left to us as hereditary trusts, and should still continue to seek for truth as for hidden treasure. We are called upon of God to let the light which he has given us shine forth in clear and steady rays. Everyone who believes in Christ as the light of the world is to be as a lighthouse on a dangerous coast, sending forth bright rays of light to warn souls, lest they make shipwreck of faith. But instead of thus shining, there are thousands who are living a godless, Christless, worldly life, whose names are registered upon the church books as Christians. They believe about Christ, but they do not believe in him.

He who obeys the law through the imputed righteousness of Christ, meets every claim that the Bible presents; but he who sets himself above God, and tramples upon his law, and still professes to be a child of God, is working on the enemy's side of the controversy. In our day, even from the pulpits of our land, professed ministers of the gospel are, as were the Pharisees, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The only safety for the soul at this time is to inquire at every step, What saith the Lord to his servant? The word of the Lord endureth forever. The Bible is to be our guidebook, and instead of consulting the wisdom of men, and accepting as divine truth the assertions of finite mortals, we should search the sure word of prophecy. God has spoken, and his word is reliable, and we must rest our faith upon a "Thus saith the Lord." God would have us study the events that are taking place around us, and compare them with the predictions of his word, in order that we may understand that we are living in the last days. We want our Bibles, and we want to know what is written therein. The diligent student of prophecy will be rewarded with clear revelations of truth, for Jesus said, "Thy word is truth."

Those who profess to be followers of Christ will be found guilty before God unless they are laborers together with God, and earnestly seek to lift up their fellow-men. Prophecy is rapidly fulfilling; and all men are ranging under their chosen standards. One class are preparing to be used of the Holy Spirit, and another class are ranging under the black banner of the prince of evil. This class have no love for either God or their fellow-men, and Satan uses them as vessels to honor himself. The very atmosphere of our world is tainted with physical and spiritual miasma. The principles of truth are corrupted. God has been dishonored, his law has been transgressed, and the earth has become defiled under the inhabitants thereof, and the vials of the wrath of God will be poured out upon the world.

Calamities by land and sea, by fire and flood, by pestilence and famine, by horrible accidents, by earthquakes in divers places, all testify in unmistakable language that the end of all things is at hand, and that great Babylon is coming into remembrance before God. The Lord is even at the door, and men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which shall come upon the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. But there is a defense for those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The prophet declares, "Thy righteousness shall go before thee." Whose righteousness?—The righteousness of Christ. And he continues, "The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for

and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

October 8, 1894

Man's Relation to the Law

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Before man was created, the heavenly intelligences were governed by the principles of the law of God. When man was created, God gave to Adam and Eve a knowledge of his ten precepts. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, God laid the foundation for marriage and for the Sabbath institution. In their happy innocence, the Lord placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and gave them employment in dressing and keeping the garden which he had made for them. In activity of body and mind they had the means of obtaining good, and of glorifying their Heavenly Father. Like the angels of God, who are ever engaged in doing good, in carrying out God's commands, man was ever to engage in earnest work.

Adam and Eve were placed upon trial, that it might be demonstrated as to whether they would obey the word of their Creator, or disobey his requirements. The Creator of man was his Father, and had an entire right to the service he could render. Body, soul, and spirit, man was the sole property of God. God revealed himself to the innocent pair in Eden, and conversed with them freely. God was their teacher, and instructed them in regard to their work. He made it plain to them that by obedience to his holy law they would retain happiness, and finally be blessed with immortality. Eternal life should be theirs if they regulated their conduct according to the principles of the law of God. Man was not left in uncertainty to suppose as to what course he should pursue, or to take any risk by venturing on some line of conduct which he might think a safe course. As children are educated by faithful parents, so Adam and Eve were instructed as to what was required of them as intelligent creatures of God. Every provision was made whereby blessings might be secured to the human race, and but one mild restriction was placed upon the sinless pair to test their loyalty to God.

The Lord had said unto them, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In every matter God was to be obeyed; but the test of man's obedience in everything was to be found in his faithfulness in carrying out one particular command, in abstaining from taking of the forbidden tree. The result of obedience would be eternal life, and the outworking of disobedience would be death. Adam and Eve were tempted of Satan. The tempter came to them, saying: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." They believed the words of the serpent, that were in contradiction to the words of God, their Maker. Falsehood was taken instead of truth, and the flood gates of woe were opened upon our world.

It was as Eve was standing near the forbidden tree that Satan gave utterance to the query of her mind, and thus the controversy on earth was begun. For when she saw that the tree was "good for

food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Satan presented to man the bribe of attaining to a higher position, of gaining knowledge and wisdom beyond that with which their Creator had endowed them, through an act of disobedience to his divine will. Satan had lost his derived power and glory, had lost heaven through pride and ambition, for he thought to place his throne above the stars of God, and to be like the Most High; and now, at a favorable opportunity, he presents the temptation which had originated with himself, in order to lead the creatures of God to doubt divine wisdom, and to cast reflection upon divine providences. Satan did not scruple at deception in order to gain his purpose and bring shadow over the life and character of the holy pair, to cause sorrow and grief in heaven, and to thwart the purpose of God in the creation of man. Pretending to be the friend of man, he placed himself as the enemy of God, and used all his power to prove that Jehovah had made a mistake in instituting the law to regulate the conduct of his creatures. But in casting contempt upon the law of God he was only seeking to further his hellish design of bringing the human race under his own control.

After Satan had induced man to sin against God, he claimed that man had chosen him as his leader in the place of God, and that his work from henceforth should be to unite with him in making void the law of Jehovah. It was his work now to enlist the beings whom God had created, to be the agents of Satan, and to cooperate with him in obliterating the moral image of God from the soul. Through all the ages he has worked upon the same principles that he worked upon in causing the fall of man. He presented the restriction of God in such a way to the mind of Eve as to create jealousy, and said to her, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan cast reflections upon the character of God, representing him as selfish and oppressive.

Our first parents were without an experience for themselves; but, had they lived by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, they would not have disobeyed their Creator. The terrible and tremendous effects of their disobedience opened their eyes. They discerned that the holy covering of light that God had provided for them had departed from them, and that they were naked. Oh, if they had but heeded the instruction that God had given them,—to call upon him when they were threatened with evil from the fallen foe,—they would have had the presence of angels to shield them in the hour of temptation, and the fascinating charm of Satan would have been broken! But they did not look for the fallen foe to come to them with soft words and fair speeches, as a friend who would give them information fraught with weighty importance to them. Had Satan come to them with rough words, charging God with dishonesty, accusing him of being overbearing, and of giving them commandments that would require the degradation of their independence, they would have understood his attack; but in flattering their pride, in presenting to them a prospect of exaltation, he caused them to forget God, and sin entered into the world. The beings that God had created placed themselves on the enemy's side. The human family was lost.

Will God abolish his law because Adam sinned? Had he done this, he would have immortalized sin, which is the transgression of his law. No, this would have been impossible. Wherever there is a kingdom there must be statutes and laws, and the law of God is the transcript of his character. But provisions had been made in the counsels of the Father and the Son to meet this emergency. It had been provided that, should Adam fall a prey to the tempter's power, a ransom should be found in the Son of God, who should become man's Redeemer. An opportunity should be given to man to

repent of his sin, and, through faith in Christ as his personal Saviour, to be restored to the divine image and favor. After the fall, the Lord said unto the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The controversy was to wage between Christ and Satan throughout all time. The costly ransom that was provided reveals the value that God set upon man. Christ volunteered to become man's surety and substitute, and took upon himself the penalty of transgression, in order that a way might be provided whereby every son and daughter of Adam may, through faith in their Redeemer, cooperate with heavenly intelligences, and oppose the workings of Satan, and thus bring in everlasting righteousness. The Lord Jesus would take man into partnership with himself. Human intelligences have been endowed by their Creator with capabilities and powers, which, if surrendered to God, will promote his glory in building up his kingdom in the earth. Human beings can reach human beings through the imparted gift of the Spirit of God. Through faith man accepts the world's Redeemer as his Captain, and when standing under his blood-stained banner, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, and in cooperation with God is to act an important part in revealing the glory of God to a world in the darkness of transgression. Unless man shall fully cooperate with Christ in the work of rescuing souls from evil, the plan of salvation can never be carried out. But through the scheme of redemption, notwithstanding the opposition of Satan's united agencies, the Lord will bring good out of the evil that Satan designed should exist. The counsels of God will stand before unfallen worlds, before heavenly intelligences, before the fallen world, and he will accomplish all the good pleasure of his will.

Man has the honor of being taken into partnership with God, and the secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him. God will give light and knowledge, so that, by conforming to his directions, man may become one with Jesus Christ; and the Father will love him who is conformed to his law, as he loves his only-begotten Son. Satan has laid his plans for the purpose of divorcing man from God, and causing him to break God's holy law. He has come to man in our day as he came to Adam in Eden, and through his agents is saying today that the law is not binding on man, but that it is abolished. Those to whom God has given reasoning powers should use them to better advantage than did Adam when he transgressed the law of God. We have the example of Adam before us to warn us from treading on the dangerous ground upon which Adam fell. Adam accepted the false suggestions and the foul misrepresentations concerning God, rather than a plain "Thus saith the Lord." Let not the presumptuous assertions and claims of men be reiterated as the voice of God. Let those who would serve God remember that it is written, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

October 15, 1894

Consider the Moral Code

"I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts. I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." The commandments of God are not a yoke of bondage, and in obedience to them we have nothing of which to be ashamed. We should not feel that we are severely restricted in being required to

keep God's law. The Lord withholds from us nothing which is for our good. We should be ashamed of disobedience to his precepts.

There are men who profess to open the Scriptures to others, and who claim to be ministers of the gospel, who yet place stumbling-blocks in the way of those who are seeking for safe paths. But let the sincere seeker for truth look to the Author of truth, and not to the would-be instructor who knows not the way of light. Go to the Fountain of knowledge, and become acquainted with what saith the Scriptures, and take no mortal man's inferences and assertions. The fallacies of men have in them no power to sanctify the soul; and the word of God is not to be adulterated with the customs and traditions of the world. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

The next verse opens with this warning: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Let us consider the moral law, which was specified by the loved disciple as the "old commandment which ye had from the beginning," which was spoken from Mount Sinai amid smoke and flame, thunder and earthquake. The commandments are:

"I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

"III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

"IV. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

"V. Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

"VI. Thou shalt not kill.

"VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

“VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

“IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

“X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.”

If this code of morals had been respected and obeyed, the world would not now be in the state in which it is,—corrupted under the inhabitants thereof. If human agents had cooperated with God, and had obeyed the laws which lie at the foundation of his government, we should not see and hear so much concerning iniquity and crime, suffering and death. Christ magnified the law, and made it honorable. He saw the necessity of expounding the law which he himself had spoken amid flame and thunder and tempest. The rabbis had heaped the rubbish of their traditions upon the law, and made of no effect the commandments of God, because they taught as doctrines the commandments of men. He showed the people that the law of God penetrated to the motives of the heart, and the lover of self was a transgressor of the law. He rescued the commandments from their companionship with error, and placed them in the framework of the gospel, and presented them to men in their true significance and importance; and to those who listened the law seemed a new revelation. Far from taking anything from the sacredness of a single precept, he revealed to men the exalted character of the whole law. But because he cleansed from the law the rubbish of tradition, and freed it from the exactions of men, and from the multitude of minute requirements of men, that confused the people, and hindered them from seeing the real significance of the requirements of Jehovah, the Pharisees were saying in their hearts that Christ had come to do away with the law. But while they were musing in their hearts, he spoke words that revealed to them the fact that he read their thoughts as an open book:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

Christ then proceeds to show that the commandments are exceeding broad, and penetrate to the very motives that control the heart.

The great adversary, the first rebel and apostate, makes war on the commandments of God, for “by the law is the knowledge of sin.” This is the reason that he would have the world believe that the law of God is not binding, for then he can keep men in ignorance of the fact that they are sinners and in need of a Saviour. In this way he can lead them to reject the great salvation, that has been purchased for them at infinite cost.

October 22, 1894

The Commandments Are to Be Obeyed

"The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." The conditions upon which the promises of God are to be fulfilled, that we may prolong our days, and abide in the tabernacle of God, to dwell in his holy hill in the heavens, are found in the injunction to keep God's commandments and live, and his law as the apple of the eye. Jesus said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." The law of God, with its commands of "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," is in full force today, and is as binding on life and character as when it was proclaimed from Sinai.

The living out of the law of God means a life of purity that is impossible to man unless he cooperates with God, becoming a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Every sinful indulgence, every form of vice, all selfish ambition, is condemned by the moral law. The cheap, loose, inattentive type of mind and character which is so prevalent in this generation, is not sanctioned by the law of God. That law condemns the sensual vice that clothes itself in an appearance of loveliness until the soul is ensnared and learns by bitter experience how hateful are the results of indulgence in sin. The law of God is an emanation from the divine mind, and the commandments cover the moral obligation of men.

During the brief probation of life, we are to be educated and disciplined for the future immortal life, and the rule of life is to be the commandments of God. "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," are not grievous commands. The law of God is not a yoke of bondage, for the doers of the law shall find life and strength in obedience, and through the grace given them by Jesus Christ they are enabled to be truly obedient to God's holy rule of life. To keep God's commandments is to keep the soul in the love of God, to secure life from evil, and to discipline the character for a heaven of love.

Those who teach that the binding claims of the law of God have been abolished, think that they know all about the commandments of God; but they make it manifest by their course of disobedience that they are ignorant of the first and last principles of the law, and that they know nothing of the character of God, which is portrayed in the law. The young ruler who came to Jesus asking what he should do to inherit eternal life, thought himself very wise, and in self-complacency, and with a touch of offended dignity, assured Christ when he bade him keep the commandments that he had kept them all from his youth up, and yet Jesus opened up to his mind the fact that he was self-deceived, and knew nothing of keeping the commandments of God. When he was directed to sell what he had, and give to the poor, and come and follow the Lord of life, he went away sorrowful. Those who imagine that they understand the law of God while living in disobedience, make their ignorance manifest by their life and example, and reveal the fact that they have no comprehension of the depth and significance of its precepts.

The law is our teacher, instructing us as to what is rectitude and perfection of character, in order that through the righteousness of Christ we may have a living connection with God. "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Thus are stated the conditions upon which we may expect the blessing of the Lord. The result of cooperation with God is set forth,— "I shall not be moved." Those who keep the commandments of God are promised the gift of eternal life; but he who disobeys the law shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

"Hear, ye that are afar off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." "But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey. And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." God is love, and when we love God supremely and love our neighbor as ourselves, we reflect the character of the Father and the Son. But those who truly love God will be obedient to all his commands. Obedience is the test of love. Jesus says, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." Now lest there should be any misunderstanding as to what commandments should be obeyed, John says, "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning." John writes again: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another; and this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world." "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous;" they are not a yoke of bondage, as commandment breakers would have us believe. "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

October 29, 1894

To Abide in Christ the Will Must Be Surrendered

Christ says: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

It is not enough that we believe a portion of truth, we must grasp truth after truth, and by both precept and example we must teach the truth as it is in Jesus. When sorrow comes, we may see the love of Christ in it all, and the fullness of divine love may keep the soul in perfect peace. If we abide in Christ we must ever be searching after truth as for hidden treasures, in order that our apprehensions of truth may be quick and comprehensive. We shall not then be putting on the garments of resistance, and be prepared to be prejudiced against the very things which we need in our time. Christ is continually unfolding old truths in a new light. The only way in which we will be prepared to have a more perfect apprehension of truth, is by keeping the heart tender and subdued by the Spirit of Christ. We cannot afford to cultivate hardness of heart; for if we are students in the school of Christ, we shall be continually growing in knowledge.

Jesus gives the invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." When we come to Jesus as humble learners, seeking to know the mind of Christ, we shall have no disagreeable surprises. That which we received from him will be to us light, and life, and salvation. We shall walk in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, advancing from light to a greater light, and at every step our hearts will well up with gratitude for the precious revelations of his love. We shall not walk in darkness, we shall behold him who is our only help, him who only has the words of eternal life.

We are never to feel that there is no more truth to be unfolded to us. The history of the past few years has taught us that the words which Jesus spoke to his disciples are appropriate to us. He said: "I have many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now." But I trust that we shall not have the experience of those disciples who, when new truth was revealed to them, walked no more with him, but "because of the word they were offended." Will the experience of these disciples be repeated that called forth from Christ these words: "There are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.... From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

"Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the mind of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves; but Jesus Christ the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of

darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Could our eyes be opened, and could each see the conflict of angelic agencies with the Satanic confederacy, who are combined with evil human agencies, what astonishment would come upon the soul. The holy angels are working with terrible intensity for the salvation of men, because the destroyer of souls is seeking to make of no effect the salvation which has been purchased at infinite cost. Could our spiritual vision be opened, we should see that which would never be effaced from the memory as long as life should last. We should see souls bowed down under oppression, loaded with grief and pressed down as a cart beneath the sheaves, and ready to die in discouragement. We should see angels flying swiftly to aid the tempted ones who stand as on the brink of a precipice. These tempted souls are unable to help themselves, and avoid the ruin which threatens them; but the angels of God are forcing back the evil angels, and guiding the souls away from the dangerous places, to plant their feet on a sure foundation. We should see battles going on between the two armies, as real as those fought by opposing forces on earth. When the power of Satan over souls is broken, we see men binding their will to the cross, and crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts. It is indeed a crucifixion of self; for the will is surrendered to Christ. The will of man is none too strong when it is sanctified and put on the side of Christ. The will is a power, and as many triumphs are to be won in spiritual warfare, and many points of progress to be made in the spiritual journey, and many lessons to be learned from Christ, the great Teacher, it is necessary that the will should be sanctified. In surrendering the will, the root of the matter is reached. When the will is surrendered, the streams that flow from the fountain will not be bitter, but will be as pure as crystal. The flowers and fruit of Christian life will bloom and ripen to perfection.

Jesus Christ is our example in all things. He began life, passed through its experiences, and ended its record, with a sanctified human will. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet because he kept his will surrendered and sanctified, he never bent in the slightest degree toward the doing of evil, or toward manifesting rebellion against God. Have men and women who profess to be followers of Christ, been simply gratifying their own tastes, been confirming themselves in selfishness, in obstinacy, simply living to gratify their carnal propensities? Those who persist in living in this way will at some time in their experience become offended by the truth presented from the word of God. They cannot be one with Christ or abide in him, because they refuse the terms upon which salvation is provided. They do not wear Christ's yoke or lift Christ's burden; for they will not learn of him meekness and lowliness of heart. Those who have a sanctified will, that is in unison with the will of Christ, will day by day have their wills bound to the will of Christ, which will act in blessing others, and react upon themselves with divine power. Many cultivate those things which war against the soul; for their desires and their will are set against God, and employed in the service of Satan.

Let us no longer gratify the enemy by complaining of the strength of our evil will; for in so doing we are feeding and encouraging our wills against God, and pleasing the evil one. Let us remember that we are children of God, pledged to cherish a holy will which cometh to us from God. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

When we resist the devil, he will flee from us, and we will rise above the human weakness in a way that will be a mystery even to ourselves. The judgment day is not that which will decide our eternal

interests; but it is the yielding to influences that either subject our character to the moulding of Christ, or oppose our will to the will of God. The one absorbing aim of the life of Christ was to do the will of his heavenly Father. He did not become offended with God; for he lived not to please himself. The human will of Christ would not have led him to the wilderness of temptation, to fast, and to be tempted of the devil. It would not have led him to endure humiliation, scorn, reproach, suffering, and death. His human nature shrank from all these things as decidedly as ours shrinks from them. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. The contrast between the life and character of Christ and our life and character is painful to contemplate. What did Christ live to do? It was the will of his heavenly Father. Christ left us an example, that we should follow in his steps. Are we doing it?

November 5, 1894

“Comprehended It Not”

The Lord Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, laid aside his royal robe and relinquished his royal crown, gave up his high command, and came into the world, all seared and marred with the curse. “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” Did the world appreciate the light?—No; they refused to accept the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” Thus it will be until the close of time. The Son of God came personally into the world, and men did to him as they listed. “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”

The Son of God came to our world with his heart overflowing with love for fallen man. He was in the express image of God, and equal with God in character. He was the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person. He came to meet and to conquer his adversary, Satan, the fallen angel, who had become exalted because of his brightness and wisdom, and who desired to place his throne above the throne of God. Satan desired to set aside the law of God, whose precepts could not be altered any more than could his character or his throne. Satan sought to be first among the ranks of heaven, to have the supremacy in the courts of God, and for this sin he was cast out of heaven, and became the lowest of all creatures. Christ came to controvert Satan's assertions, and to reveal his misrepresentations of the character of God. The Son of God clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to the world without parade or display, that he might be accepted, not because of outward attractions, but because of his heavenly attributes of character, as revealed in his words and works. He presented to men lessons whereby their souls were brought into comparison with the law of God, not in a legal light, but in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, that man by beholding might be changed into the divine image.

Jesus taught that in no case is man to give up his mind to the guidance of his fellowman, or to follow his own vain imagination. This is what men will do if they drop eternity out of their reckoning, for they will fail to contemplate the things of heaven, and will make the world and the things of time their first consideration. When Christ came to the world, he found men engaged in pursuing phantoms as though they were realities, and eternal realities were looked upon as unreal and

unimportant. They were wholly given up to strife for worldly conveniences and for providing possessions for the future.

Jesus presented to men eternal considerations, and urged upon them the necessity of not losing eternity out of their reckoning. He sought to attract their minds to contemplation of sacred truth, of a high, immortal character, capable of expanding and elevating the mind and ennobling the soul. He sought to reveal to them the fact that man cannot serve God and mammon, for, through serving the world and seeking for worldly gain and honor, the service of God is made a secondary matter.

The Lord Jesus requires that those who would serve God shall make the world and its interests subordinate to the interests of pure and undefiled religion, and he gave to man in his own life an example of what it meant to be a loyal worshiper of God. If men follow the precepts and example of Christ, they will not become the sport of Satan's temptations. They will not let day after day go by without a thought of God, as they follow out their own devices and plans, as did the inhabitants of the world in the time of Noah. In Noah's day men carried out their plans with no reference whatever to God, upon whose power they were continually dependent. We should continually realize that God is at our right hand, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

In his lessons Jesus presents different symbols and illustrations as he seeks to restore the moral image of God in man, and save the soul from utterly yielding itself to the power of the destroyer. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden;" and, although you have followed in a course that I have forbidden, and in so doing, you have bound your own souls under Satan's oppressive yoke, and have carried the burden he has imposed upon you, yet "come unto me,...and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Shall we practice this lesson? Shall we daily learn that peace, rest, happiness, power, and true greatness are in becoming meek and lowly of heart? Jesus bids us learn of him, for he was meek and lowly in heart. If he had thought that the best way to save perishing souls was to charm the senses and attract them to his standard through pomp and display, he could have surrounded himself with worldly attractions, and presented to them maxims and sentiments that would have won the approval of the world.

But there was but one remedy by which man could be saved,—man must believe God's word, and follow the example of humility and meekness of heart. Jesus leads the minds of men from their worldly philosophy and self-exalting sentiments to the purity and virtue of the gospel. He leads them away from their false religions of fancy and human reason. There is a religion in the world that is apparently beautiful, but which leads men to turn with disgust from the representation given by Christ of the office work of the Holy Spirit. Of the Comforter which he was to send to his disciples, he says, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The natural heart does not enjoy this constant reproof of sin and continual exalting of righteousness. Men feel disgusted when they are represented as helpless to do good; yet Jesus declares, "Without me ye can do nothing." The word of God requires humility and practical godliness, and the picture of man's dependence upon God is mortifying to the selfish independence of man, to his grand ideas of eloquence and finery and parade, which he esteems as essential for the conversion of the world.

Those who are enamored of this religion of fancy do not relish the idea of destroying the old man with his deeds, and bringing into subjection every rebellious thought to the dominion of Christ. They

do not desire to submit themselves to the control of the Spirit of God, which works in the human heart to expel every corruption and to establish vital principles of virtue, temperance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and Christlike love. Yet those who receive the Spirit of God, though they were dead in trespasses and sins, will experience the active working of that power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead. The vital power of the Holy Spirit will raise up those who realize their helplessness, and who come confessing their sins and believing in Jesus. All the faculties are to be brought under the control of the Spirit of God. Unaided humanity may struggle with all its power, may exercise reason, eloquence, and philosophy in seeking to repair the ruins of a fallen, disordered world; men may listen to the theories of men, but the question to ask is, What have been the results? Jesus answers, "Without me ye can do nothing." When all the wisdom of the schools, all the accumulations of human ability, are brought to bear upon those who are dead in trespasses and sins, they avail nothing for the reformation of character. Human selfishness remains in all its depravity. The Spirit of God alone can make and keep men pure. Its work upon the soul is represented as bringing life to the dead, and freeing the soul from the slavery of sin, which has brought it under the condemnation of the law, where wrath and tribulation fall upon every evil doer. It is the grace of Christ which brings salvation to everyone who receives it. Those who are converted, experience peace and assurance forever. In place of being slaves, they are made free through Jesus Christ. Brought into the liberty of obedient children, they can say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

We see and are compelled to acknowledge human depravity, but we do not need to stop at this conclusion, for through faith in Christ life and immortality are brought to light. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Jesus is the one of whom Isaiah said: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Man is full of frailties and imperfections, and dependent upon God, and yet he stretches himself to enormous proportions of importance, and makes boast of his human wisdom and achievements. He forgets that he is in the world which God has made by his own wisdom. And shall man refuse to admit his obligation to the law of the Creator? The truly converted soul will stand true to the law of God, and be obedient to all his commandments.

November 12, 1894

A Perpetual Memorial

The law of God is immutable in its character, for "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail." The law of God is a revelation of the divine will, a transcript of the divine character, and must forever endure. Not one command has been annulled; not a jot or a tittle of the law has been changed. The Psalmist says, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." "All his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever." In the very bosom of the Decalogue is the fourth commandment, as it was proclaimed:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

The claim so often put forth that Christ changed the Sabbath is disproved by his own words. In the sermon on the mount he said: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Both by precept and example the Saviour taught the sacred obligations of the Sabbath commandment. Throughout his ministry upon earth no small share of his teaching was directed toward instructing men as to what was lawful to do upon the Sabbath day. He set aside the traditions of men, and because he did not concede to the perverted customs of the Jews, by which they heaped exactions upon the people in regard to the Sabbath, he was accused of Sabbath breaking. But this was a false charge, for he declared that the works of mercy and necessity which he had done were lawful works and in harmony with Sabbath keeping. In their ignorance and superstition the Jews had condemned the guiltless. Are there not others who have followed this course and have charged Christ with Sabbath breaking, with violation of the law of God?

Jesus said at the close of his earthly ministry, “I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” Neither the Saviour nor his followers ever broke the law of the Sabbath. Had the Jews been able to sustain their charge against Christ as a Sabbath breaker, as they tried to do, they would have had no need of bringing false witnesses in order that they might secure his condemnation and death. But because no fault could be found with him, in order to secure his death it was necessary that men should perjure their souls by testifying to a lie.

Christ not only honored the Sabbath throughout his life upon the earth, but he provided that its sacred claims should be remembered and honored after his death and resurrection. When warning his disciples of the destruction of Jerusalem, which did not take place until forty years after his ascension, he said, “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day; for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time.” In accordance with his instruction, the followers of Christ were enabled to depart from the besieged city, and escape to the mountains, not taking their flight either in the winter, nor upon the Sabbath day. After the death of Christ the disciples “rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” After the ascension of Christ, Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, preached to both Jews and Gentiles “on the Sabbath day.”

Then how can we account for the observance of the first day of the week by the majority of professed Christians, when the Bible presents no authority for this change either in the precepts or in the example of Christ or his followers? We can account for it in the fact that the world has followed the traditions of men instead of a “Thus saith the Lord.” This has been the work that Satan has always sought to accomplish,—lead men away from the commandments of God to the veneration and obedience of the traditions of the world. Through human instrumentalities he has

cast contempt upon the Sabbath of Jehovah, and has stigmatized it as "the old Jewish Sabbath." Thousands have thoughtlessly echoed this reproach, as though it were something to which was attached great weight of argument; but they have lost sight of the fact that the Jewish people were especially chosen of God as the guardians of his truth, the keepers of his law, the depositary of his sacred oracles. They received the lively oracles to give unto us. The Old and New Testaments both came through the Jews to us. Every promise in the Bible, every ray of light which has shone upon us from the word of God, has come through the Jewish nation.

Christ was the leader of the Hebrews as they marched from Egypt to Canaan. In union with the Father, Christ proclaimed the law amid the thunders of Sinai to the Jews, and when he appeared on earth as a man among men, he came as a descendant of Abraham. Shall we use the same argument concerning the Bible and Christ, and reject them as Jewish, as is done in rejecting the Sabbath of the Lord our God? The Sabbath institution is as closely identified with the Jews as is the Bible, and there is the same reason for the rejection of one as of the other. But the Sabbath is not Jewish in its origin. It was instituted in Eden before there were such a people known as the Jews. The Sabbath was made for all mankind, and was instituted in Eden before the fall of man. The Creator called it "my holy day." Christ announced himself as "the Lord of the Sabbath." Beginning with creation, it is as old as the human race, and having been made for man it will exist as long as man shall exist. Hallowed by the Creator's rest and blessing, the Sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocence in holy Eden, by Adam fallen, yet repentant, when he was driven from his happy estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs from Abel to Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob. When the chosen people were in bondage in Egypt, many, in the midst of the prevailing idolatry, lost their knowledge of God's law; but when the Lord delivered Israel, he proclaimed his law in awful grandeur to the assembled multitude, that they might know his will, and fear and obey him forever.

From that day to this the knowledge of God's law has been preserved in the earth, and the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been kept. Christ has given no hint that the seventh-day Sabbath has ever been or ever could be changed, and no apostolic example for the change from the seventh to the first day of the week can be cited. The custom of observing the first day of the week instead of the seventh day of divine appointment has no authority save that of tradition, popular custom, and the command of the Church of Rome. The Church of Rome has been the agent by which Satan has made this breach in the law of God, and turned the professed Christian world away from the precepts of Jehovah. Through his insinuation men made the claim that because Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, therefore the first day of the week should be celebrated as the Christian sabbath, but the Scriptures give no authority for this manner of reasoning. The prince of evil well knew that could he set aside the true foundation for Sabbath observance, he could make the fourth commandment of no significance in the minds of men. Thus, under the pretense of honoring Christ, Satan succeeds in tearing down God's great memorial, turning the minds of men away from their Creator in a false zeal for a spurious institution. He led the Jews to have a false zeal for the Sabbath, and then induced them to reject Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath.

(Concluded next week.)

November 19, 1894

A Perpetual Memorial

(Concluded.)

Satan's chief agent in bringing about the rejection of the fourth commandment, and the institution of the first day of the week as a day of rest, has been the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the part she has acted in this change, but makes a boast of her power as shown in the change which she has brought about in the world. Papists acknowledge that the Bible gives no sanction to this change, and that Protestants have no Scriptural authority for Sunday worship. The Catholic Church changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day, and without the shadow of divine sanction it has been accepted by almost all the Protestant churches, and Rome, pointing to the adherents of her doctrines, claims the supremacy. In changing the fourth precept of God's law, the papal power has thought itself able to exalt itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. This was the very work that the prophecy foretold would be done by this power. In trampling upon the fourth commandment, the first commandment is broken. Their idolatry is similar to that of Israel's when she substituted a god which her own hands had made, for the living and true God, and followed after the example of Egypt; for when the Catholics substitute a sabbath of their own making for that which God commanded, they too worship that which their own hands have made, and follow the example of the heathen who worshiped the sun on the first day of the week.

Through the pope of Rome the same work has been carried on here on earth as was carried on in the courts of heaven before the expulsion of the prince of darkness. Satan sought to correct the law of God in heaven, and to supply an amendment of his own. He exalted his own judgment above that of his Creator, and placed his will above the will of Jehovah, and in this way virtually declared God to be fallible. The pope also takes the same course and, claiming infallibility for himself, seeks to adjust the law of God to meet his own ideas, thinking himself able to correct the mistakes he thinks he sees in the statutes and commands of the Lord of heaven and earth. He virtually says to the world, I will give you better laws than those of Jehovah. What an insult is this to the God of heaven!

Many thousand who have accepted the change made in the day of rest have done so ignorantly, and unwittingly have placed themselves under the banner of the prince of darkness. The Christian church has accepted the false sabbath, but the day of light has now dawned. The times of their ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth men everywhere to repent. It is demonstrated that no change is necessary in the law of God. Were there a change needed in the law of God, and could such a change be made, the rebellion of Satan would be justified, and the universe would have to concede that Satan was wiser than God, and had a right to supreme authority. But Jesus came to magnify the law and to make it honorable, and his death on Calvary in the sinner's behalf, proves the immutability of the law of heaven.

The work of the papal church was to be of an exactly opposite character to that of Christ. Daniel in holy vision saw that he "would think to change times and laws." The laws of God and the time of God were to be changed by this antichristian power. The laws of God are the only laws which men are prohibited from changing, for secular powers may change as they see fit the laws of secular governments. In the prophecy it is plainly shown that this papal power would with deliberate intention change the law of God. In the Catholic catechisms the second commandment is not taught as obligatory, but for this change they do not hold themselves responsible of intention to change the law, as they declare that the whole significance of the precept is contained in the first commandment. But the change of the fourth commandment, the institution of the first day of the

week as the Sabbath instead of the seventh day, is a change for which she holds herself responsible of intention to change, and makes a boast of her power, because the whole professed Christian world acknowledges her mandate in this particular. It is by thus trampling upon God's commandments (sin is the transgression of the law) that the Roman Church has proved its right to the title given in prophecy to one who shall be the "mystery of lawlessness."

The Papacy, claiming to be the vicegerent of the Son of God, is in truth the vicegerent of another power. She points to the Sunday institution as the sign of her authority; but in the change of the law and time of God, she is only doing that which Satan tried to do in heaven,—prove the law of God faulty, and the Lawgiver fallible. In boasting of her power above the law of God, she is but echoing the sentiments of the great deceiver. God instituted the Sabbath as a sign of his authority and power, and the Papacy, acting for the prince of evil, points to the Sunday as a sign of her power and jurisdiction. The day of the sun, Sunday, was a day devoted to the most vile of the heathen worship, for it was celebrated in connection with sun-worship. This Sunday-sabbath has been accepted by many who know it to be the foundling of heathenism, which has been cherished and nourished by the Church of Rome, and by her clothed in the garments of sanctity. But while many are now aware of its origin, there are true Christians in every church who do not know the origin of the Sunday-sabbath, and believe that they are keeping the day which God sanctified and blest. This is true of worshipers even in the Catholic Church; and while this ignorance and integrity remain, God accepts of their sincerity; but when light shall fall upon their pathway, God requires them to come into harmony with his law, and to observe the Sabbath of his appointing. The time has come when the glory of the Lord is to fill the earth, and when the whole earth shall be lightened with his glory. The cry is sounding to the honest in heart to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

November 26, 1894

Variance Between Believers and Unbelievers

Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. He says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Christ is drawing all unto himself, but all do not respond to his drawing. If all men would respond to his drawing, there would be no variance, no discordant note in the household. If all would respond to his drawing, he would never have said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Some respond to the drawing of Christ. The truth convicts them, and they repent, become converted, and are made the children of God. They reverence and love Jesus Christ, and surrender themselves in obedience to his will. In Christ they find the highest realization of their hopes. In him the troubled soul finds rest and peace. He stands before the repenting, pardoned soul as the complete Pattern, and they seek to be like him, acknowledging to all that they have given their hearts to him.

But while one member of the family gives his heart to God, the others do not. They are still under the control of the Saviour's worst enemy, and they feel annoyed and angry that there has come to be a division in their household. He who has accepted of Christ is no less dutiful than before; on the contrary, he is more kind, more faithful, more affectionate, because his nature is being purified and sanctified and ennobled by the truth. But the Master of the Christian and the master of the unbelievers are in deadly conflict. Those who love not God are at enmity with those who do love God, and they are stirred up with bitter opposition by the spirit of Satan, who keeps them from responding to the drawing of Christ. Satan deceives the soul with false pretensions. He perverts the judgment, and misleads the mind, so that the very best motives of those who believe in God are misinterpreted by unbelievers, and the disloyal are led to think that they are badly used and treated unkindly by those who have placed their trust in God. Christ is the believer's hope and consolation, the one about whom he weaves the best affections. The Christian confesses Christ in word and deed, in spirit and actions, and the enmity that is created in the unbelieving heart against the children of God is not against men simply, but against Christ.

Christ longs to give those who do not understand him, correct views of his character, to set them right, to take away their burden of sin and resistance, and give them rest. The divine Comforter is full of pity, sympathy, and love, and seeks to woo them to God. He seeks to direct their attention to Christ as he really is, full of mercy, compassion, and pardoning love, willing to forgive their transgression and sin, when they repent and seek him for forgiveness. But Satan interposes his hellish shadow between Christ and the soul. The sinner sees not Jesus, but fastens his gaze upon the cloud of darkness, and desires not the Lord of life and glory. He does not realize that Jesus alone can give him peace and rest, and quiet the tempest that Satan has created in the human soul, and so he does not come unto him. Under the dark cloud of impenitence, sinners are in a state of insanity. They will not listen to reason, and Jesus, their best Friend, is accounted as an enemy, and those who believe in him are also placed in the same light. Such is the power of the deceiver, who whispers his suggestions in the ear of the unbeliever, that Paul asks, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Truth has everything commendable in it, yet many are making the sad mistake of rejecting the truth, which would bring to them peace, rest, and salvation. The Holy Spirit comes early and often with the message of salvation to the impenitent heart, only to be rejected.

The conflict goes on in many homes, and those who serve Jesus are misjudged and persecuted, when their hearts are breaking with longing that their unconverted relatives and friends may be converted to the Jesus whom they see and love. They are pleading earnestly with God that their loved ones may be drawn to him, when the hearts of their relatives are bound as with iron fetters to Satan's car, and they are asking, as did Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" They cherish pride, envy, and hatred, and are continually creating contention, because some of their family love Jesus and they do not. Jesus, full of grace and truth, again and again has knocked at the door of their hearts, and has asked for admission there; but they have padlocked the door, and refused to receive him. The happiness of the members of the family who have accepted Jesus amazes and exasperates them, until, like Cain, they would raise their hand to destroy them. "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child."

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, came to shed his bright beams into every home. To those who receive the light of life, it is as a savor of life unto life, but those who reject it, find it a savor of death unto death. Whatever we do, and wherever we may be, we are God's property, and we can never

cease to be responsible to him. He has given us faculties, privileges, and opportunities, and he holds us responsible for the use to which we put his intrusted gifts. If we take this responsibility, and meet the requirements of God as we should, we shall be constituted the light of the world, because Christ is formed within, the hope of glory.

Jesus says: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." The words that Christ addressed to his disciples were addressed to us as well as to them. We have presented before us the unwearied conflict that we must wage on this earth as long as time shall last. We can place no person before Christ in our affections. If a person who has been convicted by the Spirit of God smothers his convictions, and continues to trample underfoot the commandments of the Lord, and rejects the truth of God simply because he sees it will bring disunion into the family relations, he shows that he loves the peace that is not of Christ, but of the world. He prefers to be in harmony with the world rather than to be in unity with Christ. But to have the peace of Christ it is necessary to place Christ and his service first. Those who yield their convictions of truth to please father or mother, sister, or brother, husband or wife or children, prove themselves unworthy of Christ. They do not estimate his excellency. They view him not as the Son of God, whom the Father gave for the sins of the world, in order that they might not perish, but have everlasting life; and therefore they shun the cross. But there is a cross to be lifted by everyone who by faith accepts a crucified and risen Saviour.

He who is truly penitent does not forget his past sins, and grow careless about them as soon as he has obtained forgiveness. On the contrary, the clearer the evidence he has of divine favor, the more he sees to regret in his past life of sin. He loathes, abhors, and condemns himself, and is more and more astonished that he should have continued in rebellion so long. He renews his repentance toward God, while he grasps more decidedly the hand of Jesus Christ, and finds that repentance is a daily, continued exercise, lasting until mortality is swallowed up of life. He who thus repents, appreciates the righteousness of Christ as above silver and gold, above every earthly tie and affection.

No soul can take an advance step in the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, without obtaining fresh supplies from the Fountain of grace and truth. Where enmity exists between man and Satan, it is an enmity that has been put there by the Lord Jesus Christ; for fallen men and fallen angels are naturally in harmony. Both stand on the same platform, and are nourished by the same atmosphere. Both are evil through apostasy from God. The enmity that exists in the natural heart is made manifest when a soul leaves the ranks of apostasy and joins the army of the Lord Jesus Christ. When a soul is truly converted to God, it will be made manifest that evil men are in league with evil angels, in a desperate companionship.

The announcement that there should be enmity between Satan and the seed of the woman was very unwelcome to the prince of evil; for it was the promise of a Redeemer. Satan thought to induce men, as he had angels, to stand on his side, and join in rebellion against God; and, with men as his allies, he planned to control the earth, and wage war against the King of heaven.

Whenever a soul falls in love with Jesus, every other affection is placed in subservience to this pure, refining principle of heavenly love. Pride, passion, and ambition, which have held sway over the

natural heart, are surrendered to Jesus Christ. With Paul, the converted soul can say: "But what things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

The world's Redeemer was scorned as a deceiver, hunted down as a malefactor; and shall those who become the servants of Christ expect to be treated any better than was their Lord? If they work the works of Christ, friends and relatives will rise up against them. They will persecute, forsake, and betray them. Let the believer not become discouraged because of the things he must suffer. Let his only anxiety be that hatred be kindled against him for no other reason than that of faithfulness in the discharge of his duty for Christ's sake. The true child of God will say, I know I have to do with God, who trieth the heart, and hath pleasure in uprightness. I will set the Lord ever before me, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

December 3, 1894

God's Word Our Assurance

The word of God is the foundation of our faith, and therefore it is by the word of God that we may obtain evidence of our standing before God. We are not to make our feelings a test by which to discern whether we are in or out of favor with God, whether they be what we consider encouraging or not. As soon as one begins to contemplate his feelings, he is on dangerous ground. If he feels joyous, he is confident he is in a favorable condition, but when a change comes, as it will, for circumstances will be so arranged that feelings of depression will make the heart sad, then he will be naturally led to doubt that God has accepted him. It is not wisdom to look at the emotions, and try to test your spirituality by your feelings. Do not study yourself; look away from self to Jesus. While you acknowledge yourself as a sinner, yet you may appropriate Christ as your sin-pardoning Redeemer. Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Satan will not be slow in presenting to the repentant soul suggestions and difficulties to weaken faith and destroy courage. He has manifold temptations that he can send trooping into the mind, one in succession of another; but the Christian must not study his emotions, and give way to his feelings, or he will soon entertain the evil guest, doubt, and become entangled in the perplexities of despair. Expel the suggestions of the enemy by contemplating the matchless depths of your Saviour's love.

Do not exalt your feelings, and be swayed by them, whether they be good, bad, sad, or joyful. The apostle says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." It is the word of God that is to be your assurance. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The soul's supply of nutrition is in Jesus Christ. A legal religion will always be a troublesome guest, and it is a deception to imagine that there is such a thing as natural religion that is acceptable to God. The religion of Christ teaches its possessor self-distrust, but at the same time enables him to grasp the hand of Christ firmly, and still more firmly, as temptations press upon the soul.

There is a warfare in which every soul must engage who would have the crown of life. Inch by inch the overcomer must fight the good fight of faith, using the weapons of God's word. He must meet the foe with, "It is written." He must keep the armory well supplied with, "It is written." In this way

he must meet the advances of the enemy, and educate and train the soul for the still more severe attacks of the foe. Truth, the word of God, faith and righteousness, and the hope of salvation, must be the armor of the successful warrior, and his eyes must be anointed to be keen and sensitive to detect the devices of the enemy. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." If God had not made provision by which you might be thoroughly equipped for your warfare with the powers of darkness, then these commands and promises would be but mockery to you, and would tantalize your soul; but our God is true. We may depend upon him under all circumstances. The word of God cannot fail, and in it we are to find our assurance.

By the word of God we are to overcome every temptation of the enemy. Satan may present every attraction, bring to our notice every deceiving, alluring bribe, in seeking to eclipse the brightness of Jesus from our view, and to obliterate from our minds his plainest requirements, but we are to meet his deceptions with the word of God. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

When the enemy begins to draw away the mind from Jesus, to shut away his mercy, his love, his all-sufficiency, do not devote precious time to the consideration of your feelings, but flee to the word. In the Scriptures Christ is presented as the One by whom God made the worlds. He is the light of the world, and, as the seeker for light studies the word, he finds heavenly illumination. Christ, the all-absorbing theme, is revealed to his soul, and he sees the requirements of God to be of a Christlike character. He studies the conditions on which redemption may be his, sees the divinity of his Saviour, the value of his atonement, the efficacy of the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost; and Christ becomes all and in all to his soul. He sees in the Scriptures that which the casual reader does not see, a significance and value beyond computation. He comes with a teachable spirit to the word, and is instructed by both the Old and New Testaments.

Christ opens the mind to comprehend the meaning of the sacred word, and the Holy Spirit conveys its true significance to the soul, which before had not been seen or appreciated. The searcher for truth feels as did the disciples when Christ overtook them on their journey to Emmaus. They told him their pitiful story, and he reproved them for their unbelief and slowness of heart. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." When their eyes were opened, and they realized that it was Christ himself who had been talking with them, they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

What do we hope to accomplish by longing to have the whole world converted to Jesus, by believing in his pardoning love, when we do not ourselves believe in his love or find rest in his grace? How can we possibly lead others to a full assurance, to simple, childlike faith in our heavenly Father, when we

are measuring and judging our love to him by our feelings? We cannot be lifted up in thought, or know what it is to be the sons and daughters of God, unless we trust implicitly to the word of God, for Satan will ever be on the ground to dispute our claims. We must educate the soul to trust in God's word with unwavering confidence. Let gratitude and thankfulness flow out of the heart, and cease to hurt the heart of Christ by doubting his love, which has been assured to us by most astounding evidences; for he so loved us as to give his own life for us, that we should not perish, but have everlasting life.

December 10, 1894

The Sending Out of the Seventy

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." The seventy were appointed to go on their missionary journeys some months after the twelve had been appointed to visit the lost sheep of the house of Israel. When the twelve were sent forth, they were restricted to the tribes of Israel, lest their missionary efforts should create prejudice among the Jews, whose teaching had been of such a character as to make them narrow in their ideas in regard to the extension of the gospel to other nationalities. The disciples themselves could scarcely comprehend the fact that the blessings of God were for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and had to unlearn many lessons that made them conservative in their views concerning the mission and work of the Messiah. But evidences were given them that prepared them to understand that the tidings of the kingdom of Christ were to be preached to all nations. Now that their sympathies were broadening, and their ideas expanding in regard to the purpose of God, Christ desired them to act out their faith before he should be removed from them, that there might be no misunderstanding in regard to the extension of the gospel.

Jesus' great heart of love was filled with longing to proclaim the words of life to all nationalities, and he did this in a large measure. He placed himself in the great thoroughfares of travel, where the crowds passed to and fro, and preached to large concourses of different peoples. But he saw numerous fields opening up for missionary labor. There was abundant opportunity for the twelve disciples to work, and not only for them, but for a very large number of workers. He educated a larger number to employ in missionary work, and, as he sent forth seventy more laborers into the harvest field, he said, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." In giving his laborers direction as they began this most important work, he said, "Salute no man by the way." The salutation to which he referred was not that of giving a friendly grasp to the hand, but was a long series of ceremonies, that consumed time to no profit, and their business was too urgent to trifle away precious moments in unnecessary forms. They were bearing a message that was to be as a savor of life unto life to those who received it, and as a savor of death unto death to those who rejected it; and all these superstitious positions and ceremonies of salutation, if performed, would lessen the importance of the message, and seem to make it of little moment.

The sending out of the disciples on a missionary tour was a most important movement, as it was a breaking away from the old, narrow conservatism of the Jews, and would have a tendency to lead them away from their prejudices against other nations, and establish them in a larger charity. He wished them to be impressed with the necessity of planting the truth in the hearts of all men, with

the thought that all who would come might come to him, and by believing in him have life through his name. The time was approaching when he should leave his followers, but he promised them that the Spirit should come to lead them into all truth, to illuminate to their minds the Scriptures which he had himself given to patriarchs and prophets. No longer were the Gentiles to be kept in heathenism, or, as it were, in the outer courts of the temple.

The Pharisees were daily plotting to stop the spread of the gospel of Christ, and were misinterpreting God's word, by threatening the people, and seeking to intimidate them, and they deepened the darkness that enveloped the souls of men, and bound more firmly the chains of superstition and error that Jesus was breaking from those who believed in him. The Pharisees and rulers and rabbis sought to controvert the truth by their assertions, and manifested great zeal in pursuing their evil course. They hesitated at nothing that would carry out their hatred of Christ. The seventy were sent out with the warning, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." But though sent out to meet opposition, they were not to be spiritless, powerless, and feeble. They were to exercise every proper means that was consistent with the commission they were given, and spend and be spent in seeking to win souls to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. A new and mighty movement was to be inaugurated, a new epoch was to be ushered in, advancing the truth to the world.

The world's Redeemer marks out the course the disciples were to pursue. There must be no betraying of sacred trusts on the part of those intrusted with the work, no yielding save to one Guide. Christ laid out before them the rules of action they were to follow, the manner in which they were to pursue their work, and there must be no swerving from God's word. He sent them forth two and two. This was the order in which the laborers were to go forth. He was about to leave the work, and he determined to put it in the hands of faithful men, who would teach others also to carry forward and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to all nations, tongues, and peoples. He had revealed to his followers invisible realities, and had told them of coming events, reaching down to the end of earth's history. He had opened up to them principles concerning redemption and moral government by holding forth to them the words of life, and all these great truths which he had communicated to them were not only for their enlightenment, but that they also might communicate truth to others who were in darkness. The seventy were to go forth to do a work similar to that which was being done by the twelve. They were all endowed with supernatural endowments as the seal of their heavenly calling. They were ordained to proclaim that which Jesus at the beginning of his ministry had bidden them to keep secret. Repeatedly Jesus had charged them not to proclaim his Messiahship, but to let the people receive him upon the testimony of his words and works. His works presented the divine credentials that bore sufficient evidence of his claims. But before the close of his earthly ministry, it was his purpose to give men unmistakable evidence of the fact that he was the Sent of God, that he was the center and soul of the kingdom of Israel; and this fact was to be proclaimed throughout all the borders of Judea; and in his last journey toward Jerusalem, prophecy should be so publicly fulfilled that no student of Scripture need be in doubt concerning his character and mission. The specifications of prophecy were to be fulfilled to the letter.

It was the work of the seventy disciples to give publicity to his work. They were his delegated forerunners, sent forth to create an interest in him, and to bear their message heralding his approach. The Saviour gave them special instruction as to how they were to conduct themselves, and what preliminary work must be done by them. The instruction was after the same order as he

gave to the twelve when he sent them forth. "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." They were not to keep their goods, bind them up in a napkin, and hide them in the earth. The Lord would have them put to use the talents he had given them, and put them out to the exchangers, by using every ability of money, mind, or influence in furthering the communication of the light of truth to souls who sat in darkness.

He said to them, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The spirit of prophecy had distinctly predicted that God would raise up an inspired Teacher, who should instruct the people. This great Teacher had appeared among men, but they knew him not. Christ, the foundation of the whole Jewish economy, who had been prefigured in sacrifices and offerings, had appeared in the Jewish nation, but their eyes were blinded. He had himself inspired the prophets to testify of the manner of his coming, and at sundry times and in divers places Christ himself had spoken to man. There had been no time when he was not in communication with his chosen people. The Jewish services all testify of him, pointing out the attributes of his divine character. Important truth concerning him was veiled in types and shadows and symbols, and was to be fulfilled in Christ's mission and ministry. From time to time the veil had been lifted and the mystery had been revealed concerning the plan of salvation. The reality had been made plain, the substance had appeared, explaining the shadow. Jesus Christ was revealed, the One who was to give his life for the redemption of the world. Those who believed in him in the ages before his personal advent, "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Here is plain evidence that Moses understood the mission of Christ and the work he was to do. He expected the substance to be revealed, and the unfinished economy of the Jewish nation would be completed in perfect fulfillment of every specification that God had given in types and shadows. He would bring his own system of arrangements to perfection. For Moses truly said unto the fathers: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."

The work of the chosen twelve, and of the seventy who were sent out, was to proclaim the Messiahship of Jesus, and to herald his personal coming wheresoever they should go. They were to say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

December 17, 1894

Object of Christian Living

Christ ever rebuked the Pharisees for their self-righteousness. They extolled themselves. They came forth from their religious services, not humbled with a sense of their own weakness, not feeling gratitude for the great privileges that God had given them. They were exalted to heaven in point of opportunity, in having the Scriptures, in knowing the true God, but their hearts were not filled with thankfulness to God for his great goodness toward them. They came forth filled with spiritual pride, and their theme was self—"myself, my feelings, my knowledge, my ways." Their own attainments became the standard by which they measured others. Putting on the robes of self-dignity, they mounted the judgment seat to criticise and to condemn. But no human being has been authorized of God to do this work. It is the very essence of Phariseeism. It is gathering about the soul the very shadows of darkness so that the light of life cannot penetrate the darkness. Satan deluded the Jews with a natural or legal religion, which was full of selfishness and hypocrisy, and thus were light and knowledge perverted; but this exalting of self, this self-righteousness, is nothing short of deception and self-destruction. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again."

The soil of the hearts of the Pharisees is a hopeless and profitless soil, where the seeds of heavenly truth cannot take root. Oh, how self-deluding is this feeling of superiority that all Pharisees cherish! They suppose that others are at fault, and speak words of reproof and condemnation, and their words are strong and hard as nether millstones, and crush all hope and courage out of the soul. The goodness of heart manifested in the works of true Christians, puts into the heart of Pharisees roots of bitterness whereby many are defiled. They are full of evil thoughts, and suspect the purest. They make a man an offender for a word. Exalted self claims all their faith, honor, and love.

As Christ redoubled his efforts, manifesting his love in works of mercy, in pouring a flood of light upon a sin-stricken world, because the Pharisees could not controvert his doctrine, they threatened, hunted, and persecuted the Son of God. The people rejoiced in the wonderful works that Christ was doing; but the Pharisees, under the training and discipline of Satan, were so blinded that they charged Christ with casting out devils through the prince of devils. What a terrible pass for men to come to who profess to be the children of God! Those who begin to criticise and judge others know not to what lengths they will be led.

Jesus "spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." Let every disciple of Christ inquire in all humility of mind, What must I do to be saved? If we sincerely desire to understand, we shall know. It is not because of our riches, our knowledge, our superiority of position, that Jesus loves us and blesses us, but because we believe in him as our personal Saviour. Jesus loved us while we were yet sinners, but having chosen us he says he has ordained us to go and bring forth fruit. Has each one something to do?—Certainly, everyone that is yoked up with Christ must bear his burden, work in his lines. Christians are not to be strengthless and indolent. No. "Ye are laborers together with God." The life of Christ's pardoning love in the soul is as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. If the well of water is in the heart, then the entire life will reveal the fact, and the refreshing grace of God will be made manifest. Religion is not simply to have joyous feelings, to be conscious of having privileges and light, to have rapturous emotions, while expending all the energies to keep a balance in the Christian life, while doing nothing for the salvation of souls. Religion is doing the words of Christ; it is standing as faithful sentinels, not doing to earn salvation, but doing because, all undeserving, you have received the heavenly gift. Religion is to work out God's plans, to cooperate with the intelligences of heaven. In

this way you fulfill the words of Christ, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

It is the high privilege of the sons and daughters of God to go forth and present to others the truth as it is in Jesus; for we are to watch and to seek for souls as they that must give an account. We are to feel a constant sense of our indebtedness to God for the gift of his Son, and be ever watching for opportunities to enlist others in the army of the Lord. It is not he that enjoyeth righteousness, but he that doeth righteousness, that is righteous. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The doing of the will of God is a result of possessing the faith that works by love and purifies the soul.

"That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledging of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." If we will follow on to know the Lord, our views will broaden. They will not be bound about by self. We should pray the Lord to enlarge our understanding, so that we may not only understand that Jesus Christ is our substitute and surety, but that we belong to Christ as his purchased possession. Paul says, "Ye are bought with a price," and draws this conclusion, "Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

December 24, 1894

A Lesson from the Experience of Judas

It was a grief to the Saviour that his disciples failed to comprehend the character of his kingdom. He plainly stated to his followers the humiliation, suffering, and death that awaited him; but they seemed to be unable to understand it, and on the way to the scene of the Saviour's trial and death, disputed among themselves who should be greatest in his kingdom. Judas was numbered among the twelve. He was accepted, not because he was perfect, but notwithstanding his imperfections. Peter, James, and John were not perfect characters, but they were received by the Master in order that they might be moulded by the words he should speak and the example he should set before them. Judas had witnessed the power which the disciples had over the unclean spirits, and could testify that the devils were subject unto them.

But the often-repeated statements of Christ in regard to his kingdom not being an earthly kingdom, created thoughts of disaffection in the mind of Judas. He had marked out a line upon which he expected Christ to work. He had planned that Christ should deliver John the Baptist from prison, and, lo! John was left to be beheaded in prison, and Jesus withdrew himself and his disciples into a country place, instead of avenging the death of John. Judas wanted more aggressive warfare established, and thought that if Jesus would not hold them back from carrying out their schemes, they would be more successful. Doubt became more established in his mind as he saw the gathering enmity of the Jewish leaders, and saw the challenge go by unheeded by Christ when they requested that he should show them a sign from heaven. His heart was open to unbelief, and the enemy supplied mind and heart with thoughts of questioning and rebellion. Why did Christ dwell so much upon that which was discouraging, portraying his trials and persecutions, and describing the trials and persecutions which his disciples must endure? Why did he refer to his own humiliation and death? Were their hopes to be all disappointed? Was it not the prospect of having a high place in the

new kingdom which God was to establish that led him to espouse the cause of Christ? Judas had not decided that Jesus was not the Son of God, he had not made up his mind that he performed miracles through the agency of Satan, but yet he was questioning, and seeking to find some way by which he could explain the mighty works which he did.

The other disciples were as unwilling as was Judas to receive the statement concerning Christ's humiliation and death, for it seemed to them to mean an end to all their hopes; but when Christ presented before them his true mission, they were not offended, but appreciated the spiritual good that was to come, although they but dimly perceived its nature. Jesus said unto them: "I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that Bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this Bread shall live forever.... Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? what and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father."

Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, was about to suffer an ignominious death, and he spoke plain truth in order that the characters of all those who professed to be his disciples might be developed, so that the true and faithful might not have added to their trials the discouragement that these doubters and questioners should bring upon them at his death. Judas was among those who said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon; for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

It was at this very time that Judas made shipwreck of faith. After this he permitted doubt, envy, suspicion, bitterness, and hatred to be his guests. He became jealous at once when he was not included among the three who were chosen to witness the transfiguration of Christ upon the mount. When the disciples disputed by the way as to who should have the supremacy, his voice was often heard. In all that Christ said to his disciples there was always something with which he disagreed, and the leaven of disaffection was fast developing under the influence and presence of Judas. When he witnessed the manifestation of the fervent love of Mary as she anointed the feet of Christ with the precious ointment, his very spirit seemed turned to gall. He manifested his covetous nature, and displayed his malice and hatred.

Judas was not a doer of the words of Christ. He had had every advantage given him in order that he might learn lessons concerning Him who brought to light life and immortality, but he failed to overcome his selfish spirit, and cherished covetousness, which is idolatry, and did not cleanse the soul temple of its defilement. Every human soul has some mastering passion which must be overcome or it will overcome him and plunge the soul into ruin. Christ said: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."

Each one has a work of overcoming to do. If the objectionable trait of character is not overcome, Satan will take advantage of the defect, and thereby defile the whole man.

While Jesus was at Bethany, he told his disciples of what was to come to pass in a few days from that time. At the Passover the case of Judas was decided. Satan took control of heart and mind. He thought that Christ was either to be crucified, or would have to deliver himself out of the hands of his enemies. At all events, he would make something out of the transaction, and make a sharp bargain by betraying his Lord. He went to the priests and offered to aid them in searching for him who was accounted the troubler of Israel. Thus it was that the Lord was sold as a slave, purchased by the temple money used for the buying of the sacrifices.

Satan bound Judas to his side to be his human agent to work the death of the Son of God. But conscience was not yet dead in Judas, and when he saw Jesus deliver himself into the hands of those who would condemn and crucify him, Judas rushed in to the priests, exclaiming: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." As he saw Jesus given into the hands of his enemies, he remembered the words he had spoken in Gethsemane, "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" His master passion had spent its force, and reason again held sway; but he felt nothing but despair. He knew that Christ was the Son of God, and that he was his betrayer. The leaders of Israel heartily despised his base conduct; though they had taken advantage of his covetousness and hatred, yet when he repented, and turned to them with a confession of his guilt, they spurned him, and left him to die in his sins. Judas failed to have a place among the sanctified because he failed to learn of Christ the daily lessons that he would teach his followers, of meekness and lowliness of heart. He failed to learn the lessons of faith that the other disciples finally learned, and thus became heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.