

Ellen G. White 1895 Sign Of The Times

January 3, 1895

Doubt Not God's Pardoning Love

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” As our heavenly Father is perfect in his sphere, so also those for whom Christ died are to be perfect in their sphere. “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.” We are to believe in salvation through Christ, and make manifest that faith in our life, not by our own strength, but by trusting in the strength and efficiency of Christ. “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.” “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

The Lord wills not the death of any sinner, but that all should come to repentance. His mercies are without number, and he will not leave those for whom he has given the ransom of his life to become the sport of Satan's temptations. All heaven is given to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. No soul can more dishonor God than by professing to believe in Christ, and yet go in mourning and sorrow to present to the world the aspect of orphans. “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”

The Lord does not leave his wounded and bruised sheep to the power of Satan to be torn to pieces. He is ever strengthening his own in their weakness. He delivers those who are tried and tempted from the power of Satan. The Lord never forsakes the soul that puts his trust in him. Those who claim to be the sons and daughters of God must trust always in Jesus. To do otherwise is to disown the fact that he loves us. When we go mourning and full of depression, covering ourselves with the garments of heaviness, we represent Christ to the world as a hard, tyrannical Master. But this is untrue. This is misrepresenting the One who gave his own life for us, that he might make it possible for us to believe in him, and trust in his interest and love for sinful man. “He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.” Speaking of his watchful care over us he says, “I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.”

What great injustice is done to the Saviour, who gave his life for us, when those who profess to believe in him walk in the shadow of darkness. Jesus has said, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” If you have been walking in darkness, you have been following another leader than Jesus, and it is time for you to turn about and follow Jesus, the Truth, the Life, the Way, and the Light of the world. Is the Lord pleased to have you tossed about as the restless waves of the sea?—No, no. I tell you he wants you to be strengthened, stablished, rooted and grounded in the truth, and built up in the most holy faith. You are not your own; you are bought

with a price which cannot be estimated. You belong to God, the mighty God, bought with the price that was paid for you on Calvary's cross. Then when you keep yourself in a state of fluctuating fear and doubt, you grieve the heart of Christ, who has given you unmistakable evidence of his love, and of his desire to have you with him in his kingdom. He says, "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; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Do not lose sight of Jesus, and separate from his companionship, and keep company with the prince of darkness, entertaining his suggestions, and heeding his directions, and acting out his plans. Cling to him who has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." That you should take up with Satan, the apostate and traitor, and do after his works, after you have a knowledge of Jesus Christ, is a mystery to the universe of heaven.

Let no Christian seek to excuse himself in sin on the ground that others who have claimed to follow Jesus have committed the same errors. Your sin is none the less heinous because others have been guilty, and your manifest duty is to confess your sin to Jesus Christ, your Intercessor. Take the weight of your woe to no human being. You have one Mediator, Jesus Christ, the righteous. In contrition of soul go to him and tell all your sins. The promise is sure, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." John says: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "That ye sin not"—here is where you bring yourself into condemnation when you continue to sin. But in the strength of Christ cease to sin. Every provision has been made that grace should abide with you, and that sin may appear to you the hateful thing it is. But if any man sin, he is not to give himself up to despair, and talk like a man who is lost to Christ. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only; but also for the sins of the whole world."

The temptations of the enemy will come, but shall we give him the advantage to break down all the barriers, by yielding one iota from the strictest principles of integrity? If we yield in the least, he will follow one temptation with another, until we shall go directly contrary to the plainest statements of the word of God, and follow the mind and will of Satan. Satan and his confederacy of evil angels is ever on the alert to see by what means they may ensnare and ruin souls who have enlisted under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. You did run well for a season, you did taste and see that the Lord is good, but when you fell into sin you walked in darkness. When you yielded to temptation, you must have ceased to look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith. But, having confessed your sins, believe that the word of God cannot fail, but that he is faithful that hath promised. It is just as much your duty to believe that God will fulfill his word, and forgive your sins, as it is your duty to confess your sins. You must exercise faith in God as in one who will do exactly as he has promised to do in his word, and pardon all your transgressions.

How may we know that the Lord is indeed our sin-pardoning Redeemer, and prove what is the blessedness, the grace, the love there is in him for us? O, we must believe his word implicitly, with contrite and submissive spirit. There is no need to go mourning and ever repenting, and under a cloud of continual condemnation. Believe the word of God, keep looking unto Jesus, dwelling upon his virtues and mercies, and there will be created in the heart an utter abhorrence of that which is evil. You will be among those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. But the more closely we

discern Jesus, the more clearly we shall see our own defects of character. As we see our failings, let us confess them to Jesus, and, with true contrition of soul, co-operate with the divine power of the Holy Spirit to overcome all evil. If we confess our sins, we must believe that they are pardoned, because the promise is positive: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us no more dishonor God by doubting his pardoning love.

January 10, 1895

Disunion the Result of Unbelief

Every true disciple of Christ is to win souls to Jesus Christ by manifesting his Spirit and doing his works. The Lord has not placed any man upon the judgment seat to find fault with and to condemn his brethren. The prayer of Christ for his followers just before his crucifixion was to be a standing warning signal against the doing of anything of the kind, because the influence of criticism and judging of others would not gather with Christ but scatter away from him. Jesus prayed: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory [character] which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

O, that our minds were expanded so that we might take in the significance of this statement! The love that God has for those who believe in Jesus is to be demonstrated as the same love with which he loves his Son, by the unity of the disciples with Christ. They are to manifest forth to the world his character, cherishing that tender love one for another that will bear to the world the credentials of the power of Christ to link heart to heart in the strongest bands of fellowship and brotherhood. But the fact that the prayer of Christ is so lightly regarded, that so little effort is put forth to cultivate unity among those who profess to believe in Jesus, makes manifest the fact that the spell of Satan is upon the church. He who is full of criticism of the brethren, does not represent the oneness for which Christ prayed, but is displaying variance, discord, and disunion. If one brother errs from the truth, the Lord has given direction as to what should be done by the church, and by its individual members. No one need make a mistake or stumble. The Lord says: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church."

It is not to be told to the church until the previous directions have been faithfully and tenderly carried out; but it is never to be published to the world. Satan and his angels will make all that is possible of differences in the church to make of no effect the saving grace and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let there be no divisions among the professed children of God, for in union there is strength.

Christ is so greatly misrepresented by those who claim to believe in him, who disregard his prayer for the unity of his followers, that angels are amazed. The angels of God are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and it is their business to bind heart to heart by the golden chain of love that links each soul through Christ to God. All, all are to be bound together, brother to brother with Christ in God. The instruction for this time is, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."

Our individual work is to surrender ourselves to God, that we may be purified, ennobled, and sanctified through the truth. We need to cultivate and strengthen that faith which works by love and purifies the soul. No one need to make a mistake. Jesus has plainly revealed to us what are the requirements of genuine religion. He says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." The human agent cannot comprehend this command or obey it unless he is continually a partaker of the divine nature, having a living realization of the great sacrifice made for him, that through faith in Christ he need not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." It is our privilege to bear the divine credentials to the world that the Saviour, in whom we believe, is the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. We shall do this when we who stand under his banner present to the world a united front. But what must be the grief of Christ and heavenly angels when they behold us doing exactly opposite to that which he desired! What must be his feelings as he sees his professed children paying no heed to his prayer to his Father that they should all be one, as he and the Father were one! "This is my commandment," he said, "That ye love one another as I have loved you." "These things," he says again, "I command you, that ye love one another." We must live the requirements of God in Christ Jesus. We must arouse and be in earnest.

When you discern evil in those who profess to love God, you are not to close your eyes to it, but do just as you have been directed to do in the word of God,—deal faithfully and in a Christlike manner with those who are erring. Flatter no one. Do not link up closely with a few just because you think them congenial, to the exclusion of others who need your help and sympathy, for this savors of hypocrisy and partiality. In doing this way, faults are left unreprieved and excused in those you esteem your friends, while those who follow the Lord more closely are neglected and passed by, and some who are in greater need of help, of tender words of encouragement and sympathy, are left outside your circle. A union of this kind is not a sanctified union, and reveals the fact that those who are linked in it need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

There was never a time when the world needed a more plain and decided testimony against moral wrong than today. Deal faithfully with those who are inconsistent, and labor to restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Study the word of God critically and prayerfully. and you will receive divine enlightenment. All that God requires of us is that we shall live up to all the knowledge he has given us. We are to live upon the word of God, not upon the defects we see in the characters of others. To live upon others' errors is to do that which is fatal to spirituality. Do not set yourself up as a judge of others. Look to Jesus, talk of Jesus. Dwell upon the great plan of salvation, and keep the mind guarded lest you think and speak evil of others, pronouncing judgment upon them.

Let everyone who has named the name of Christ seek by all means to establish and to preserve the unity for which Christ prayed. Let there be harmony among the followers of Christ. The reason of

disunion is found in the fact that unbelief has darkened the mind, and the hellish shadow of Satan has fallen athwart the temple of the soul. It is Satan's purpose to cut off every ray of light that comes from the Light of the world to illuminate and brighten the human soul. Instead of beholding the defects of humanity, turn your eyes to Christ, until, charmed with his beautiful character, you become changed into his divine image.

January 17, 1895

Discipline Needed for God's Work

There is a great work to be done in the Master's vineyard, and God calls for men to do his work to whom he has given ability for that work. Those who are successful in the work of God should not become proud and selfish and lift up themselves with boasting. They should constantly remember that they have nothing but that which God has given them in trust. The Lord has furnished that by which men may become successful preachers and teachers to labor for the good of their fellow-men. It is true that men must put forth efforts so as to use their capabilities in the very best manner. Through cultivation the value of God's gifts bestowed upon men for improvement will be made manifest. God requires that men should put forth taxing effort in the line of study, and in this work divine power will surely combine with human effort. The Lord can do nothing without man's cooperation, and it is thus that man works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in him to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The cause of God needs efficient men; it needs men who are trained and educated to do valuable service as schoolteachers, and as preachers in word and doctrine. There are men who have labored with a measure of success who have had little training in either school or college; but they have put hard study into their work. They would have attained a far greater measure of success, and have been more efficient laborers, if at the very start they had acquired mental discipline. But by diligently applying themselves, and putting to use the knowledge they had already attained, by studying and by practicing, they made a success of their work.

Faithful shepherds of the flock will not be ashamed of the banner of truth, however unpopular it may be. They will not hold their peace from proclaiming the truth in all places. Whether in season or out of season, they will herald the glad tidings of salvation, they will be missionaries for God, facing danger, enduring privation, and suffering reproach for the truth's sake. The third angel is represented as flying swiftly through the midst of heaven, proclaiming his message with a loud voice. This representation symbolizes the work of God's witnesses near the end of time. With no shame upon their countenances, with no hanging down of their heads as a bulrush, but with uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth as bold soldiers of Jesus Christ. They make it manifest that they have tasted of the powers of the world to come, that their feet are not upon the sliding sand but upon the solid rock, and that they are not to be easily moved away from the faith that was once delivered to the saints. They will be strengthened by their Leader to cope with difficulties, and will be messengers of righteousness, representing the character of the great Example, and revealing the triumphs of his grace.

The Lord has endowed men and women with capabilities and talents that are to be improved by exercise, not for the glory of self, but for the glory of the divine Giver. From those who believe the

truth the rays of truth must shine forth. The truth must be heard from their lips, reflected from their countenances, and demonstrated in their characters. The grace of Christ ever has a refining, elevating, ennobling influence on the character. There are men and women of refinement and education who will throw the whole weight of their influence on the Lord's side, will ignore worldly interests, part with friends, and become missionaries for God, going forth to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. Their unconquerable fidelity will be registered as approved of God in the books of heaven. They will make it manifest to the world that there is power in Christianity to exalt the character in righteousness and true holiness. The Gospel will be seen to be the power of God unto salvation.

Those who are reckless in regard to obeying the law of God in this world, can never be intrusted with the judgment of the world hereafter. Those who have not especial respect and reverence for a "Thus saith the Lord" in this world, will not have a place among the saints who are to judge the world. Transgressors of the law of God would not feel at home in society that is pure and holy, for they would not cheerfully submit to the law of Jehovah which is to govern all the universe. How then could they judge the unlawful? Not being in harmony with the law of God in this life, they would be unfitted to have a place among those who hearken unto his commandments and cheerfully obey his statutes. This world is the training school for the future kingdom to which we are bound. It is not enough to have an intellectual religion, for this will not sanctify the soul. A mechanical, ceremonial religion is a snare, and cannot take the place of genuine heart work. Theological training must not be neglected, but experimental religion must accompany it.

The work of teachers in our schools is not to be of the same order as the work done in the colleges and seminaries of the world. The great, grand work of education is not to be of an inferior order in scientific branches, but at the same time knowledge must be imparted which will fit up a people to stand in the great day of God's preparation. Those who teach in our schools must have a deep religious experience. They must be closely connected with God, so that they may be able to bring divine wisdom and knowledge into their work of educating the youth for the future, immortal life. Students must be trained to place their will on the side of God's will, in order that they may be able to sing the new song and blend with the harmonies of heaven. They are to be, as were Joseph and Daniel, moral heroes, living noble, devoted lives of self-denial and self-sacrifice. They are not to seek worldly recognition and worldly fame as the end of their efforts. Their plans, their ideas, must be in harmony with the law of God; the object for which they must strive is the blessing of humanity and the salvation of the lost.

From age to age the heroes of faith have been marked by their fidelity to God. They have been brought conspicuously before the world, in order that their light might shine forth to those who are in darkness. The devotion and godliness that characterize the light bearers will result in glorifying God.

The world is full of men, women, and youth who are eager for distinction. Their highest aim is to obtain a knowledge of science; but they feel no sense of obligation to God for their intrusted talents. They do not realize that their influence should be exerted to bring men closer to Jesus, to help men to view the life and character of Christ, and to behold the matchless mercy, purity, humility, and loveliness of the world's Redeemer. Seeking the highest place for themselves, they do not understand that they might become agents by which to bring men in contact with the divine life, to

inspire them to unselfish labor in imparting the light of truth to those who are in darkness. God has qualified some men with more than ordinary ability. They are deep thinkers, they are energetic and thorough in their pursuits, but they are working wholly for selfish ends, and are leaving God's honor and glory out of the question. Some of these have been blessed with the light of truth, and yet they are rapidly drifting away from faith, trust, and confidence in God, and do not recognize his blessings; and, unless arrested in their mad course, they will be found in the dark, restless, turbulent waters of skepticism and infidelity. This will be the result of honoring themselves and of not making God first and best in everything. Some of these will be suddenly arrested by the chastisements of God, and they will be led through a series of affliction until they shall inquire for the old paths, zealously repent, and return to their first love. Through sorrow they may be led to place their feet in the way that is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. They will no longer seek for a place where money and selfish interests are the only objects to be attained. All worldly success without God is dry and barren waste. They will value the working of the Spirit of God upon the heart more highly than they value gold and the praise of mortals. Their minds will become free from the influence of selfishness and skepticism, for there will be an amazing change in heart and character, in thought and feeling. The aspirations will be stirred toward that which is divine, and the effort of the life be to practice that which is holy.

True religion has power to enable man to overcome stubbornness, pride, selfishness, worldly ambition, questioning, and unbelief. There is grace and strength in Christ to enable us to rise superior to the alluring, infatuating temptations of Satan, and to lead us to the cross of Calvary, to become active, devoted, loyal workers for the cause of truth. What is redemption?— It is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven, and it requires something higher, something more divine, than a mere knowledge of books. This training means a knowledge of Christ. It means emancipation from ideas, from habits and practices that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness. The soul must be delivered from the feelings and practices which are opposed to loyalty to God. We are here to learn submission to the divine will, or we shall not be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Those who are corrupt in their sympathies, who have never had the divine touch, never can sing the song of the redeemed. They would be unhappy in heaven; they would feel that they were inharmonious elements. Their dark souls and untrained powers would utterly disqualify them to join the heavenly host in ascribing praise unto God and to the Lamb.

January 24, 1895

Obedience to God's Word Required

The Lord gave to Israel evidences of his presence, in order that they might fear his name and obey his voice, and might realize that God was their leader and ruler, and that Moses was simply the Lord's general, to direct their ways through the wilderness to the promised land. Jesus Christ, the Captain of the Lord's host, was the divine leader. The people whom God had chosen to be his especial treasure, under oppression, servitude, and idolatry, had become disorganized and demoralized. Their associations in Egypt had left a degraded mold upon their habits and appetites, and there was need that they should be transformed in character. Christ had visibly manifested his presence and power among them. The glory of God had been revealed in a most remarkable manner, so that they exceedingly feared that they would be consumed by the presence of the Lord. They had heard the voice of God, as Christ bade Moses and Aaron draw near to the cloudy pillar in

which he was enshrouded, and the Lord talked with his servants. They were assured that he had heard their murmurings, and had granted what their appetites craved, flesh in the morning, and bread in the evening. They had murmured against Moses and Aaron, declaring they would have been better off had they remained in Egypt. From the pillar of cloud and fire Christ taught them that their murmurings were directed, not against Moses, but against their divine Leader. Moses and Aaron had led them according to his directions, and they were assured that it was not the man Moses that was guiding them but the Lord Jesus Christ.

From time to time the character of God and his dealings with them were opened up to the Israelites. Christ was lifting them up from their demoralized condition by the revelation of himself. The Lord promised that if they would be obedient to his commandments he would supply their necessities by his own miraculous power.

God has brought out a people in these last days and has given to them a knowledge of his law. Christ has shed a flood of light upon their pathway, revealing himself as the invisible leader of Israel in both the Old and in the New Testament. Christ has made his people the depositaries of his law. They are to keep and to teach the commandments of God, and to show their binding obligations upon men. Christ has promised that to those who obey his commandments he will be as a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, guiding them in and lighting them along the pathway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord, that they may enter in at the gate of the eternal city.

They are to keep the fear of the Lord ever before their eyes; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It is better to obtain a knowledge of God's revealed will through an understanding of his word than to have the praise of men, the honors of the world, and great pleasure. God's word assures us that in keeping his commandments there is a great reward. No earthly consideration should for one moment be looked upon as an inducement to turn from the commandments of God and refuse to lift the cross. Christians should look upon riches, ease, pleasure, and worldly honors, as those things that are represented by wood, hay, and stubble, that will perish in the fires of the last day.

Let none to whom has been represented the duty of keeping God's commandments, seek to find some objection by which they may seem to excuse themselves from obedience. Let them remember the great perverter of God's word, who was a liar from the beginning of his rebellion in heaven, and let them know that he is ready to lead them blindfold away from the plainest statements of God's word, and make that which is clear and distinct uncertain and questionable. It is his work to deceive and to make of no effect the words of Jehovah. Plant your feet on the platform of eternal truth. Follow every ray of light that you see, and that which is shadowy will be made clear to your understanding as you walk in the light. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

When Moses led the Israelites to the waters of the Red Sea, the command of God was, "Go forward." As the people moved forward in the path that Providence indicated, as they did that which was commanded, the waters of the sea rolled back. They did not see a broad path opening for them by the power of God. They were not lifted up and borne to the other side in the arms of the angels; but as they moved forward, the power of God was revealed, and on one side the sea was piled up like a wall of congealed water, leaving a path for their feet to walk upon in the hitherto buried sands

of the Red Sea. What lesson should we learn from this?—To go forward, walking in the light that God permits to shine upon our pathway, and not stopping to question and doubt.

Many have the idea that the Jewish age was one of darkness, superstition, and ignorance. They have received the erroneous idea that repentance, and faith, and divine enlightenment were reserved for the Gospel dispensation, and that these have no part in the Hebrew religion. Many think that the Jewish religion consisted only in forms and ceremonies, but there never could have been a greater deception. The Jewish nation was taken into close relationship with God, and was esteemed by him as a peculiar people, an holy priesthood, a royal nation.

Today the Christian world looks upon the Jews as a people who are under the divine curse because of their rejection and crucifixion of Christ. But, instead of looking upon them as sinners above all others, they should seek to learn a lesson from their condition, and inquire why it is that the judgment of God fell upon them in so signal a manner. It was because they rejected the great light which had been given them from the time of their delivery from Egyptian bondage. It was because the Lord had revealed to them, through his prophets, and through holy men of old, his will, and they chose to walk in their own ways, and to follow their own will. Calamity overtook the Jews because they failed to keep the commandments of God. God had told them if they did not keep his commandments, he could not fulfill his covenant of promise, for this covenant was to be fulfilled only upon condition of obedience. The history of Israel should be to us a most solemn warning of the calamities that will overtake us if we are disobedient to God's commandments. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."

Do the words of Christ spoken in reproof to the Pharisees, find an application in our days? He said, "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [Because you keep the law of God?—No.] for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." Do we not in our own day find just such teachers, who will not obey the plainest statements of truth, who turn from the light of God's word, and then do their utmost to pervert the Scriptures and to blind the eyes of those who are seeking to understand the word of God? These transgressors of God's law seek with all their power to hedge up the way so that souls shall grope in vain for the door that Christ has opened, and which he says no man can shut. Are there not teachers today who seek to close, if possible, the door of the understanding? They will not enter into the light themselves, and neither will they permit others to enter in. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

(Concluded next week.)

January 31, 1895

Obedience to God's Word Required

(Concluded.)

There are many who claim to be sanctified. They are not slow to declare before the people that they have not committed sin for years. But this profession does not constitute proof of their statement. If they were holy, their conversation would be holy, their testimony would be in accordance with the divine will, their prayers would be modeled after the prayers of Christ. They would pray, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." We are living in days when deception is on every hand. We are warned to "beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." We are to know them by their fruits. The Lord said, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

If persons come to you claiming to be sanctified, and yet making void the law of God, and teaching others that they may transgress it with impunity, their sanctification, when weighted in the balances of the sanctuary, has no more weight with God than had the long, pretentious prayers of the Pharisees. The higher the profession, the more deceptive the pretention, the more likely the unwary are to be deceived, and the greater will be the wrath of an offended God. Those who make high claims, and who disregard the law of God, are registered in the books of heaven as rebels against the divine government. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

Was this fearful denunciation pronounced against the Pharisees because they kept the law of God?—No, it was because they did not keep the law of God, and were not doers of his word. Had they kept God's law, they would have discerned that Jesus was the Son of God, and would have appreciated his mission. So it is in our day. If those who profess to believe in Christ, really did believe in him, they would do his work, they would have respect unto his commandments.

Jesus has made it evident that his attitude to the law was one of loyalty. He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." There are some who tell the people to throw the Old Testament into the fire; but such statements are not in harmony with what Jesus told the people. Jesus declared that his work was not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. He came to magnify the law, to exalt its honor, to show by his suffering and death that the law is immutable, and that God cannot annul its penalty for transgression. He further declared: "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." He showed them what it was that constituted the sin of the Pharisees, that, though they were punctilious in the observance of outward forms, they did not in heart obey the commandments of God. "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."

The attitude of Christ to the law is unmistakable, but how men have presumed to misstate, misapply, and pervert his words! They have drawn an altogether different lesson from that which he designed to teach, and have therefore put themselves under the condemnation that Christ pronounced upon the Pharisees: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's

bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

February 7, 1895

The Living Testimony

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

We are not only to contemplate the glory of Christ, but also to speak of his excellences. Isaiah not only beheld the glory of Christ, but he also spake of him. While David mused, the fire burned; then spake he with his tongue. While he mused upon the wondrous love of God, he could not but speak of that which he saw and felt. Who can by faith behold the wonderful plan of redemption, the glory of the only-begotten Son of God, and not speak of it? Who can contemplate the unfathomable love that was manifest upon the cross of Calvary in the death of Christ, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, and have no words by which to extol the Saviour's glory? We cannot become partakers of his love, and give no expression to our reverence and adoration.

As believers behold Christ, they will be led to assemble together, and to speak one to another words that will express their fervent love. They will say, He is “the chiefest among ten thousand,” “Yea, he is altogether lovely.” “In his temple doth everyone speak of his glory.” The sweet singer of Israel praised him upon the harp, singing: “I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.... They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.” This will be the character of the conversation of those who are described in the Scriptures as those that “feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.” God is represented as listening to their words and writing them in a book.

John, the beloved disciple, bore a living testimony, saying: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

Surely, those who speak one to another of the goodness of the Lord are highly privileged. Peter exclaims, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” We have rich themes for thought and conversation, and if we will dwell upon these themes, our souls will be encouraged and uplifted. Those who are subjects of the grace of God, upon whom the

bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness are shining, are to be God's witnesses. Should they hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. God will be glorified.

If the members of the church are one with Christ, there will be union one with another. The unity of believers will be a living testimony to the world of the power of the Gospel. When there is love one to another, the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will be diffused to a world that lies in darkness. Why can we not see from the lessons of Christ, and especially from his prayer for the unity of believers, that Christians must be perfect in unity in order to represent the glory of their Redeemer? If those who believe the truth would bring the prayer of Christ into their practical life, they would grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. As believers in Christ, we are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

The believer in Christ should understand that dissension and division in the church are brought about through the working of the powers of darkness, in order that those who profess to be the children of God may not present the oneness for which Christ prayed. God's people greatly dishonor his name, and misrepresent his truth, when they manifest a lack of love one for another. As love for God grows cold, they lose the childlike simplicity that knits heart to heart in loving tenderness. Hard-heartedness comes in, and there is a drawing away one from another. Many are saying by their actions, "I care not for the prayer of Christ." They feel under no special obligation to love others as Christ has loved them, and Jesus can do little for these souls, for his words and Spirit are not permitted to enter into the heart.

Many are in darkness, and know not the cause; they are not at peace with God; they are not one with Christ nor in unity with the brethren. They seem to think that they are at liberty to act out the natural feelings of the heart. They testify by their words and actions that they do not desire to be in union with those who do not exactly meet their mind, even though they are believers. All who entertain evil surmisings, and cherish ill feelings to others, need to be converted. They need to learn to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Love for one another is not to be manifested by praise and by flattery of one another, but by true fidelity. The love of Christ will lead us to watch for souls, and if we see one in danger, we will tell him so, plainly and kindly, even at the risk of his displeasure. The religion of Christ is not to be controlled by impulse. We need to pray much and lean wholly upon God. We need to hold the truth with firmness, and in all righteousness and truth; but while we speak the truth with fidelity, we should speak it in love.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." How much?—"As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Do we regard this commandment sufficiently? Do we permit it to control mind and heart, and mold the character? "By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Thus believers are to bear to the world the credentials which will testify that they are indeed the children of God. Jesus says: "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

What can I present before my brethren and sisters that is more important for their study and practice than the prayer of Christ? The entire seventeenth chapter of John is full of marrow and fatness. Are there not urgent reasons why we should take heed to those words of Christ? Is it not time we sought for the unity for which the Saviour prayed? Shall we not open our hearts to the melting love of Jesus? Shall we not let that love take the place of the coldness and hardness that have been too often revealed in the character? May the Lord have compassion upon us; may he forgive our perversity, heal our backslidings, and unite the hearts of all that believe the truth in that oneness for which Christ prayed, that we may be one even as he and the Father are one.

February 14, 1895

Forgiven as We Forgive

In his epistle to Titus, Paul bids him to exhort the brethren to be "ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." The mercy and favor which God manifests towards us is an example of how we should treat the erring. When those who claim to believe the truth humble their hearts before God and obey his word, then the Lord will listen to their prayers.

If your brethren have erred, you must forgive them. You should not say, as some have said who ought to know better: "I do not think they feel humble enough. I do not think they feel their confession." What right have you to judge them, as if you could read the heart? The word of God says: "If he repent, forgive him, And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." And not only seven times, but seventy times seven should you forgive him, just as often as Christ forgives you.

God has freely forgiven our sins, not asking us to render any equivalent. The Lord has given us this example in order that men may see how they should treat their fellow-men. As God for Christ's sake has forgiven your sins, you should forgive your brethren who trespass against you. If you are an overcomer at last, it will not be because of your own righteousness, but because of the righteousness of Christ, because of the long forbearance, mercy, and forgiveness of God. But if you do not cherish kindness, love, and a forgiving spirit toward your brethren, you will not be of the number who will receive the forgiveness of God. The lesson that Jesus would impress upon his disciples is that those who profess his name should not cherish a revengeful spirit, or do an unkind action. The whole work of Christ had a tendency to counteract the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees, who encouraged revenge and retaliation.

Jesus taught that the poor were not to rise up against those who are in power. They were not to resist their oppression; but at the same time he pronounced a terrible woe upon those who tyrannize over the poor: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." God enjoins upon the servant to be faithful to his master, and to be contented for Christ's sake, but he assures the master that he also has a Master, who will requite him full measure for his deeds. He gives the rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to

them." We do not receive forgiveness because but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Christ gives lesson after lesson in his school to teach us to learn to trust, not in our merits, but in the merits of Christ's righteousness. The conditions of salvation are presented in various ways, in order that correct impressions may be made on varied minds, and that none may be deceived. Repentance and faith are the conditions upon which salvation is provided. Abraham was justified by faith; but it was the faith which worked obedience. Let all who claim to believe present truth be doers of the word, which plainly teaches that the spirit of forgiveness must be cherished, that it is indispensable to our receiving forgiveness of God. The sinner who is forgiven and accepted through Christ will forgive his brother willingly, freely, and thoroughly.

Jesus brought out an important lesson in the parable of the unjust steward. He said: "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents." This steward was in a high position, and had been intrusted with a vast amount of property, but upon examining his accounts, he was found unfaithful; he owed his Lord ten thousand talents. When the king saw the evidence of his servant's unfaithfulness, he commanded him to be sold, with his wife and children, his houses, his lands, and all that he had, that payment might be made. Alarm seized the unfaithful man, as ruin stared him in the face, and he pleaded for delay, saying, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But his lord knew that he could never pay the debt. While the servant acknowledged the justice of the sentence against him, he begged for mercy. "Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

What joy was this, what relief from the shadow of his wrong course, which surrounded him like a cloud! He went forth from the presence of his lord with the whole debt canceled. But circumstances occurred which tested the true spirit of this man—whether he would manifest the same forgiveness and mercy to another that had been shown toward him, or whether the joy and gratitude which he expressed were of a selfish nature, and his heart was still unsoftened. "The same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt."

In this parable Christ illustrates the spirit of selfishness and severity which brother exercises toward brother. Both are human, both are in need of mercy, patience, and forbearance; but one whom God has forgiven much will not forgive a small offense in his fellow-man. Too many professed Christians have an unfeeling, relentless spirit, which is the result of pride, self-sufficiency, and hardness of heart, and they deal in an exacting way with those whom they think to be in error, and thus show that they do not appreciate the great love that God has manifested for them; for their hearts are not subdued and softened by its influence.

When the unjust steward whose great debt had been forgiven met another inferior to him in position, who owed him but a small sum, he was filled with anger, and with threats and violence claimed the money that was due him. When the poor debtor fell at his feet, and used the very same prayer which he himself had uttered before his lord, he was merciless. He accused the man of an

intention of not paying him, and disregarded his prayers and tears. He who had been forgiven so much, would himself forgive nothing. He claimed his right, and, taking advantage of the law, afflicted the distressed debtor by casting him into prison. This conduct grieved those who witnessed it, for they knew the whole story of his pardon, and they carried a report of his doings to the king. Then the king's anger was stirred, and he ordered the man to come before him. "Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him."

Will not those whose names are upon the church books, who claim to be the sons and daughters of God, consider their relation to God and their fellow-men? We must depend entirely upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Saviour, and shall we allow our hearts to remain hard and unsympathizing? Can any provocation authorize us to cherish unkind feelings, or cause us to harbor ill feelings or seek revenge? Can we cast the first stone in condemnation of a brother, when God is extending his mercy toward us, and forgiving our trespasses against him? Should God enter into judgment with us our debt would be found to be immense, yet our heavenly Father is willing to forgive. Men will be dealt with by God not according to their opinion of themselves, not according to their self-confidence, but according to the spirit which they reveal toward their erring brethren.

A spirit of harshness and severity is the spirit of Satan. Pride of heart, if cherished, creates envy, evil surmising, and leads to revenge. There is danger of our exaggerating casual words or actions into intentional offenses, and of thinking that some one has done us an injustice that merits our coldness, indifference, or contempt. Yet the Lord has charge of these very persons whom we accuse; angels of God minister unto them. He who reads the heart may see more genuine goodness in them than in him who harbors ill feelings against them for a supposed wrong. "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; if he repent, forgive him." Treat him and his errors as you wish God to treat you when you offend him. Charity does not rejoice in evil; revenge does. Be careful to manifest zeal for yourselves that you may show out of a good conversation your meekness of wisdom. Avoid every bitter word, every unkind action. Love as brethren; be kind; be courteous. Do not scandalize the truth by bitter envying and contention; for such is the spirit of the world. Let not these unholy traits once be named among you.

February 28, 1895

Who are the Sanctified?

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

Sanctification is not a happy flight of feeling, not the work of an instant, but the work of a lifetime. If any one claims that the Lord has sanctified him, and made him holy, the proof of his claim to the blessing will be seen in the fruits of meekness, patience, long-suffering, truthfulness, and love. If the blessing that those who claim to be sanctified have received, leads them to rely upon some particular emotion, and they declare there is no need of searching the Scriptures that they may know God's revealed will, then the supposed blessing is a counterfeit, for it leads its possessors to place value on their own unsanctified emotions and fancies, and to close their ears to the voice of

God in his word. Why need those who claim they have had special manifestations of the Spirit, and the witness that their sins are all forgiven, conclude that they can lay the Bible aside, and from henceforth walk alone? When we ask those who claim to have been instantaneously sanctified, if they are searching the Scriptures as Jesus told them to do, to see if there is not additional truth for them to accept, they answer, "God makes known his will to us directly in special signs and revelations, and we can afford to lay the Bible aside.

There are thousands who are being deceived by trusting to some special emotion, and discarding the word of God. They are not building upon the only safe and sure foundation,—the word of God. A religion that is addressed to intelligent creatures will produce reasonable evidences of its genuineness, for there will be marked results in heart and character. The grace of Christ will be made manifest in their daily conduct. We may safely ask those who profess to be sanctified, Do the fruits of the Spirit appear in your life? Do you manifest the meekness and lowliness of Christ, and reveal the fact that you are learning daily in the school of Christ, shaping your life after the pattern of his unselfish life? The best evidence that any of us can have of our connection with the God of heaven is that we keep his commandments. The best proof of faith in Christ is distrust of self and dependence upon God. The only reliable proof of our abiding in Christ is to reflect his image. Just so far as we do this we give evidence that we are sanctified through the truth, for the truth is exemplified in our daily life.

There are thousands, yes, millions, who are making a mistake in their religious life. They make religion a thing independent of their life, of their thoughts and words, and daily actions. Their religion is a delusion of the senses. Their ideas and principles presented as sanctification are deceitful workings. Some speak of hearing voices and of seeing sights of a supernatural character; but there is no sign in their daily course of action that the Spirit of God has wrought a change in the natural heart, for they are carnal, at enmity with God's law, and neither love God nor obey his commandments.

Nervous excitement in religious matters is no evidence that the Spirit of God is working upon the heart. We read of frenzied contortions of the body, of shrieking and screaming in the work of Satan upon the minds and bodies of men; but the word of God affords us no example of any such manifestations in connection with those upon whom he pours out his Spirit. It is clear that distempered fancies, wild outbursts, and contorted bodily exercises are the workings of the enemy. Yet many think that the disorder of the mind, which is intensified by the power of Satan, is a warrant that God is causing these deceived souls to act in so uncomely a manner. The whole spirit and tone of the Bible condemns men in acting without reason or intelligence. When the Spirit of God moves upon the heart, it causes the faithful, obedient child of God to act in a manner that will commend religion to the good judgment of sensible-minded men and women. The Spirit of God illuminates the mind with the word of God, and does not come as a substitute for the word. The Holy Spirit ever directs the believer to the word, and presents its passages to the mind, to reprove, correct, counsel, and comfort. It never leads its possessor to act in an unbecoming way, or to manifest extravagant and uncalled-for developments that bear not the least resemblance to that which is heavenly, and lower the standard of what is pure and undefiled religion in the minds of men.

There was nothing of this character found in the life or teachings of Jesus. All that is of heaven is pure, peaceable, refined, and ennobling, free from everything that is extravagant or fanatical in

thought, word, or action. The religion of Christ bears the heavenly credentials, and when the heart has been impressed with the divine image, the soul is in harmony with all God's commandments. But the sanctification that leads its possessors to refuse to study the Scriptures, and persuades them to believe they know it all, and that there is no advanced truth for them to accept, is of a spurious order. They are yet carnal, for it is the carnal mind that is "enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." They are deluded by the adversary of God and man. They have illusions, and a bewitching power is upon them as they cry out: "I am saved, I am saved. I cannot sin." We only can distinguish the true from the false by the manifestation of the graces of the Spirit, which Christ has promised to implant in the heart.

Many who claim to be sanctified, who are yet breaking the commandments of God, and filled with enmity against God, are boldly presumptuous, and, while disobeying the words of Christ, yet dare to appropriate the promises given to the loyal and obedient. They have no right to one of the promises of God, because they do not fulfill the conditions upon which the promises are to be fulfilled. They will talk of faith and holiness when their foundation is built up of rotten timbers, and they are depending on their own self-righteousness. But their presumptuous assurance is not faith. They do not know what constitutes faith.

While there are many who lay claim to the promises of God while they are not fulfilling their conditions, there is another class who are humble and conscientious, but faint hearted, and they overlook the precious promises of God that are for their appropriation. They are continually in fear that Jesus does not love them. They walk in fear and trembling, and the hand of faith seems too feeble to reach up and grasp and hold the promises of God. They continually look to themselves to find an assurance that they are good enough to become the children of God. But to look to self is to look in the wrong direction. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican has forcible lessons for both these classes. The Pharisee is full of self-sufficiency, and rests in carnal security that he is saved, while the publican has a deep sense of his unworthiness, and stands afar off. He does not feel worthy to draw nigh to God, but smites upon his breast in self-condemnation, and will not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven to meet the eyes of the heart-searching God. His cry is one of soul agony, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yet this was the one that Jesus himself declares went down to his house justified. But the Pharisee had no such divine favor. The publican looked away from himself, for he could see nothing there in which to trust for salvation. He felt the need of a physician, and his humble prayer was heard, while the prayer of the boasting Pharisee was an offense to God.

The promises contained in the seven beatitudes are not to be fulfilled to the one who feels self-sufficient, who turns from the Scriptures of revealed truth to a false theory, crying: "I am saved, I am saved. I cannot sin." The precious promises of the beatitudes are for those who feel their poverty of spirit, to the true mourners, to the meek, to the peacemakers, to the pure in heart, to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. It is the weary and the heavy laden that Christ invites to come unto him, and to them his promise is sure, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." But the rest comes in wearing Christ's yoke, in bearing Christ's burden.

March 7, 1895

The Cross Incontrovertible Evidence

Christ came to the world to convince men, by evidence that could not be controverted, that "God is love." This fact, so long disputed by Satan, is forever put at rest with unfallen worlds and with heavenly intelligences. It is put at rest with those who look upon an uplifted Saviour, who are convinced by the manifestation of the love of God displayed at Calvary. The wondrous condescension of God in giving Christ to the world to work out the principles of divine character, leaves every human intelligence without a shadow of excuse in withholding his allegiance from the God of heaven. Jesus was one with the Father, and revealed the perfection of God, and yet he came to the world in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and condemned sin in the flesh by his own life of perfect obedience to the law of God, showing that men may become partakers of the divine nature, and may through faith in Christ lay hold on moral power that has been brought within their reach through the love so abundantly expressed in their behalf. Human agents may form characters after the divine similitude, because of the great love wherewith Christ has loved us. The Saviour said: "I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "This commandment have I received of my Father."

Here was the power that braced the human nature of Christ, and that showed itself mighty to save. In Christ was wisdom not born of earth, but of heavenly extraction, by which the plan of salvation was unfolded, which called forth the admiration of the universe of God. The plan of redemption unfolded in the practical life of the world's Redeemer. He held fast to man with his human arm, and would not let him go; and with his divine hand he grasped the throne of the Infinite. In all the details of his life he gave to earthly and heavenly intelligences an example of humility, of faithfulness in honoring and accepting every requirement of the law of God. He manifested holiness (wholeness) in accepting and expressing that law, in bringing it before the world, and in pressing close to his heart that violated law of God, planning for its honor, bidding those who would discern God's way to look up and rejoice, and saying, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Thrones and kingdoms shall be yours if you will endure testing and proving of God, for only the loyal shall enter the portals of bliss.

Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. In beholding God we behold the one who poured out his soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and his hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold his love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love.

The plan of Satan was by his lying philosophies to widen the breach that existed between God and man. He argued that man could not keep the law of God, and therefore that God had been obliged to change the laws which he had made, and had abolished the rule of his government. Satan's work was to keep the agitation against God in progress, and keep the question to the front as to whether God was light and love or not. Satan had charged God with his own attributes, and thus sowed in the hearts of men the seeds of enmity against God, for man accepted the statements of him who was a liar from the beginning. Uniting fallen man with himself, he kept a series of false theories in regard to God in continual circulation, asserting them to be truth, in order that he might cover up the truth, and interpose his shadow between men and the way and the life.

Satan could establish pronounced enmity toward God only by bringing into contempt the laws of his government. In doing this he deceived many, and through his subtle reasonings he caused many to transgress. Thus he thought to cultivate so large a harvest of enmity toward God as to discourage the divine power, exhaust the forbearance of God, and counteract his love, so that God would abandon man to his deceiver by withdrawing his mercy and grace. He thought to so work with human agents as to cause the last spark of love to die from the heart of God, and cause him to lift the sword of justice and destroy the rebel race. Then Satan supposed that his claims would be vindicated before unfallen worlds, before unfallen angels.

But what was the result of his malignant workings?—The signals of mercy were continually exhibited, and, although those who could have received the heavenly offers of love and mercy, continually answered back with defiance, and responded, “We want not thy ways, O God; depart from us,” and the principles of hatred to the law of God were continually increasing, yet the forbearance of God did not cease; he did not fail or become discouraged. Love and hatred stood face to face with each other. Were men to receive the annihilating stroke of an offended God? “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” “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.” At the crisis, when iniquity had overspread the world, and Satan seemed about to triumph, Jesus came with the embassy of divine mercy. Satan, exulted in the idea that he had led men to such a state of evil that God would destroy the world, but Jesus came, not to condemn but to save the world.

But was the law of God that pointed out man's transgression extinguished by the death of Christ? If that was so, Satan had gained everything he had aimed to obtain. No! truth, everlasting truth, was vindicated in the manifestation of the justice of God, which is in its true essence the love of God. The cross of Christ testifies to the immutability of the law of Jehovah. God could give his only-begotten Son, but he could not abolish one jot or tittle of his law, to meet man in his fallen condition. To set aside one tittle of the law would be to make null and void the whole law. The cross of Calvary for all time, through all eternity, is the unanswerable argument in regard to the immutability of the law of God.

The whole world stands condemned before the great moral standard of righteousness. In the great day of judgment every soul that has lived on the earth will receive sentence in accordance as to whether his deeds have been good or evil in the light of the law of God. Every mouth will be stopped as the cross with its dying Victim shall be presented, and its real bearing shall be seen by every mind that has been sin blinded and corrupted. Sinners will stand condemned before the cross, with its mysterious Victim bowing beneath the infinite burden of human transgression. How quickly will be swept away every subterfuge, every lying excuse! Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. They will then understand that they have chosen Barabbas instead of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The mystery of the incarnation and the Crucifixion will be plainly discerned; for it will be presented before the mind's eye, and every condemned soul will read what has been the character of his rejection of truth. All will understand that they have erred from the truth by receiving the misinterpretations and bewitching lies of Satan instead of “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” They read the announcement, “Thou, O man, hast chosen to stand under the banner

of the great rebel, Satan, and in so doing thou hast destroyed thyself." Whatever may have been the endowment of talent, whatever may have been the supposed wisdom, the rejecter of truth has then no ability to turn unto God. The door is shut, as was the door of the ark in Noah's day.

The great men of earth will then understand that they have surrendered mind and heart to ensnaring philosophy which pleased the carnal heart. Hope and grace and every inducement had been held out by One who loved them, and gave his life for them, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, but they refused the love of God. Their lofty opinions, their human reasonings, were extolled; they declared themselves sufficient in themselves to understand divine mysteries, and they thought their own powers of discrimination were strong enough to discern truth for themselves. They fell an easy prey to Satan's subtlety, for he presented before them specious errors in human philosophy, which has an infatuation for human minds. They turned from the Source of all wisdom, and worshiped intellect. The message and the messengers of God were criticised and discarded as beneath their human, lofty ideas. The invitations of mercy were made a jest, and they denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, and derided the idea of his preexistence before he assumed human nature. But the tattered shreds of human reasoning will be found to be only as ropes of sand in the great day of God.

March 14, 1895

Christ the Impersonation of the Law

Jesus 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." Of Christ it was written, "He will magnify the law, and make it honorable." How did he do this?—He lived out the law in the sight of the heavenly universe, in the sight of unfallen worlds, and in the sight of sinful men. In this earth he performed his mission, and fulfilled his office, and, by obedience to the law of God, he testified to all its immutable character, while at the same time proving that its precepts could be perfectly obeyed through his grace by every son and daughter of Adam.

"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none."

The Lord Jesus was the only one who could make up the gap, and restore the hedge of the law of God. He came not to abrogate the law, but to carry out every specification. The Lord Jesus had a very different conception of the law from that of the scribes and Pharisees, the rabbis and Sadducees. They had corrupted the truth with traditions and maxims of men. The symbols that pointed to Christ had been perverted. They went through a round of ceremonies which were destitute of virtue because they were destitute of life. Any form, any outward symbol, if it be not prompted by holiness and true goodness, is but mockery. True goodness, true obedience to God, is not in need of outward show and parade. Vital godliness will be revealed without a great effort at display. Spiritual life will

be made manifest by transformation of character in him who is possessed of the divine power that works sanctification. A name to live, and no vital activity, is a contradiction, for death is there.

Jesus said of his followers, "Ye are the light of the world." They are to shine amid the moral darkness. How?—Not by making long prayers to be seen of men, not in laying claim to high position, not in following a long, prescribed, tedious round of ceremonies, but by being imbued with the working principle of love to God. The people of God are to shine by working the works of God with earnest zeal as obedient children, showing earnestness and loyalty to Christ, not being hearers only, but doers of his words. They are to shine by working out their salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God that worketh in them, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

The followers of Christ are drawn to him, and the Holy Spirit is imparted to them, so that they are not a mass of corruption, but are as salt. Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men." The religion of the Pharisees was well described by the term of salt that had lost its savor. The Pharisees, who loved the honor of men, who loved their own maxims and traditions, made idols of their own little specifications, and lost sight of the doctrines of the Bible, and spiritual death was the consequence.

In his sermon on the mount Jesus presented the true principles of the law of God, and divested the precepts of God from the rubbish of man's inventions which had been accumulating for ages, corrupting the true principles of religion, and making them consist in a ceaseless round of ceremonies. Jesus presented the truth in its unadulterated form, and showed that the principles of the law must be planted in the heart. He leaves it to his followers to change all their previous ideas concerning the exacting requirements of men, and for love of him follow after purity of character and conduct. But he does not in any way give license to the idea that the law of God is not binding, for his kingdom is established upon the law of God.

Jesus 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 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." Then in the most solemn manner he takes up the specifications of the law, and shows how far-reaching is every precept which is to be written in their hearts and to be made manifest in their character. And as the people listened to his words, they said, "Never man spake like this Man."

The Lord Jesus came to our world to represent the character of his Father. He came to live out the law, and his words and character were daily a correct exposition of the law of God. His own personal example testified to the world, to angels, and to men that he was keeping the law of God, and was a standard and pattern to mankind. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Jesus was a living manifestation of what the law was, and he revealed in his personal character its true significance, and showed it to be the only remedy for the existing evils, when it was set free from the rubbish of men's traditions and maxims. As it was expounded by the scribes and Pharisees, it was

misleading because misrepresented, and it perverted the characters of those who received the traditions and commandments of men.

The Lord Jesus gave to men a representation of the character of God in his life and example. The law of God is the transcript of the character of God. And in Christ they had its precepts exemplified, and example was far more effective than the precept had been. Christ founded his kingdom upon the law of God, and those who followed Christ, imitating his life and character, were pronounced loyal and true to all God's commandments. Jesus was a living illustration of the fulfillment of the law, but his fulfilling it did not mean its abolition and annihilation. In fulfilling the law, he carried out every specification of its claims.

Adam fell through disobeying the commandments of the Lord; but Christ took the field of battle to resist the temptations of Satan, and to refuse to transgress a "Thus saith the Lord." He declares, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill"—to do all the requirements of the law. There could be no deviation on his part from one single specification of the law. If there had been the least failure in carrying out any particular of its commands, we should have had in Christ a worthless sacrifice. The Pharisees charged Christ with breaking the Sabbath. Christ had declared himself the Lord of the Sabbath, and he had carried out every principle of the Sabbath commandment, and asked them how it was that they condemned the guiltless. Shall we take the words of Pharisees, who accused Christ of sin, or take the words of Christ, who declared himself guiltless? Shall we take the charge of the Pharisees as true, and have nothing better than a sinner for our Saviour?—No, no; never defile the lips with such guile, and bear false witness against Jesus, as did the Jews.

Jesus is the Light of the world, and those who claim that he broke the law of God are in the darkness of error. Their minds are perverted, their understanding is darkened in the same manner as was the understanding of the Pharisees whom Christ addressed, saying, "Ye are ignorant of the Scriptures and the power of God." They made void the law of God through their tradition. Professing to be the followers of God, they had turned from the holy commandment, and were as salt that had lost its savor. Impure salt has no saving virtue. If the followers of Christ do not derive their life, their fragrance, and their saving qualities from Jesus Christ, they have no spiritual worth. But all who conform their life, their heart, their mind, fully and ungrudgingly to his service, reflect his image, and shed the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness into the darkness of a world that lieth in wickedness.

March 21, 1895

Parents are to Teach God's Statutes

Fathers and mothers who claim to be Christians, and who have not been doers of the words of Christ, who have not educated and trained their children in correct habits, have not brought them up to love and fear God, as God has directed them to. The words of Moses to Israel, concerning the statutes and judgments of the Lord, are also the word of God to us; he says: "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently,

lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons; specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children."

"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Who gave these commands?—It was the Lord Jesus, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud. He presented to the people the only true standard of character, which is the law of God. "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord our God hath commanded you? then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand." The Lord commanded the parents to rehearse to the children his past dealings with them, for the mighty works of God were ever to be kept fresh in their minds. "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God [not with a servile fear, but], for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us."

The Lord gave them a warning, lest they should fall into sin, forget God, and practice idolatry. But should they practice idolatry, and be taken captive by their enemies, the Lord makes provision for their reinstatement in his favor, and says:

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God); he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them."

What voice were they to be obedient to?—To the voice that spake the law to them from Mount Sinai. "Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?"

In these latter days the light has been shining unto the people of God in clear, bright rays. It is shining upon many who have been led into idolatry through keeping a spurious sabbath, by following the tradition of men instead of the commandments of God; but if they now turn unto the Lord with all their heart to keep his commandments, God will show himself merciful.

Parents have a solemn duty to perform. They should labor most earnestly to counteract their own false teachings. They should lift up the true standard of character, and bring their own habits and practices into harmony with God, and be doers of the word of Christ. They should take up their neglected work, and educate and train their children in accordance with the directions given in the word of God. There should be no neglect on the part of parents, no neglect on the part of instructors, to faithfully perform their duty in the fear of God, in lifting up the standard before the young by both precept and example.

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Parents and teachers should feel it their duty to deal faithfully with those who are in their charge; but they must also realize that they must deal lovingly and mercifully with the erring. They will need to have long patience and forbearance, to cultivate the power of presenting heavenly inducements in such a way as to inspire courage and hope in those who are defective in character, in order that the erring may make decided efforts to reform, exercising faith in God, who has given them precious evidences of the great love wherewith he has loved them.

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord says, “I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” The Lord has estimated the value of the human soul by the value of the sacrifice made upon the cross of Calvary. Then let every human agent remember that the claims of God are upon him, and that he is not his own. Let those who are obtaining an education, thinking that they will engage in the work for the Master, to advance his truth in the earth, take heed to themselves, and closely examine themselves to know whether or not they are in the truth. Is the truth working by love, and purifying the soul from its moral defilement? God will not accept as his collaborators those who have no real sense of holiness and virtue. Those who wear the yoke with Christ will be in harmony with the purposes of Christ, and will represent Christ in character. They will be lights to the world.

March 28, 1895

Temporal Interests to Be Subordinated

The cross of Christ is the mighty agency through which God has planned to move the world. Christ as the atoning sacrifice has influenced the heavenly intelligences to such a degree that it is their highest joy to work as the messengers of Christ, to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. O, how important has this world become! Every eye in the universe of God is looking upon this world, for here it is that the great battle is in progress. Christ, the prince of life, is in conflict with Satan, the prince of darkness, over every fallen soul, that he may rescue the human race from the slavery of Satan. Satan and his agencies are opposing every effort for the advancement of the good.

The cross of Christ is to be so distinctly presented before the world that every other power will be eclipsed, and the human race be drawn in homage to Christ Jesus. The Father has given everything into the hands of Christ,—all power, dominion, and glory have been bestowed upon the Son of God. When the eye is directed to Calvary, the soul beholds Jesus, the royal Sufferer, dying for the sin of man, in order that man may have another trial, another opportunity to obtain eternal life. When Jesus Christ is evidently set forth before the sinner's eyes, manifest in the flesh and crucified for him,

the Spirit has taken of the things of Christ, and has shown them to the sinner, and the result has been transformation of character, the sinner becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.

But, though the greatest Gift of heaven has been bestowed in order to attract the attention of men heavenward, men are ensnared by the temptations of Satan, and their minds seem to be enchained to the earth. Our Saviour came to the world to correct this evil, and to fasten the affections of the soul on things above. He lifted up his voice in warning, saying, "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 world's Redeemer calls the attention of men to the nobler life which they have lost sight of, and brings again unseen and eternal realities within range of their vision. He opens before their eyes the glories of heaven.

"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." Jesus takes men to the very threshold of heaven, and opens before them the sanctuary, flooded with the glory of the Lord of hosts, sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and the train of his glory filled the temple. It has been maintained by some, both by pen and voice, that it would incapacitate human beings for conducting wisely the affairs of this life, to look upon unseen realities. It has been argued that earthly matters would seem so inferior when contrasted with heavenly things, that every thought and impulse would be engaged with the world that is to come, and that earthly affairs would be neglected.

But Jesus presents to the mind the realities of the world to come, yet all his lessons, both to his disciples and to the promiscuous crowds that thronged his steps, were of a character to create a wholesome, appropriate interest in the affairs of this life, and to bring eternal realities before the mind as of supreme importance. He takes the world as it were in his hand, and assigns to it its proper place, and directs his disciples as to what are their duties in regard to the things of this life. He would have every son and daughter of Adam learn of him, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew. By both precept and example he taught them that every moment of life was fraught with eternal responsibility. He weeded life of its vanities and follies, distinguishing between the tares and the wheat, and presenting before men the pure, the precious, the desirable in comparison with the finite and perishable.

The Lord Jesus made the world. "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. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Yet he who made all things, he who was equal with the Father, one with God, who was in the express image of his person and character, left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, clothed his divinity with humanity, and came into our world in order that humanity might touch divinity, and divinity sanctify humanity. He came that the fallen sons and daughters of Adam might be recovered from the effects of Adam's transgression and fall, and, through his divine, uplifting power, become sons and daughters of God. He sees that the world is largely under the control of the enemy of God and man, and cannot break the spell of infatuation that is over them. Satan, who first tempted Eve in Eden, and through her caused the fall of Adam, continues his temptations, seeking by every power to retain men in disobedience. Every lying device is put into operation to misrepresent the Father and to dispute the authority of his only-begotten Son. Satan casts a hellish shadow before the world to hide God and

the world's Redeemer from sight, so that if they were viewed at all, it might be through the mists and fogs of superstition, tradition, and error, and not in truth.

The mission of Christ to our world was to set things in order, to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. He saw the world chasing after happiness and finding it not, meeting with failure on every hand, and yet ever eager to give every flattering inducement a trial to attain that for which they sought. He pointed out to them the true source of happiness. The world's Redeemer would have them direct their attention to the world on high, and he gives them lessons in which eternal realities are ever brought to view, where he showed to men that which is good and imperishable. The treasure they seek is not to be found upon earth. They should set their affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. He said to them, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Satan has blinded the eyes of those who see nothing beyond the earthly, temporal interests. They are unable to behold things which are afar off, while they see with magnified vision the merest atoms of worldly interests assume large and attractive proportions. They are spiritually blind, and the Lord Jesus performs a greater miracle when he restores spiritual vision to those who have been blinded by the glitter and tinsel of this world, than if he healed the most malignant disease. He found the world, who have souls to save or to lose, mistaking phantoms for realities.

The great deceiver sought to blind the eyes of Christ by the glitter and tinsel of the world, and presented before him the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them. He who had fallen from heaven, pictured the world as possessing the gilding of the world above, in order that he might induce Christ to accept the bribe, and fall down and worship him. Calling him by his true name, Jesus rebukes the deceiver. Divinity flashed through suffering humanity, and he made manifest through his word the authority of heaven. He reveals to the deceiver that, though he had resumed the disguise of an angel of light, his true character was not hidden from the Saviour of the world. He called him Satan, the angel of darkness, who had left his first estate, and had refused allegiance to God.

Jesus overcomes the great deceiver, and sees his working with the children of disobedience to keep them in disobedience. He sees him deluding them by innumerable deceptions, and beholds men ready to take the offered bribe to have the world and worship the deceiver, rather than renounce the world and worship the Son of God. Absorbed in providing for their temporal necessities, engaged in the chase for the worldly advantages and attractions which Satan holds out before them, they stake all to win the glittering prize, and lose both worlds. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, urges them to have respect unto the recompense of the reward, to value their everlasting happiness, and to keep eternity in view. He seeks to heal the defective spiritual eyesight of the soul with whom he comes in contact and brings heaven before their vision. He knows the necessities of mortals. He does not lose sight of their temporal needs; but he presents also that which is nobler and higher than things that are temporal, and bids them consider the claims of the future immortal life. He would draw the mind and engage the attention in contemplating eternal realities.

Those who serve mammon, put Bible religion in a secondary place. But those who love and serve God will subordinate their temporal interests to their eternal interest, and, instead of spending all their energies in securing property, indulging in worldly pleasure, to secure that which is simply

temporal and perishable, they will seek for immortality by patient continuance in well-doing, and exercise their spiritual energies in securing eternal treasure.

April 4, 1895

Prayer and Watchfulness in the Conflict

We are exhorted to pray always, to watch unto prayer, lest Satan crowd in between the soul and God, or mingle with our prayers to such a degree that God and Christ shall be shut out from our view, that the pledged word of God shall be made of no effect. He would so engage the mind that those who profess to be Christians shall have only a few stray thoughts of God, and engage in occasional, listless seasons of prayer. He would have them neglect to come to God, who is the great reservoir of power.

The great Teacher, Jesus Christ, would show us something better than anything we have yet known. He would impress upon our minds the necessity of putting forth an earnest effort, of making that sincere supplication for wisdom and grace that would be in proportion to the object that we as Christians are in pursuit of. What is the chaff to the wheat? "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?" Satan is constantly at work to present worldly things in so attractive a light that the Christian may be bribed to make the world his first consideration. Should he induce the Christian to seek for worldly treasures, and make the things of God of secondary importance, he could readily efface the image of God from the soul. The things that are seen are diversified in character, and they solicit the attention and crave the highest place in the thoughts, and there is continual danger that the things of this world will gain the supremacy, and cause us to neglect the things of priceless value. Jesus has brought heaven to view, and presents its glory to our eyes in order that eternity may not be dropped out of our reckoning. With warning voice he cries: "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."

The Lord has the interests of his creatures in view. He presents heaven before the vision, and in so doing is planning for our peace on the earth. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We are to make investments in heavenly interests, and always work with heaven in view, laying our treasure up in the bank of heaven. As obedient children of God, we shall receive the impress of the divine image, and our anticipations cannot be exaggerated in regard to the value and security of our heavenly investments, for we are made certain of the stability of heaven. While we keep heaven in view, we are enabled to enjoy the mercies bestowed in this life with superior relish. We do not set the heart upon them, and if we lose them we have a treasure in heaven.

The Lord says, "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Those who heed this instruction will not be placing their treasure in an uncertain bank. They will be making sacrifices for Jesus; and every sacrifice and self-denial made in his name will bring its recompense of reward. Those who acquit themselves as faithful stewards of their Lord's goods, who consecrate their talents to his service, using their means and influence and ability to further his cause in the earth, have the promise that

they shall be requited, not because the Lord is indebted to any human agency, but because they have the mind of Christ. They make it evident in their life that the truth has transformed their characters, that through the Spirit their souls have been sanctified. To such the Lord of heaven promises that in this life they shall have an hundred-fold, and in the world to come eternal life.

Every effort to overcome selfishness and sin, every effort to use the talents God has given, not to glorify self, but to honor God, will make us more meet to be among those who shall be blessed in the kingdom of God. Those who deny self become partakers of the divine nature, and are one with Christ and the Father. The daily experience of this life is preparing us to become members of the royal family. Jesus came to this earth to engage in a struggle with Satan and his angels in behalf of fallen men. Jesus knows the temptations and difficulties that man will have to meet in the battle, and he knows and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. While he takes his followers to an eminence, and shows to them the vast confederacy of evil that is arrayed against them, he also shows them the crown of life. He reminds them that there is much at stake, and shows them the plan of the battle, pointing out their dangers, and bidding them count the cost. He sets before them the fact that if they are victorious in the conflict, they gain everything. He tells them that heavenly angels will cooperate with them against the hosts of evil, and that they may become workers together with God, because they are children of light and not of darkness. Their warfare will consist in pressing back the powers of darkness, in taking the strongholds of the enemy, and he shows them that they have One mightier than the angels of heaven in their ranks. The Captain of the Lord's host is with them, and gives them divine assistance. His voice is heard saying, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The children of the heavenly King are fighting in the sight and presence of the whole universe of God, and this fact should nerve us for the conflict, leading us to go on conquering and to conquer. It is impossible for man in his own unaided strength to overcome the natural propensities to evil. There is no saving quality in the law, to save the transgressor of the law, and yet no man who has had light as to the binding claims of the law will be excused from obedience by the great Lawgiver because it is inconvenient to keep God's commandments, because it would injure man's popularity, or hurt his worldly interests. In the judgment the law will be seen to be the test of character. It is the settled purpose of Satan to deceive men today as he deceived Eve in Eden, and lead them to disregard the command of God, and accept something beside God, something independent of God, something in opposition to God.

Those who accept of the suggestions of Satan do not live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, as did Abraham. They do not keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. They go in pursuit of riches, and are filled with desire for other things. They take upon them the care of this world. There is a care that is essential. It is a prudent forethought concerning temporal matters, and it is in harmony with reason; but the care that is condemned is that which is brought upon the soul by following the suggestions of Satan, practicing falsehoods in order to gain wealth or to procure position. This kind of care is the result of distrust and alienation from God; and the human agent, instead of being a laborer together with God, becomes a colaborer with Satan. Circumstances seem beyond the control of the one who renders allegiance to the evil one. He works at cross purposes with God. He is not pleased with himself. He has so many vain desires, so many perplexing thoughts, and does so many things that he despises. When he hears the word of God, he feels condemned, but wicked purposes master him, for he has no strength to resist Satan's

suggestions, and the word of God does not find a lodgment in his heart. While his eyes and his thoughts are drawn to the earth, he cannot see eternal realities.

“No man can serve two masters.” The theories of Satan continually choke the word in his mind. There is no vacuum for the Holy Spirit within in which to find room to dwell. The character on the world's side is strengthening, while the character on Christ's side is growing more and more feeble by being engrossed in inferior matters. The atom of this world becomes a world, and the eternal world becomes an atom.

April 11, 1895

Revelation of God through Christ

Those who possess the faith that works by love and purifies the soul will represent Christ, in whom their hope of eternal life is centered, by denying self, by sacrificing self for the good of those for whom Christ died. They will have the experience for which Paul bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, “of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Those who have experienced the blessing of God should be the most grateful of persons. They should send up to God words of thanksgiving because Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, clothing his divinity with humanity, in order that he might bring before the world the perfection of God in his own character. He came to represent God, not as a stern judge, but as a loving father. “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 is love. This was the great truth that Christ came to the world to reveal. Satan had so misrepresented the character of God to the world, that man stood remote from God; but Christ came to display to the world the Father's attributes, to represent the express image of his person. “As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.” “This commandment have I received of my Father.” The object of Christ's mission to the world was to reveal the Father.

The Lord Jesus is an example in all things. By the works which he did he made it plain that he was in council with the Father, and that he was in every move fulfilling the eternal purposes of God. In spirit, in works, in his whole earthly history, he revealed the mind and purpose of God toward his heritage among men. In his obedience to the law of God, he exemplified in his human nature the fact that the law is a transcript of divine perfection. In the gift of Christ to the world God would overwhelm fallen man with a marvelous manifestation of his great love wherewith he has loved us; but while he would that all should come to repentance, the declaration no less expresses his character, that he will by no means clear the guilty. Should he give the least sanction to sin, his throne would be corrupted. At immense cost, he opens a way of refuge for the sinner, providing that through the work of the Holy Spirit man shall be transformed into an obedient child of God, a loyal subject of his kingdom. He who receives Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, also is provided with heavenly protection and heavenly light; for the angels of God are sent to minister to those who shall

be heirs of salvation. The representation given to Jacob of a ladder whose base rested upon earth, and whose top reached to the throne of God; whereon ascended and descended the angels of heaven, is a representation of the plan of salvation. Had the ladder failed to connect with earth by one inch, the connection between earth and heaven would have been broken, and man would have been hopelessly lost. But the ladder is planted firmly upon the earth, that heaven may connect with earth, and that the fallen sons of men be redeemed and rescued. Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, whose base is upon the earth, and whose topmost round reaches the throne of God. Down this ladder streams the glory of God, and on it ascend and descend the angels of heaven to communicate the light and the glory of God, whose train fills the temple, to the lost children of earth. Through Christ heavenly intelligences may communicate with human agents.

Christ declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Christ alone can bridge the gulf that sin has made between earth and heaven, and make it possible to reach fallen man with the overtures of mercy. But through the merits of Christ, man has been given a second probation, that he may be tested and proved by another trial to see whether he will be obedient to all the commandments of God, and be brought back in freedom from sin, with his loyalty proved, to have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in through the gates into the city.

In order that man might be thus privileged, Christ, the divine Son of God, joined himself to human nature, that man might understand that the living true God would have every son and daughter of Adam a partaker of the divine nature through union with himself, and thus manifest to the world, to unfallen worlds, and to the synagogue of Satan, that the redemption of the fallen race is possible. God would have his children bear testimony to the fact that God cannot be satisfied until the fallen race is redeemed, reclaimed, and reinstated to their holy privileges, having free access to the tree of life. He would have them bear testimony to the fact that through the grace of Christ, they may represent Christlikeness of character, and find greatest joy in the assurance of his great love wherewith he has loved us. Once separated from God by the lying devices of Satan, they are reunited to him by learning the lesson of redeeming love, as manifested in the great sacrifice of Christ in giving his precious life for mankind. The human is united to the divine by a tie so strong that unfallen worlds, angels, and men are amazed, for those who believe in the love of God to them are secure in the refuge of his love, and not all the arts of Satan can induce them to continue in transgression of the law of God.

O, cannot the sinner understand that Christ clothed his divinity with humanity, in order that he might reach humanity? Can he not see that Jesus lived the life that all the human race may live, and that no soul shall enter the portals of bliss unless he obeys the laws of the kingdom of God? Christ made the law of God binding upon every soul, in order that, through obedience to the divine precepts, man might be brought back to loyalty to God. Every sinner converted to God must live in conformity to all the commandments of God. Jesus lived among men, consuming himself by continual self-denial and in labors of love. The fact that Christ lived among men in human nature is a testimony to us that God is with us. God dwells in every abode, hears every word that is uttered, listens to every prayer that is offered, tastes the sorrows and disappointments of every man, regards the treatment that is given to father, mother, brother, sister, friend, and neighbor. He understands our necessities, and his beloved Son is the channel through which his love, mercy, and grace shall flow to satisfy our need.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

April 18, 1895

An Example of Saving Faith

We are to find the assurance of our acceptance with God in his written promise, not in a happy flight of feeling. Were we to ground our hope upon joyful emotions, there are many of God's true people who would be without assurance. There are in the fold of Christ not only the sheep, that he leads into green pastures, but the lambs, that the Shepherd gathers in his arms and carries in his bosom. Jesus cares for the weak and feeble in their simplicity, and would quicken their life by his own heart beats. If all had strong assurance, in what would the babe differ from those of more advanced experience? The word of God is rich in pearls of promises; but there are weak and trembling souls, who dare not venture to think that they are bringing forth fruit meet for repentance, and who fail to appropriate the promise; yet they are precious in the sight of the Lord. Mary Magdalene was very near to Christ, yet she stood weeping and lamenting, crying, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”

It would be the ruin of many a soul always to have unclouded assurance in joyful feelings that they are accepted to God. Without feeling we must learn to lean upon his word. We must learn to grasp the promise, because we can never perish if we come to the feet of infinite Love. The absolute assurance will be ours when we hear from the lips of the Master the welcome words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant; ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” We shall have trials of faith, but they will only tend to increase our spiritual sinew and muscle; for we shall have to exercise faith, and put forth our trembling hand to lay hold upon a “Thus saith the Lord.” But in this way we shall bring honor and glory to God. The doubts and fears against which we have been called to struggle are the precious trials of our faith, God's workmen that work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Again and again we must raise our eyes to Him who has been lifted up upon the cross. “Look and live,” were the words that were echoed throughout the encampment of Israel when the brazen serpent was erected. This required an act of faith on the part of the suffering victims who had been bitten by the fiery serpents, but they were assured that if they did look, they should live. We also are to look and live.

While there are many counterfeits of faith in the world, there is a genuine faith, and it is this faith which works by love and purifies the soul. God in his providence set forth Noah as a representative of what true faith would do. The Lord designed that Noah in his life and character should present

before the antediluvian world a marked example of the results of believing the word of God. He did not walk in sparks of his own kindling. He obtained all his discernment, all his power, all his strength, from the source of all light; for he held communion with God. It was because he had faith in God, because he was a man of prayer, that he was a man of power. He kindled his taper at the divine altar, that he might be a light to the world. He had a message intrusted to him from God. In his day there was so fearful a departure from God and his ways that hatred of God's law, contempt of truth and righteousness, was well nigh world-wide. The wickedness of men was very great, yet there was hope for them if they would turn from their wickedness, and the Lord made Noah his messenger to proclaim to the inhabitants of the Old World their sins, and to set before them wherein they had provoked the wrath of God. He told them what God proposed to do in the world. He declared to them the word of God. "And the Lord said, 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 it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.... But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." "The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. 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."

"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.... Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

Noah had faith in God. His position was a trying one; he had to fight the good fight of faith at every step. One hundred and twenty years of probation was granted to the inhabitants of the world, and Noah was to live through that generation. Everything around him was in confusion. On all sides was sin and wickedness, disregard of God and his holy law; but he was to live among men, and not be a partaker of their wicked works, but to be an example of righteousness, and faith, and entire obedience to God. Amid world-wide contempt of God, he was a faithful preacher of righteousness, exemplifying to the world what a man's life could be by reposing confidence in the sure word of God, by rendering obedience to all his commandments. Nearly the whole world was against Noah; yet there were many who had not had light in regard to the redemption that had been promised to our first parents. The significance of the sacrificial offerings had been perverted, and they no longer shadowed forth to the people the method of the atonement.

The message given by Noah, the building of that strange boat, called forth questions, just as God designed it should, and excited the curiosity of the people. Crowds of people came from all parts of the world to see the strange and wonderful structure, and heard the message of condemnation and the promise of deliverance. The words that had been spoken to Adam were rehearsed,—that sin and Satan should not always triumph. There was to be victory for those who feared God. When his voice was lifted in warning of what God was about to bring upon the world in judgment because of the wickedness of men, great opposition was manifested against the words of the messenger. The

opposition, however, was not entirely world-wide; for some believed the message of Noah, and zealously repeated the warning. But the men who were accounted wise were sought, and were urged to present arguments by which the message of Noah might be counteracted. And as the world was at peace and not at war with the prince of evil, they were glad of any excuse to set aside the "Thus saith the Lord" and to listen to the philosophers of the age, who presented the impossibility of such a change taking place in the forces of nature as Noah predicted. There is no enmity between fallen man and fallen angels; both are evil through apostasy, and evil, wherever it exists, is in league against God. Fallen men and fallen angels were united for the dethronement of God.

Thus it was that the wise men of this world talked of science and the fixed laws of nature, and declared that there could be no variation in these laws, and that this message of Noah could not possibly be true. The talented men of Noah's time set themselves in league against God's will and purpose, and scorned the message and the messenger that he had sent. When they could not move Noah from his firm and implicit trust in the word of God, they pointed to him as a fanatic, as a ranting old man, full of superstition and madness. Thus they condemned him because he would not be turned from his purpose by reasonings and theories of men. It was true that Noah could not controvert their philosophies, or refute the claims of science so called; but he could proclaim the word of God; for he knew it contained the infinite wisdom of the Creator, and, as he sounded it everywhere, it lost none of its force and reality because men of the world treated him with ridicule and contempt.

Noah did not mix the soft, pleasing deceptions of Satan with his message. He did not utter the sentiment of many of his day who declared that God was too merciful to do such a terrible work. Many asserted that God would grant the wicked another season of probation; but Noah did not indulge them in the faintest hope that those who neglected the present opportunity, who rejected the present message, would be favored with another opportunity of salvation. God means that men shall not only love him, but that his fear shall be in their hearts. Noah's faith was mingled with fear; for it is written that Noah, being warned of God, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house. His faith intensified his fear; for it was no cowardly fear that moved him. He dared not suppress the words of God for fear of men, or withhold his message in dread of the consequences that might result because of the opposition and hate of the wicked and unbelieving about him. He knew the power of God, and realized that God would fulfill his word. His fear of God did not separate him from God, but served to draw him closer to him, and to lead him to pour out his soul in earnest supplication. There were many who at first received Noah's message, but the fear of men was greater than the fear of God, and they turned away from the truth of God to believe a lie. As time passed on, and reproach and ridicule were heaped upon them, their hearts failed them, and they did not bear the test. It is the testing time that will measure professed faith and assurance in God. Courage and integrity cannot be estimated rightly by men until the day of trial puts them to the test.

The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; but it is a part of the Gospel to warn the sinner of the doom that awaits the unbelieving and unrepentant soul. The love of God has been manifested in the gift of his dear Son to the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; but, while salvation is promised on condition of faith in God's Son, condemnation is pronounced upon those that believe not. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." God has indescribable love for the sinner,

but he declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; for it is his will that all men should have eternal life through faith in the Son of God.

The Lord promises a blessing to those who do his commandments, and declares that they shall enter in through the gates into the city, and shall have a right to the tree of life. But when God issues a command, he means that we shall obey him. Our circumstances, our surroundings, our financial prospects, are not to be considered in the matter, or made an excuse; for he will give strength to every one who sets about in sincerity to fulfill his word, because it is God that has spoken.

The long-suffering God bore with the inhabitants of the Old World one hundred and twenty years, but his patience, his long forbearance, was made an excuse for indifference and impenitence and abuse of his providences. No soul is ever deserted of God, given up to his own ways and doings, forsaken of heaven, as long as there is the least hope of his salvation. God follows men with entreaties, with warnings of danger, with assurances of compassion, until it is sure that further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. Noah's light was to shine forth for one hundred and twenty years amid the moral darkness of people who were encompassed within a certain limit of years. Under Noah's direction his carpenters built an ark, and they were impressed day by day with the unwavering faith, the unswerving integrity, of the messenger of God. Every blow of the hammer, every advance that was made, was a warning to the world of the flood that swept away the unbelieving and ungodly. Noah's faith was a working faith; it was a saving faith, that moved him with fear, and led him to act in accordance with the word of God. This is the quality of faith that will save the soul. Is it yours?

April 25, 1895

Prejudice Blinds to Truth

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." From the beginning of sin Christ was with his people to dispute the authority of Satan; for he saw that the conflict must be carried on here in the earth. Satan withstood the Son of God in every effort to redeem his people. Enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and in the pillar of fire by night, Christ directed, guided, counseled the children of Israel in their journeyings from Egypt to Canaan. But how unwilling were the children of Israel to be led, how unwilling to be controlled by the voice of the Angel of the Lord! How eager they were in vindicating their own course, in justifying themselves in their rebellious feelings, and to follow their own ideas and plans!

It was the mighty Counselor who was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud and fire, and who was beholding the encampment of his people. It was he that corrected them in their evil ways, and encouraged them to trust in the living God to lead them safely to the land of promise. They were continually under the eye that never slumbers nor sleeps, and yet they murmured against Moses, the man whom God had appointed as their visible leader, and to whom Jesus Christ talked face to face, as a man talketh with his friend. Notwithstanding the fact that the Lord wrought through his servant Moses, yet when the enemy tempted them to evil surmising, jealousy, and fault-finding, they did not resist his temptations and stand firmly for principle. But their failure is explained by the inspired word, and a warning given to us upon whom the ends of the world are come, lest we also

fall after the same example of unbelief. "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their hearts; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

The children of Israel fell under the power of the enemy by cherishing an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, and when once they were found on the enemy's side, he pressed his advantage, and made them his allies to the utmost extent. The sin of unbelief, by which their confidence in the Son of God was destroyed, led Israel far astray. At the very time when they should have been praising God and magnifying the name of the Lord, talking of his goodness, telling of his power, they were found in unbelief, and full of murmuring and complaint. The deceiver was seeking through every means possible to sow discord among them, to create envy and hatred in their hearts against Moses, and to stir up rebellion against God, and by listening to the voice of the great deceiver they were led into affliction, trial, and destruction.

When Jesus came as a man to our world, Satan had led the Jews into the practice of a religion that pleased the powers of darkness. The professed people of God had departed from God, and were following another leader. Through their own perversity, they were going on to destruction; but Christ came to dispute the authority of Satan. He was met on every hand by the temptation of the enemy, who sought to appear not as a fallen, evil angel, but as an exalted, loyal angel. He sought to veil his true character of the deceiver, the falsifier, the apostate, the accuser of the brethren, and the murderer, and to present himself as one who had the honor of God at heart. But the life of Christ was made one long scene of conflict. Satan stirred up the evil hearts of men, and set envy and prejudice at work against the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. He caused men to question and to doubt the word, works, and mission of Christ.

Although the Jews had long waited for the coming of the Messiah, yet when he came, they would not believe on him. They followed Christ from place to place, in order that, if possible, they might catch some word from his lips to misstate, misconstrue, and publish abroad, giving it a meaning that had neither been expressed nor intended. Thus the way of Christ was hedged up by men who claimed to be just and holy men. They were suspicious of Christ because his teaching did not agree with their preconceived ideas and opinions, and if they acknowledged Christ to be right, at the same time they acknowledged themselves to be in the wrong. The work of Christ testified to his divine mission and character, and marked him out as the light of the world. He bore the divine credentials, but, filled with self-righteousness, they would not permit themselves to believe in his heavenly authority. Blinded by prejudice, they could not discern his true character. They turned from the voice of the true Shepherd, and listened to the suggestions of the enemy of all righteousness.

Christ was a living representation of the law. There was no violation of its holy precepts in his life. Looking around upon a nation of witnesses, who were eagerly seeking for something to question, searching for some mistake or error, in order that they might have something whereby to condemn him, he could ask, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" They made high professions of godliness,

and claimed to be advanced in knowledge, and because Jesus did not praise and glorify them as a nation superior to others, they were offended, and were determined to counteract his influence and make of no effect his teaching.

Christ was one with the Father, on a level with the eternal throne, and the glory of God fell directly upon him, and was reflected to the world in the luster of the greatness of the character of the Son of God. His voice came with the authority of the living oracles, as from one who reigned in the midst of the central glory; yet those for whom he was laboring, in order that he might save them from eternal ruin, did not know his voice or believe his word. The enemy was at work upon human hearts in the days of Christ, in order that he might keep the light from the people. Many of the wise men who listened to the teachings of Christ, were convinced that the power of God was with him, but they would not accept him as the Messiah. With a great show of prudence they guarded the people, lest they should be led astray, and cautioned them not to be hasty in receiving the new doctrines that were taught by this new Teacher; for his theories and practices were at variance with the doctrines that they had received from the fathers. They said to the people: You are in danger of being deceived. Do not commit yourselves to these new doctrines, for if this man is the Christ, he will give some remarkable evidence of divine character. In this way Satan led men who might have been a power for Christ, to work on the enemy's side in the controversy, and to become agents whereby he instilled into the hearts of the people questioning, suspicion, doubt, and hatred. Although many of the priests and rulers believed on him, they delayed in acknowledging him, for fear of being put out of their positions.

The leaders of the people were ever watching for an excuse for their attitude of unbelief, and when he wrought his most convincing miracles, were ready to catch up anything that would appear like an objection to his divine claims.

When Jesus had healed the palsied man, he had said to him, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house."

In the miracle which Christ had wrought, he had changed the man's heart, and had renewed him in mind and body, thus demonstrating to the Pharisees the fact that he had power to forgive sins, and to bring righteousness and peace to the sinner. Yet the Pharisees saw in his words of divine power, a matter for unbelief and accusation. Conscious of his high integrity and authority as the Son of God, his words had amazing power, and even as he descended step by step in the path of humiliation on the way to Gethsemane and the cross, his words were such as commanded the respect of men and caused them to exclaim, "Never man spake like this man." With what authority he rebuked the sins of men in high authority! Truth was to him truth, and it never suffered at his hands. To him truth was a living reality, for he was the Author of truth. "To this end," he says, "was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The truth came from his lips with the freshness of a new revelation. He exalted the truth always. But men did not love the truth, they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. They did not desire to be told of

their errors and sins, to be reproved and corrected. The hearts of those whom he longed to save were determined to resist him.

Jesus saw that, however deeply rooted were the principles that were set in opposition to the principles he proclaimed, yet they were delusion and falsehood, and had originated in the enemy of all righteousness. Jesus said to the people, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Christ was the embodiment of truth and holiness. He it was who had stood in the councils of God, and dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal. He knew whereof he spoke. He was presenting to them the truth of the highest order, revealing to men the infinite mind, giving to men the words of eternal life. He was revealing to them the character of the Father, but the men who stood high in knowledge and position, who claimed to possess superior spiritual understanding, failed to comprehend the knowledge that Jesus came to impart. They failed to grasp with their human understanding that which had been from everlasting, and was known to the Father and to the Son. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and, lacking the Spirit of God, they were left in the blindness of darkness. Refusing the light of heaven, "because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful," they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

May 2, 1895

What Atmosphere Surrounds the Soul?

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

It is of the greatest importance to us that we surround the soul with the atmosphere of faith. Every day we are deciding our own eternal destiny in harmony with the atmosphere that surrounds the soul. We are individually accountable for the influence that we exert, and consequences that we do not see will result from our words and actions. If God would have saved Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons, what would be the influence for good that might go out as a result of the faithfulness of the people of God, if every one who professed the name of Christ were also clothed with his righteousness! If God could tell the abode, and designate the trade, of Simon the tanner, and definitely direct the centurion as to how he would find him living by the seaside, he also knows us by name, knows what is our trade or business, where we live, and what are our experiences. He knows whether we are clearing the King's highway from all rubbish and hindrance, so that he can beckon our souls onward and upward, or whether we are filling the path with rubbish and blocking up our own way, and placing stumbling blocks in the way of sinners, to hinder the salvation of precious souls for whom Christ died.

We need a more heavenly atmosphere to surround our souls. We need to have our lips touched with a live coal from off the altar. We need to hear the word from Christ, "Be thou clean." If we have scattered darkness, if we have accumulated rubbish, and hoarded doubts, if we have planted seeds of doubt and discouragement in the minds of others, may God help us to see our sin. We cannot afford to drop a single word of doubt; for it will germinate and grow, and bring forth a bitter harvest. We should take heed to the exhortation, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." One seed of doubt sown, and it is beyond the power of men to kill it. God alone can pluck it from the soul. Our

words are an indication of what is in the heart. Jesus says: "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is our duty to encourage faith, to talk faith, that we may have faith. If we talk doubt, and encourage doubt, we shall have abundant doubt; for Satan will help us in this kind of work. We need sanctified hearts and sanctified lips; we need to breathe in the rich, bracing atmosphere that comes from the heavenly Canaan. We need to be filled with all the fullness of God. We shall then have life, power, grace, and salvation.

How shall we obtain these great blessings? Christ has died that we might receive them by faith in his name, for he has freely offered us life and light. Then why should we persist in driving pegs on which to hang gloomy scenes of doubt? Why should we fill the chambers of the mind with the shadows of unbelief? Why not let the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine into the heart and mind, and dispel the gloom and the shadows that Satan would bring upon the soul? Turn to the light, to Jesus, the precious Saviour. Instead of beholding the flaws and defects of some human being, why not contemplate the matchless charms of Him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely? We need not make any human being our pattern; for God has given us a perfect example in the life and character of his only-begotten Son, and by beholding him we shall become changed into his image. Look upon Him whose throne is high and lifted up, the train of whose glory fills the temple.

The garden of the promises of God has been presented before us, and by the precious promises of God we are to lay hold on faith, hope, and love. Through these graces the church may shine forth in the righteousness of Christ. Living faith grasps the hand of divine power, and faith is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil. John says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." He describes the great multitude who shall stand before God as overcomers, and says, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." The palms signify that they have gained the victory, and the white robes that they have been clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Thank God that a fountain has been opened to wash our robes of character, and make them as white as snow. And they "cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any

heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

Are you filled with sorrow today? Fasten your eyes on the Sun of Righteousness. Do not try to adjust all the difficulties, but turn your face to the light, to the throne of God. What will you see there?— The rainbow of the covenant, the living promise of God. Beneath it is the mercy seat, and whosoever avails himself of the provisions of mercy that have been made, and appropriates the merits of the life and death of Christ, has in the rainbow of the covenant a blessed assurance of acceptance with the Father as long as the throne of God endures. Faith is what you need. Do not let faith waver. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. It will be a severe fight, but fight it at any cost; for the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Put your hand in the hand of Christ. There are difficulties to be overcome, but angels that excel in strength will cooperate with the people of God. Face Zion, press your way to the city of solemnities. A glorious crown, a robe woven in the loom of heaven, awaits the overcomer. Though Satan would cast his hellish shadow athwart your pathway, and seek to hide the mystic ladder from your view that stretches from earth to the throne of God, on which ascend and descend the angels who are ministering spirits to those who shall be heirs of salvation, yet press your way upward, plant your feet on one round after another, and advance to the throne of the Infinite.

May 16, 1895

The Whole Duty of Man

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: 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.”

The record of every life is written in the books of heaven. Every sin that has been committed is there registered. Every regret for sin, every tear of repentance, every confession of guilt, and the forsaking of every darling sin, is also recorded. When the judgment shall sit and the books are opened, every case will have to stand the test of the law of God. God has a law by which he governs intelligences both in heaven and in earth. Jehovah is the supreme Governor of nations, and no greater or more fatal deception could take hold on human minds than that which leads men to declare that the law of God has been abolished. Were this so there could be no judgment; for there would be no rule by which character could be tested, and actions weighed. But we read that the judgment is to sit, and that the books are to be opened, and that every man is to be rewarded according as his works have been. If God has no moral standard by which to measure character, there can be no judgment, no reward.

But, according to the unerring word of God, every man will be judged and rewarded according as his works have been, and we are admonished to so speak and to so do as “they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” When sin has been repented of, confessed, and forsaken, then pardon is written against the sinner's name; but his sins are not blotted out until after the investigative judgment. No finite being can tell how his case stands in the sight of Him whose eyes are like a flame of fire, who says: “I know thy works.... I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not

appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Those who presume to think that the law of God has been done away, and that it no longer exists, have set up an imperfect standard of their own. Measuring themselves by their own finite standard, they pronounce themselves pure and perfect. Satan has just such a standard, by which he declares that he is righteous; but these false standards cannot compare with God's unerring standard of righteousness. No one who has an appreciation of the verity of the law of God will claim an exalted character for himself. Our true position, and the only one in which there is any safety, is that of repentance and confession of sins before God. Feeling that we are sinners, we shall have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is able to pardon transgression, and impute unto us righteousness. When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, then the sins of the repentant soul who received the grace of Christ and has overcome through the blood of the Lamb, will be removed from the records of heaven, and will be placed upon Satan, the scapegoat, the originator of sin, and be remembered no more against him forever. The sins of the overcomers will be blotted out of the books of record, but their names will be retained on the book of life. The True Witness says, “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.” When the conflict of life is ended, when the armor is laid off at the feet of Jesus, when the saints of God are glorified, then and then only will it be safe to claim that we are saved and sinless. True sanctification will not lead any human being to pronounce himself holy, sinless, and perfect. Let the Lord proclaim the truth of your character.

John declares, “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” But we are to accept the precious promise that, “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We shall make manifest by our works as to whether or not we have personal faith in Christ as our Saviour; for it is by the righteousness of Christ that we are sanctified. We are day by day to study the lessons of Christ, and grow up into him in all things. If we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning. He is perfecting Christian character after the divine model, is growing in faith, in influence and power, and this work will progress in his character until faith is lost in sight, and grace in glory. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the obedient soul, and the peace of Christ is an abiding principle in the heart.

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” There is no quality in law to save the transgressor of the law. The law can condemn, but it cannot pardon, therefore the transgressor would have been left to perish in his wretchedness if a plan had not been devised for his salvation. Jesus Christ alone was able to save fallen man. He became man's surety and substitute. He became man's advocate to plead his case before the Father. It was for our sake that he condescended to become man. “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.” Christ became the comfort and hope of the fallen race. Our Saviour is the Son of man as well as the Son of God. He took humanity upon him, and presented a model for humanity in his pure and perfect character. “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” His life was as complete as a pattern, as his death was complete as a

sacrifice. He was tempted in all points like as we are, therefore he knows how to succor those that are tempted.

It should be to us a cause of continual gratitude and rejoicing that Jesus knows our weakness and is acquainted with our temptations. We are too much in the habit of thinking that the Son of God was a being so entirely exalted above us that it is an impossibility for him to enter into our trials and temptations, and that he can have no sympathy with us in our weakness and frailties. This is because we do not take in the fact of his oneness with humanity. He took upon him the likeness of sinful flesh, and was made in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. He has engaged himself to save every son and daughter of Adam who will consent to be saved in God's appointed way.

While we are admonished to obedience, we are not to think that we can merit salvation by our good works. Salvation is the free gift of God, and it is to be received by faith. It is provided for the repentant soul by Christ through the great plan of redemption. But the proof of our love to him, the evidence of our faith, will be found in our obedience to God's holy law. Our Saviour 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." Christ enjoins upon us the keeping of the commandments because he knows that in keeping them there is great reward, the revealing of a character after the divine similitude.

We must not dishonor God by unbelief in Christ as our Mediator; for he is fully able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." Christ made it possible for fallen man to keep the commandments of God, for he will lift from the degradation of sin every fallen soul who will lay hold of the promises of God by faith, and comply with the conditions of salvation. The humanity of Christ is a marvel to the heavenly angels who are with him in the heavenly courts, and know the infinite price he paid for the redemption of man. They marvel at his grace given to the fallen race, so that, by becoming partakers of the divine nature, they may keep the law of Jehovah. These wonderful mysteries angels desire to look into.

May 23, 1895

Thoughts on the First Epistle of John

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

John, the writer of these words, by the providence of God was spared till old age came upon him. He had been a disciple of Christ from the beginning of his ministry, he had listened to the teaching of Christ, and had witnessed his miracles. He had followed him through the different stages of his missionary work on earth, and had seen his agony in Gethsemane, his betrayal, trial, rejection,

condemnation, his suffering and death on Calvary's cross. He had looked upon him after his resurrection, and had witnessed his ascension, and he had a message to repeat everywhere that was present truth to the world then, and will be present truth as long as the world shall stand. John declared to the people that which he had seen and heard, that which his hands had handled of the word of God.

The Lord Jesus appeared to John and showed him what he should write to the people, unfolding to them what should come to pass hereafter, and the messages which John wrote in ages past are now present truth for the world. In his providence, God has spared the lives of some who, like John, can witness to the force of the messages that apply to our own time; for they have had an experience from the first in the fulfillment of God's prophetic word, and have experienced the power of God in the establishment and the promulgation of the messages of warning for this time. They can tell of the wonderful way in which the Lord has revealed truth, and, like John, can bear witness to that which they have seen and heard and handled of the word of God.

The mighty dealings of God with his people in the past are to be rehearsed for the benefit and blessing of those who follow in the faith, and through the word of God see Jesus, their High Priest in the sanctuary in heaven. The messages of John had a great influence in setting forth the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. No one could doubt the sincerity of John, and the messages from his lips had great power in turning many to the faith of Jesus Christ. The truths stated by John were the very message that the Lord would have him bear; but the Jews who rejected the truth were greatly annoyed at his testimony, and they thought that as long as John kept ringing his testimony in the ears of the people that Jesus was the Messiah, they should prevail nothing against those who had faith in Jesus whom they had crucified. Many were continually turning from their unbelief, and accepting Christ as the Messiah, and the enemies of truth declared that the testimony of John must be silenced in order that the miracles and mission of Jesus might be forgotten. They hoped to put John to death upon the false accusations of his enemies; but the Lord had his faithful witness preserved from death. Though imprisoned on the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, he did not cease to bear witness to the truth. His was a message of joy, proclaiming the fact that Christ was not in the tomb, but was a risen Saviour who had ascended on high, and was interceding for his people until he should return again to take them unto himself.

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” Those who are doers of the words of Christ will walk in the light as Christ is in the light. The loyal heart will pattern after the example of him who pleased not himself. Christ's followers will not choose to do one duty, and pass over another because it is distasteful. God sends light to his people, but if they refuse to walk in the light, they will not receive a blessing. “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Those who walk in the light of Christ reject no message of truth, and the fruit of their acceptance of truth is unity among themselves. Christ is their center, Christ is to them the way, the truth, and the

life. But those who simply cry, "Christ, Christ," and do not accept the words of Christ, are not partakers of his divine nature, and do not eat of his flesh, or drink of his blood. Those who live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God will not, cannot, be at variance; for they are like the many branches that are united to one stock. This is the unity that will exist among those in whose hearts Christ is formed, the hope of glory. Those who are united with Christ will have respect unto all God's commandments, and will accept the light that shines upon their pathway.

If we are doers of the word of God, we shall be followers of Christ, and our lives will be characterized by holiness in aim, holiness in aspiration, holiness in action, which is progressive sanctification. We shall have Christlike sympathy for all souls, both saints and sinners; but with this experience there will be no vain boasting of our sinlessness. We shall rather speak in the language of Paul, and say: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

Paul was of the number who had left positions of honor, set aside worldly inducements, and gone from his friends in order that he might do the will of God. He would not allow any worldly attraction to influence him; but he made it the purpose of his life to follow Jesus, and pressed and urged his way against every obstacle in order that he might reach the mark for the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. But if there was any one who could hope to be justified in claiming perfection of character, it was Paul; but we hear from his lips no presumptuous boasting. He says rather that he does not count himself as one that has attained, but only as one who is following after, pressing on toward the mark for the prize of his high calling in God through Christ Jesus. Christ arrested him in his blind course of self-righteousness, when he was persecuting the saints of God, and turned him from a life of sin in ignorance to a life of faithfulness, in order that through divine grace he might be cleansed and sanctified, and wear at last the conqueror's crown.

The attitude of Paul is the attitude to be taken by every one of the followers of Christ; for we are ever to be urging our way, striving lawfully for the crown of immortality. Not one may claim to be perfect. Let the recording angels write the history of the holy struggles and conflicts of the people of God, let them record their prayers and tears; but let not God be dishonored by the proclamation from human lips, declaring, "I am sinless. I am holy." Sanctified lips will never give utterance to such presumptuous words. Paul had been caught up to the third heaven, and had seen and heard things that could not be uttered, and yet his modest statement is, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after." Let the angels of heaven write of Paul's victories in fighting the good fight of faith. Let heaven rejoice in his steadfast tread heavenward, keeping the prize in view for which he counts every other consideration as dross. Let the angels of heaven rejoice to tell his triumphs, but let Paul utter no vain praise of himself in making a boast of his attainments.

Let those who feel inclined to make a high profession of holiness, look into the mirror of God's law, which discovers to us the defects of our character. Those who see the far-reaching claims of the law of God, those who realize that it is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, will not presume to make the boast of sinlessness, and venture to declare, "I am perfect, I am holy." "If we,"

John says, not separating himself from his brethren, "say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

May 30, 1895

Christ Our Complete Salvation

The character of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be reproduced in those who believe in him as their personal Saviour. They will be "rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." Our acceptance with God is not upon the ground of our good works, but our reward will be according to our works. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

"The carnal [or natural] mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Human nature could not keep the law, even if it would. Apart from Christ, without union with him, we can do nothing. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." The law requires us to present to God a holy character. It demands of men today just what it demanded of Adam in Eden,—perfect obedience, perfect harmony with all its precepts in all relations of life, under all circumstances and conditions. No unholy thought can be tolerated, no unlovely action can be justified. As the law requires that which no man of himself can render, the human family are found guilty before the great moral standard, and it is not in the province of law to pardon the transgressor of law. The standard of the law cannot be lowered to meet man in his fallen condition. No compromise can be made with the sinner to take less than the full requirement of the law. The law cannot acquit the guilty, it cannot cleanse the sinner, or give power to the transgressor to raise himself into a purer, holier atmosphere. Standing before a holy, good, and just law, and finding ourselves condemned because of transgression, we may well cry out, What shall we do to be saved?

There is but one way of escape for the sinner. There is but one agency whereby he may be cleansed from sin. He must accept the propitiation that has been made by the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. The shed blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." A complete offering has been made; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,"—not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father's person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

John said, "We have seen, and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The Son of God took upon him human nature,— "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "God was manifest in the flesh." The union of divinity with humanity brings to the fallen

race a value which we scarcely comprehend. The human and the divine were united in Christ, in order that he might represent those who should believe in him. He took our nature, and passed through our experiences, and as our representative he assumed our responsibilities. The sins of men were charged to Christ, and, innocent though he was, he engaged to suffer for the guilty, that through faith in him the world might be saved. "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Christ reconciled the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. O, what compassion and love are here revealed! How is humanity exalted through the merits of Christ! His sacrifice was ample and complete. The Holy One died instead of the unholy. He clothed himself in our filthy garments, that we might wear the spotless robe of his righteousness, which was woven in the loom of heaven. He paid the whole debt for all who would believe in him as their personal Saviour. His blood cleanseth from all sin and purifieth from all unrighteousness. In him, through him alone, we have forgiveness of sins. Through faith in his blood we have justification in the sight of God.

It will avail nothing for us to do penance, to afflict the body for the sin of the soul, or to flatter ourselves that by our good works we shall merit or purchase an inheritance among the saints. When the question was asked Christ, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" he answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." We are not to do something in order to purchase our entrance into heaven; for the Lord gives us heaven through the merit of Jesus Christ, and not through any merit of our own. Good works are the result of faith and love; for, conscious of the debt of love and gratitude which we owe to God for the infinite sacrifice made in our behalf, we show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Every one is under bonds to God to manifest obedience to all his commandments, relying fully on the righteousness of Christ for his acceptance with God. Accepting the grace of Christ, we are to live to the honor and glory of God, keeping the commandments at any sacrifice to ourselves. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The atonement of Christ was not made in order to induce God to love those whom he otherwise hated; it was not made to produce a love that was not in existence; but it was made as a manifestation of the love that was already in God's heart, an exponent of the divine favor in the sight of heavenly intelligences, in the sight of worlds unfallen, and in the sight of a fallen race. "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." We are not to entertain the idea that God loves us because Christ has died for us, but that he so loved us that he gave his only-begotten Son to die for us. The death of Christ was expedient in order that mercy might reach us with its full pardoning power, and at the same time that justice might be satisfied in the righteous substitute. The glory of God was revealed in the rich mercy that he poured out upon a race of rebels, who through repentance and faith might be pardoned through the merits of Christ, for God will by no means clear the guilty who refuse to acknowledge the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour. It is only through faith in Christ that sinners may have the righteousness of Christ imputed unto them, and that they may be "made the righteousness of God in him." Our sins were laid on Christ, punished in Christ, put away by Christ, in order that his righteousness might be imputed to us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Although sin was charged to his account on our behalf, yet he remained perfectly sinless.

O, what a history we have in the life and death, resurrection and exaltation of Christ! He was the incarnate God, the Lord of life and glory; yet for our sakes he was delivered into the hands of wicked

men. Satan and the whole confederacy of evil men and evil angels raged around him, and he suffered that which would have been insupportable to any human being. His life was one of utter self-denial and self-sacrifice, full of achievements of divine mercy, goodness, and power. Disease fled at his touch, the blind saw, the deaf heard, demons were cast out, the dead were raised. The tempest-tossed waters were stilled at his command, and as he hung upon the cross, nature gave signs that she sympathized with her dying Author. The earth reeled and heaved beneath the feet of men; the sun clothed itself in sackcloth. When the mighty angel descended from heaven, parting the darkness from his track, the Roman guard fell as dead men before the resplendent glory, and Christ in his Godhead shone forth as he burst from the tomb, and rose triumphant over death and the grave. The disciples understood, when they saw him arisen from the dead, what he meant when he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Shall our faith ever falter again? What stronger evidence could God have given us that Jesus is the Son of God? What greater evidence could be given of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ than that which has been given by those who were eyewitnesses of his Majesty? Will those who claim to believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, dishonor God by doubting that he to whose guardianship they have committed their souls will keep that which has been committed to his trust against that day? Jesus is a risen Saviour. He came forth from the grave to vindicate his previous claims, to confirm the faith of his followers, to establish the truth of his Godhead before men, to make doubly sure the assurance that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

June 6, 1895

Comforting Thoughts

Last Sabbath, July 28, my son, W. C. White, and myself, drove to Kellyville, to speak to the church, by special request. There was a person acquainted with our faith, but who was not one with us, who said he would come to the meeting to hear one of our ministers speak. We were the only ones who could respond to the request. We were glad to see in the assembly, besides this interested person, the family of Brother Radcliff, from Castle Hill, who had come ten miles to the meeting. We had a very precious season, for the promise of the Saviour was fulfilled, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." When Jesus meets with his people, his blessing rests upon those who assemble for the purpose of worshipping God. We need to cherish and cultivate a spirit of true worship, a spirit of devotion, upon the Lord's holy, sanctified day. We should assemble together believing that we shall receive comfort and hope, light and peace, from Jesus Christ.

As we rode slowly up the hills, everything our eyes rested upon was peaceful and pleasant. In every direction we looked, the scenery was lovely. The orange and mandarin orchards displayed their golden fruit, and we remarked that the world is still beautiful and pleasant, although it has been marred by the wickedness of men.

I spoke from Matthew, the fifth chapter, and W. C. White followed me with a short discourse, after which we had a social meeting, when a number of testimonies were borne. We know that the Lord comforted those who were witnesses for Christ. The preaching service should generally be short, so that an opportunity may be given to those who love God to express their gratitude and adoration. Prayer and praise offered to God by his believing children honor and glorify his name. The company

of believers may be few in number, but they have been taken by the Cleaver of truth as rough stones from the quarry of the world, and have been brought into God's workshop to be hewed and squared by ax and chisel, to be fitted up by test and trial for a place in God's heavenly temple, and they are very precious in the sight of the Lord. Though they are to be hewed and squared, and fitted and polished for the heavenly building, yet even in the rough, they are precious in the sight of God. The ax, and the hammer, and the chisel of trial and test, are in the hands of One who is skillful, and are used not to destroy, not to bring to nothingness, but to work out the perfection of every soul, so that, as precious stones, transformed and polished, the children of God may find their place in the building of God.

I would that every soul who sees the evidences of truth, would accept of Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. Those who thus accept of Christ are looked upon by God, not as they are in Adam, but as they are in Jesus Christ, as the sons and daughters of God. The Lord will no more cast off the humblest, lowliest believer in Jesus than he will demolish his throne. We are accepted in the Beloved. We are members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

The church of God upon the earth are one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth, and those who have never fallen in heaven, are one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God in spirit and truth and in the beauty of holiness. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimonies of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth, and the praise and thanksgiving that come from the church below are taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing resound through the heavenly court because Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam. While angels drink from the fountain head, the saints on earth drink of the pure stream flowing from the throne of God, making glad the city of God. O that we could all realize the nearness of heaven to earth! When the earth-born children know it not, they have the angels of light as their companions; for the heavenly messengers are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. A silent witness guards every soul that lives, seeking to win and draw him to Christ.

The angels never leave the tempted ones a prey to the enemy, who would destroy the souls of men if permitted to do so. As long as there is hope, until they resist the Holy Spirit to their eternal ruin, men are guarded by heavenly intelligences. Let us all bear in mind that in every assembly of the saints below are the angels of God, listening to the thanksgiving, the praise, the supplication that is offered by the people of God in testimonies, songs, and prayers. Let them remember that their praises are supplemented by the choirs of the angelic host above.

As we journeyed homeward, my mind was called out in contemplation of these precious themes, and I was filled with an intense longing to pass along some of these precious thoughts to my brethren and sisters. O that with pen and voice I could represent the privileges of the children of God as they really exist! O that we who are pilgrims and strangers in this foreign country, seeking a better country, even a heavenly, might comprehend Christ, the way, the truth, and the life! He says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." The path he has marked out is so plain and distinct that the veriest sinner, loaded with guilt, need not miss his way. Not one trembling seeker need to fail of finding the true path, and of walking in pure and holy light; for Jesus leads the way. The path is so narrow, so holy, that sin cannot be tolerated therein, yet access to the path has been made for

all, and not one desponding, doubting, trembling soul needs to say, "God cares naught for me." Every soul is precious in his sight; "for God so loved the world," even in its blackness and disobedience, even with the heavy shadow of sin and Satan upon it, "that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When Satan was triumphing as the prince of the world, when he claimed the world as his kingdom, when we were all marred and corrupted with sin, God sent his messenger from heaven, even his only-begotten Son, to proclaim to all the inhabitants of the world: I have found a ransom. I have made a way of escape for all the perishing. I have your emancipation papers provided for you, sealed by the Lord of heaven and earth. You may have freedom upon the condition of faith in Him who is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. A ransom has been provided at infinite cost, and it is not because there is any flaw in the title which has been purchased for lost souls that they do not accept it. It is not because the mercy, the grace, the love of the Father and the Son are not ample, and have not been freely bestowed, that they do not rejoice in pardoning love, but it is because of their unbelief, because of their choice of the world, that they are not comforted with the grace of God. It is their love of disobedience, their pleasure in sin, their enjoyment of rebellion, that have blunted their perceptions until they fail to discern the things which make for their peace. If they are lost, it will be because they will not come unto Christ that they might have life.

God waits to bestow the blessing of forgiveness of sins, of pardon for iniquity, of the gift of righteousness, upon all who will believe in his love and accept of his salvation. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner: "Take away the filthy garments from him.... Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments." "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Christ is the connecting link between God and man. The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Norfolk Villa, Granville, N. S. W.,

July 30, 1894.

June 13, 1895

The Usurper's Authority Disputed

After his defection in heaven, the Lord declares of Satan that he abode not in the truth. After his sin, he became a rebel, an avowed antagonist of God, and for the purpose of working out his rebellion, he established an infernal empire, and unfurled the standard of rebellion, rallying around him the powers of evil. Satan worked upon such principles as would conform those who sympathized with him to his own corrupt standard, and would assimilate them with his own Satanic nature. It was his determined purpose to efface from man the image of God, and stamp upon the souls of his subjects his own image and superscription. He employed in his work the most deceptive methods, and was successful in leading men to cooperate with him in rebellion against God. Christ gives to him the title

of “the father of lies,” “the accuser of the brethren,” “a murderer from the beginning.” By his bewitching power he instilled into man the same spirit of opposition and hatred of God as he himself had, and set up his throne as the rallying point for the confederacy of wickedness.

Satan claims the world as his kingdom, and counts as his subjects those who unite with him in opposition to the God of heaven, because they have chosen him as their ruler. He is unable to dethrone Jehovah; but he exalts himself as the ruler of this world, and plants his throne between the soul who would worship toward heaven, and the divine being Jehovah, who alone is worthy of all honor, glory, and praise, to whom alone belong all power, dominion, and might. Satan arranges his plans in such a way as to intercept the worship due to God, and to transfer to himself the adoration due to God alone. But the Lord did not leave the fallen race to the mercy of the devices of the enemy. He selected a people for himself, and gave directions for the erection of a temple for the benefit of those who would be his true worshipers, in order that the presence and the name of the Lord might not be forgotten in the earth. This temple of the true God was to stand as a protest against the usurpation of the enemy, a testimony to the fact that there is a living and true God, a proclamation of the character of Jehovah, and his right to the supreme regard of men. Satan was stirred with enmity toward the worshipers of God, and determined to seduce this people into idolatry, and cause the name of God to be blotted from the earth.

Satan determined to sit upon the throne of God in the earth, to sit in the temple of God, showing himself to be God. For ages he seemed to rule as though the world was entirely his own, and his assumption to supreme authority seemed undisputed. The powers of hell seemed to hold men under their control, and Satan revealed his hellish principles in taking possession of the human body, and plunging his subjects into misery and crime. To all appearances the world had become his subjects, with the exception of a small minority who dared to withstand his power and to dispute his authority. Through his agents he invented instruments of torture, and put his victims to cruel suffering, and then he charged his own attributes upon God, and indicted the law of God as the cause of men's misery. Temptation became a science in his hands, and men were educated to be sinners. The confederacies of evil were numerous, and every demon power had a part to act in carrying out the plottings of evil, and every worker was to be ready to spring into action to do his assigned work at an instant's notice. Could the curtain have been withdrawn so that men could have seen what measures were being taken to gain access to the human soul, could they have realized how successful the demoniacal plottings were to prove, they could have stood back with horror, and would have broken with Satan without delay.

But though men failed to see the deep plottings of the enemy of God and men, these plottings were not hidden from the hosts of heaven. They were known to God, and a way of escape was provided for all who would believe in the plan of salvation, devised from the foundation of the world. Jesus came to our world to oppose the usurper, and Christ was the object of Satan's hate. Christ was the rightful sovereign of the world, and Satan proposed to seduce him from his loyalty to the law of God. He led him into the wilderness of temptation, and tempted Christ, saying that if Jesus would bow down and worship him he would make him the king of the world. He declared: “All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.” But Christ had come to the world to dispute the assumed authority of Satan, and to overthrow his claims to the kingdom of this world. “And Jesus

answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Christ came to reveal to the world, in the sight of heavenly intelligences, the true character of the Father, and to present his claims to the sovereignty of the universe. Jesus represented the character of the Father in a way to disprove the lying representations of the enemy, for the Son of God revealed the Father as a being full of mercy, compassion, goodness, truth, and love. Far from casting off the fallen sons of Adam, Jesus had come to take upon himself their guilt, woe, and misery, and to suffer the penalty of the law which man had transgressed. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He was the express image of his Father's person, the brightness of his glory.

Christ was the way, the truth, and the life. He came down from the royal courts of heaven, and appeared in untarnished glory, in perfection of beauty, in holiness of character, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. So unblemished was he that he could say, "Satan cometh, and hath nothing in me."

But though no taint of evil could be found in the Son of God, though no flaw could be detected, though men could find no fault in him, yet, controlled by the Satanic hate of their leader, men rose up against the Prince of life, and with demoniacal fury they cried, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him." When Pilate brought forth Jesus and Barabbas, and asked, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? they said, Barabbas." They preferred a robber and a murderer to the Son of God, and when asked what should be done with Jesus, they cried, "Let him be crucified." But the great object for which Christ had come to the earth was not defeated by his death and suffering. Though he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, yet he revealed the love of God for a fallen world; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

June 20, 1895

"Purifieth Himself"

"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." The heritage of the people of God is discerned through faith in the word of God. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Through faith the children of God obtain a knowledge of Christ, and cherish the hope of his appearing to judge the world in righteousness, until it becomes a glorious expectation; for they shall then see him as he is, and be made like him, and ever be with the Lord. The sleeping saints shall then be called forth from their graves to a glorious immortality. When the day of deliverance shall come, then shall ye return, and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. When Christ shall come, it will be to be admired of all those that believe, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Those who are looking for the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, in life and character will seek to represent him to the world. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." They will hate sin

and iniquity, even as Christ hated sin. They will keep the commandments of God, as Christ kept his Father's commandments. They will realize that it is not enough to acquiesce in the doctrines of truth, but that the truth must be applied to the heart, practiced in the life, in order that the followers of Christ may be one with him, and that men may be as pure in their sphere as God is in his sphere. There have been men in every generation who have claimed to be the sons of God, who paid tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and yet who led a godless life; for they neglected the weightier matters of the law,—mercy, justice, and the love of God. There are today many who are in a similar deception; for while bearing an appearance of great sanctity, they are not doers of the word of God. What can be done to open the eyes of these self-deluded souls, except to set before them an example of true piety, and be ourselves not hearers only, but doers of the commandments of the Lord, thus reflecting the light of purity of character upon their pathway?

The sons of God will not be like the worldling; for the truth received in the heart, will be the means of purifying the soul, and of transforming the character, and of making its receiver like-minded with God. Unless a man becomes like-minded with God, he is still in his natural depravity. If Christ is in the heart, he will appear in the home, in the workshop, in the market place, in the church. The power of the truth will be felt in elevating, ennobling the mind, and softening and subduing the heart, bringing the whole man into harmony with God. He who is transformed by the truth will shed a light upon the world. He that hath the hope of Christ in him will purify himself even as He is pure. The hope of Christ's appearing is a large hope, a far-reaching hope. It is the hope of seeing the King in his beauty, and of being made like him.

When Christ shall come, the earth will tremble before him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself." In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing. John saw the fate of those who choose the path of transgression: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

A terrible doom awaits the sinner, and therefore it is necessary that we know what sin is, in order that we may escape from its power. John says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." Here we have the true definition of sin; it is "the transgression of the law." How often the sinner is urged to leave his sins, and come to Jesus; but has the messenger who would lead him to Christ clearly pointed out the way? Has he clearly pointed out the fact that "sin is the transgression of the law," and that he must repent, and forsake the breaking of God's commandments? Christ will come to consume the false prophet, to sweep away the hosts of apostasy, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of God; and it is of the highest importance to each one of us that we know the conditions by which we shall escape the sinner's doom. It is of the greatest moment that we understand the nature of our fall and

the consequences of transgression. Man's conscience has become hardened by sin, and his understanding darkened by transgression, and his judgment has become confused as to what is sin. He has become benumbed by the influence of iniquity, and it is essential that his conscience be aroused to understand that sin is the transgression of God's holy law. He who does not obey the commandments of God is a sinner in the sight of God.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and for this reason the Lord has provided a remedy for sin: "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." "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." The true test of religious experience is here given. He that abideth in Christ is perfected in the love of God, and his purposes, thoughts, words, and actions are in harmony with the will of God expressed in the commandments of his law. There is nothing in the heart of the man who abides in Christ that is at war with any precept of God's law. Where the Spirit of Christ is in the heart, the character of Christ will be revealed, and there will be manifested gentleness under provocation, and patience under trial. "Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." Righteousness can be defined only by God's great moral standard, the Ten Commandments. There is no other rule by which to measure character. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." It was the refusal of Satan to obey the commandments of God that brought sin and apostasy into the universe. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Through the devices of the great apostate, man has been led to separate himself from God, and has yielded to the temptations of the adversary of God and man in committing sin and breaking the law of the Most High. God could not alter one jot or tittle of his holy law to meet man in his fallen condition; for this would reflect discredit upon the wisdom of God in making a law by which to govern heaven and earth. But God could give his only-begotten Son to become man's substitute and surety, to suffer the penalty that was merited by the transgressor, and to impart to the repentant soul his perfect righteousness. Christ became the sinless sacrifice for a guilty race, making men prisoners of hope, so that, through repentance toward God because they had broken his holy law, and through faith in Christ as their substitute, surety, and righteousness, they might be brought back to loyalty to God and to obedience to his holy law.

It was impossible for the sinner to keep the law of God, which was holy, just, and good; but this impossibility was removed by the impartation of the righteousness of Christ to the repenting, believing soul. The life and death of Christ in behalf of sinful man were for the purpose of restoring the sinner to God's favor, through imparting to him the righteousness that would meet the claims of the law, and find acceptance with the Father. But it is ever the purpose of Satan to make void the law of God, and to pervert the true meaning of the plan of salvation. Therefore he has originated the falsehood that the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary's cross was for the purpose of freeing men from the obligation of keeping the commandments of God. He has foisted upon the world the deception that God has abolished his constitution, thrown away his moral standard, and made void his holy and perfect law. Had he done this, at what terrible expense would it have been to Heaven! Instead of proclaiming the abolition of the law, Calvary's cross proclaims in thunder tones its immutable and eternal character. Could the law have been abolished, and the government of heaven and earth and

the unnumbered worlds of God maintained, Christ need not have died. The death of Christ was to forever settle the question of the validity of the law of Jehovah. Having suffered the full penalty for a guilty world, Jesus became the Mediator between God and man, to restore the repenting soul to favor with God by giving him grace to keep the law of the Most High. Christ came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them to the very letter. The atonement of Calvary vindicated the law of God as holy, just, and true, not only before the fallen world, but before Heaven and before worlds unfallen. Christ came to magnify the law and to make it honorable.

June 27, 1895

Christ's Object in Coming to the World

The great object that brought Christ to the earth was to reveal the Father. When Moses had desired a closer acquaintance with God, and had prayed, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," the Lord had answered, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."

"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, longsuffering, 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." The glory of the Lord is his character that was revealed to Moses; but how different is the representation of himself from that made by Satan, the father of lies!

But who that is not infinite can understand the infinite? Christ declares, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him." It is recorded of Epictetus that when his hearers said to him, "You have uttered many excellent things of God; but we cannot as yet understand what he is," he truly and nobly replied, "Were I able fully to set forth God, I should either be a god myself, or God himself would cease to be what he is." The greatness of God cannot be measured or comprehended. And that doctrine that denies the absolute Godhead of Jesus Christ, denies also the Godhead of the Father; for no man knoweth the Son but the Father.

The mightiest created intelligence cannot grasp divinity. The principalities and powers of heaven are overwhelmed with the vastness of the theme of Christ's character and the mystery of the union of divinity and humanity. The most eloquent notes of cherubim and seraphim fail to describe him; but the angels of God delight to be in his presence. They rejoice in beholding his face, and hasten to obey his command, to fulfill their commission of love to those for whom Christ died.

The sufferings of Christ for the redemption of a fallen race were a necessity, and his exaltation is a part of the plan by which his chosen shall at last behold his full and inexpressible glory. Our Lord Jesus Christ could not have become the Redeemer unless he had first been the Sacrifice. How precious is it to contemplate the faithfulness of God to his promises! After his humiliation, suffering, and death, the Son of God steps back to the position of his former glory, and is one with the Father in power and dominion. While on earth he lived a life of humiliation, toiling for the good of men. He suffered, he died, he triumphed over death and the grave, and was received up into glory. But before he takes his seat upon the throne with his Father, he prefers the request: "I will that they

also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Jesus had represented the Father to his disciples, and before the throne of God he now represents his believing children, saying: "These have known that thou hast sent me." "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Jesus said, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it." He had represented the Father's character to the world. When Philip had said unto him, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," he had said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The Father was one with Christ in all his sufferings, in all his humiliations. The Father's heart yearned over his Son; his love knew no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God looked upon his Son as the faithful servant of the everlasting covenant, and approved of the work he accomplished by his life of humiliation, toil, and suffering. He heard his expiring cry at the cross, as he went to the very depth of humiliation, and with his last breath exclaimed, "It is finished." God was pledged to raise his Son, in whom he was well pleased, to the very highest exaltation as the Redeemer of humanity, and to give him a name above every name. As a servant on the earth, his life had been one of toil and faithfulness; as sacrifice, he had died a death of shame and suffering, to make expiation for the human family, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

In the purity of his life he had revealed the Father, and the glory of God had beamed forth from his character. The perfection of the Father had been displayed before unfallen worlds, before heavenly intelligences, and to sinful men. In the mediatorial work of Christ, the love of God was revealed in its perfection to men and angels. Having overcome the temptation and borne the test in the wilderness, having overcome in our behalf, he bends his steps toward Calvary, and in the perfection of humanity he grasps the world, and in the fullness of his divinity he lays hold upon the throne of God, and proclaims the result of his terrible conflict with the enemy, exclaiming, "Now is the prince of this world cast out," now is the last enemy destroyed. The usurper to the throne and kingdoms of the world is put to flight; his confederacy of evil is broken and scattered. With his human arm he encircles the race of Adam, and with his divine arm he grasps the throne of God, and unites finite man with the infinite God, and earth with heaven. He sees as a result of his victory a new heaven and a new earth, from which every trace of evil is removed, and where God is all in all to its righteous inhabitants.

July 4, 1895

Continue in the Son and in the Father

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Jesus has left us a warning upon this very point. He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." "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.” John continues, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

These deceivers will come, and, while claiming to be doing a special work for God, while professing to have advanced piety, to be sanctified, to see visions, and to have dreams, they will be doing the work of the enemy, and be found breaking the commandments of God. We should be on our guard, and bring these pretenders to the test; “to the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Shall we take heed to the solemn warnings of Christ, of Paul, and of John upon this point, and not be deceived by the subtle devices of the enemy, for Christ has said that the signs and wonders wrought by these deceivers will be so great that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.

Of the elect, John writes: “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” “And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.” Those who have heard the voice of God proclaiming his holy law on Mount Sinai, in the hearing of the people, know his voice, and when men claiming to be led by Christ, and professing to be entirely sanctified, assert that the law of God is abolished, and ridicule and make light of the great moral standard, and set at naught the testimony of prophets and apostles, we can confidently say that we hear not in their teachings the voice of the true Shepherd. The true Shepherd's voice has been heard, bearing a different testimony. Jesus says: “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.” The voice that magnifies the law of God we recognize as the voice of the true Shepherd; but we know that those who would make of no effect the commandments of God, are false shepherds, who would exalt tradition above the commandments of Jehovah.

John writes: “I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.” There are those who claim to have great light, who say that they have communication with the spirits of the dead, who deny the divinity of Christ, and in so doing deny the Father, whom Christ represented on earth. “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.” The class which denies the Father and the Son is rapidly increasing in the world, and the name given to this class by the Bible is antichrist. There are many who have their names upon the church records, who claims to possess superior piety, and yet should Christ appear among them, they would rebuke the Son of God. There are men who profess to be ministers of the Gospel who are teaching heresy, and deceiving many, and leading thousands in the way of apostasy.

But John writes to the true followers of Christ, saying: “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us,

even eternal life." We have here a most precious promise, which will be fulfilled to those who let the truth abide in them. Then hold fast to the truth, and be not beguiled from steadfast adherence to the truth by any of the arts of the deceiver. "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." Our character is to be moulded after the character of Christ. O what humiliation he endured in our behalf! While in this world he lived a life of obedience to the commandments of God, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps. We must wait for God to reveal his plan, that our life may be the unveiling of the character of Christ. We can be sanctified only as we render obedience to the truth as it is unfolded to us. We cannot live in conscious disobedience of any precept of God, and not be on the losing side. We need to behold the character of Christ, and by beholding become changed into his image.

"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." "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." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

John cannot find adequate words wherein to describe the amazing love of God to sinful man; but he calls upon all to behold the love of God revealed in the gift of his only begotten Son. Through the perfection of the sacrifice given for the guilty race, those who believe in Christ, coming unto him, may be saved from eternal ruin. Christ was one with the Father, yet when sin entered our world through Adam's transgression, he was willing to step down from the exaltation of one who was equal with God, who dwelt in light unapproachable by humanity, so full of glory that no man could behold his face and live, and submit to insult, mockery, suffering, pain, and death in order to answer the claims of the immutable law of God, and make a way of escape for the transgressor by his death and righteousness. This was the work which his Father gave him to do, and those who accept Christ, relying wholly upon his merits, are made the adopted sons and daughters of God, are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Let no one be so deluded by the enemy as to think that it is a condescension for any man, however talented or learned or honored, to accept of Christ. Every human being should look to heaven with reverence and gratitude, and exclaim with amazement, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

July 11, 1895

Vital Godliness Bruises the Serpent's Head

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. 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. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.... That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 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.”

It was by seducing the minds of Adam and Eve through the error of the wicked, that Satan led them to transgress the law of God. Through sin, darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people; but God sent truth into our world in untarnished glory, beauty, and perfection, and placed it in contrast with error. Neither men nor devils were able to detect a flaw in the character of Christ; but the revelation of the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, placed darkness in such contrast that men would not receive the light. The carnal heart is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Not believing on Christ, the world knew him not.

After the transgression of the law of God, our first parents were called into the presence of God. “And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle.... And 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.”

This prophecy refers not only to the enmity between Christ and Satan, but also to the enmity that exists between the world and the followers of the world's Redeemer. Christ was the special one who should bruise the head of the serpent; but the prophecy also includes all those who shall overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. In the words addressed to the serpent is a delineation of the great, unended conflict that has been waging in the world from the beginning of sin. The earth is the battle field for the conflict, and the result of the conflict, while it brings temporal loss upon the followers of Christ, will bring eternal ruin upon Satan, evil angels, and evil men, who unite with the enemy in the controversy against Christ.

The Lord says, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman.” The enmity does not exist as a natural fact. As soon as Adam sinned, he was in harmony with the first great apostate, and at war with God; and if God had not interfered in man's behalf, Satan and man would have formed a confederacy against heaven, and carried on united opposition against the God of hosts. There is no natural enmity between evil angels and evil men; both are evil through transgression of the law of God, and evil will always league against good. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship.

The prophecy of enmity between the serpent and the seed of the woman was the first intimation that Satan had that God would provide a way of salvation for the fallen race. Satan had made his calculation that he would induce men to ally themselves with him as he had induced angels, and by

this desperate confederacy he would not hesitate to war against heaven, and seek to dethrone the Lord of hosts.

The enmity against Satan never worked with such power as it did in the time of Christ. Never had a son of Adam felt such utter hatred of sin as did the spotless Son of God; and bear in mind that sin is the transgression of the law. The purity and holiness of the character of Christ stirred up the very worst passions of the human heart; for his sinless character was in marked contrast to the character of men of a fallen race, who loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. His perfect obedience to the commandments of God was a continual rebuke to a sensual and perverse generation. His spotless character was shedding light into the midst of the moral darkness of the world, and the darkness comprehended it not.

The world knows not the followers of Christ. They do not recognize their holy origin, and they will not be in harmony with them any more than they were in harmony with Jesus, their Lord. The righteous zeal manifested by Christ for the honor of God as the supreme Ruler, the unsparing denunciation of sin, the unmasking of the hypocrisy of those who made a pretense to piety, and thus deceived the people, the heavenly loveliness of his own unblemished character, aroused the enmity of the world against him, who hated nothing but sin. He warred against lust and hypocrisy, and this stirred up against him the most bitter hostility. The serpent himself came to the assistance of his seed, and evil angels and evil men conspired together in a confederacy of apostasy to destroy the champion of God, and to make void the law of the Most High.

Those who become the sons of God cannot avoid coming into conflict with the hosts of apostasy. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The Redeemer of the world subjected himself to every kind of insult and mockery, and endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. What love, what wondrous love, the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son to go through humiliation, suffering, and death to pay the debt of man's sin, and to purchase for the repenting transgressor the righteousness of his spotless life, in order that iniquity might not be perpetuated, but that through the condescension of Christ, the transgressor might be brought back to allegiance to God. Through the merits of the Redeemer, God accepts the efforts of sinful man in keeping his law, which is holy, just, and good.

Those who truly unite with Christ, will be found doing the same work that Christ did while on the earth,—they will be found magnifying the law and making it honorable. But these who stand to vindicate the honor of God's law, will be objects of Satan's enmity; for he was a despiser of the law from the beginning, and his seed will war against the righteous, and the wicked will endeavor to exterminate the good from the face of the earth.

Satan has sown plentifully the seed of dangerous heresies, that will produce a harvest of corruption, and will be as tares among the wheat. He is filling the hearts and minds of men with fables, and causing them to turn away their ears from hearing the truth. The advocates of truth are regarded as enemies to Christianity, and yet, although Satan causes the world to regard the followers of Christ as foes to progress, yet whenever a soul takes a decided stand for truth, the head of the serpent is bruised by the seed of the woman, and the serpent can bruise but the heel of the seed. When nominal Christianity is declared wanting, and is found insufficient, and practical godliness is alone declared genuine religion, the enmity of Satan is aroused at once, but his anger is an evidence of his

bruising. He is seeking to hold the people in the deception of a form of godliness without its power, to keep them satisfied with a profession of piety; when their hearts are carnal and at enmity with the law of Jehovah. When the advocates of truth reveal the efficiency of truth in their life and character, a blow is struck against the kingdom of Satan.

July 18, 1895

Christ Received, Man's Character Transformed

A Lesson from Judas

“Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.” Satan would not have entered into Judas if he had not opened the door to give him admittance. He would not have entered into him if he had been a doer of the words of Christ. “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Had he been a doer of the words of Christ, he would have taken heed, and would have barricaded the soul, so that Satan could not have entered.

Judas had had great light; he had had many opportunities to understand what were the requirements of God. Numbered among the twelve, he had listened to the lessons of Christ; he had heard the truth, and he had no excuse for failing to form a character after the likeness of Christ. It had been his privilege to behold the character of Christ, to contemplate his goodness, his compassion, to see his works of mercy, to behold his wonderful miracles in healing the sick and giving life to the dead. He should have been rich in faith, and bound to Christ with cords of love which nothing could sever; but though a hearer of the words of Christ, he was not a doer of his word. Had Judas improved his opportunities and appreciated his privileges while being in close relationship with Christ as a disciple, he would have watched unto prayer, and would have overcome his besetting sin, avarice and covetousness, which is idolatry, and would have become transformed in character. But, although Christ gave lessons in condemnation of this sin, Judas did not feel his danger. He did not make his request to God for the aid of the Holy Spirit to help his infirmities, nor did he earnestly strive for the best gifts in order that he might accomplish the greatest good and receive grace for grace.

In this age, if those who come under the precious influence of the truth do not become transformed in character, they will, like Judas, go from light to darkness; and how great will be their darkness. God had intrusted to Judas talents of ability, and if he had used these gifts of God in blessing humanity with the rays of light that shone upon him from the Sun of Righteousness, he would have had increased light, and his path would have been as the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But he was more eager for position, for rank and wealth, than for the glory of God and the good of humanity. He became so narrow in his ideas, so selfish in his plans, that good and holy impressions could not be made upon his heart and mind. Had he as eagerly sought for the spirit of true goodness, mercy, compassion, forbearance, and true courtesy, as he did for power and wealth, he would not have possessed the attributes of Satan, but would have manifested the attributes of the character of Him who daily lived not to please himself, but went about doing good, healing all who were possessed of the devil. Judas had talents of influence, and had he received the

Spirit of Christ, he would have been transformed in character so that he could have accomplished the work to which God had called him. God qualifies his disciples for the work which he would have them do, and gives them talents according to their several ability. But in order that they may do the work for which they are called, they are admonished to wait, to watch, to pray, lest Satan shall take advantage of them.

Christ Alone Our Helper

Every one who truly becomes the disciple of Christ will be tested and tried. If the human agent will fully determine that he cannot and will not live without Christ, he will be an overcomer. Although, like Peter, James, and John, he may reveal defects of character, yet he will receive the lessons of reproof from the Saviour, and will be transformed in character. The angels of God will be around the tempted soul who is striving for the victory. His determination, his importunity, will bring to him the necessary strength and grace.

James and John thought that they could obtain the favor of God, and, for the asking, have a seat at the right hand and at the left hand of Christ when he received his kingdom. But Jesus answered and said: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" This inquiry meant, Can you bear the test and proving of God? Can you drink the cup of self-denial, of humiliation, reproach, suffering, ignominy, and death? They said, "We are able." O, how little did they understand what would be the sufferings of Christ! Had they known, they would have shrunk back from such a statement, and their answer would have been one of far less assurance and self-confidence. Could they have realized that their Lord would be subjected to such utter humiliation as he was, could they have seen him staggering and falling under the cross, and known that their own path would be one of reproach, of ignominy, of imprisonment, of persecution and shame, before they could win the crown, they would never have said in self-confidence, "We are able." But they did become partakers of the sufferings of Christ. They did drink of the cup of which he drank, and were baptized with the baptism with which he was baptized.

It is essential that the lessons of humility that Christ has given should be thoroughly understood. These disciples of Christ loved Jesus, and were ever close to him. James and John desired the privilege of being nearest to Jesus in the kingdom of heaven. This led them to ask for a seat upon his right hand and upon his left hand. But every disciple, from age to age, is individually required to take up his cross and follow where Christ leads the way, learning in the school of Christ his meekness and lowliness of heart.

Those who reign with Christ in his kingdom must have a fellowship in his suffering. Every defect in character condemned by the law of God, must through the grace of Christ, which is freely given to every soul who desires it, be overcome. Every hereditary and cultivated tendency to evil must be seen, subdued, and cleansed, that the soul temple may become fit for the indwelling of the Spirit of God. The divine will must be accepted, and the human will brought into harmony with God, though it cause bitter agony and tears. Traits of character that are offensive to God are often very dear to man, and are cherished as virtues. How blind is humanity unless the light of heaven is accepted and cherished! When truth is laid hold of resolutely, and a firm, determined purpose is cherished to bring the life into harmony with truth, then is cultivated the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Then the disciples of Christ manifest that steadfastness of purpose that will not fail nor be

discouraged. God will bestow his gifts to the striving soul in proportion to his willingness to receive, and his readiness to impart for the glory of God.

But the same resistance to light is manifested now as was manifested in the days of Christ. O, why did not the Jewish nation know and understand Jesus? He could have been everything to them. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.... That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 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."

No one of us has the power to save himself. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, can alone give power to reform, to believe in himself as the Restorer. He alone can break every yoke. All the outward ceremonies of the Jews, all their sacrificial offerings, were of no virtue, for the One prefigured in them stood in the midst of them, and, sad fact, they knew him not. He came unto his own, the nation he had redeemed from Egyptian slavery, but they would not receive him.

"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." "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

July 25, 1895

Walk in the Light of the Cross

I had a wonderful dream last night, or this morning. A few persons were assembled, and we were conversing together as to how the work should be carried on in this country, when there is such a dearth of means with which to advance it. We seemed as sheep in the midst of wolves. We offered up tearful prayers. Our hope and courage and faith were severely tested and tried. We could not see how we could advance the very work that we were anxious to do, which the Lord was impressing upon us should be done. In our solemn council, we decided that methods must be devised by which the work could be made more thorough and effectual.

While we laid open our situation before God, a voice was heard full of sweetness and melody, saying: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." The voice continued, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship. Walk not in the shadow of the cross, but in the path where the Sun of Righteousness is ever shining, to impart life and vitality, and to give grace for grace. The cross of Calvary is to you a pledge of forgiveness, of righteousness, of peace, and of fullness of joy. It is as a well of water to every believer, springing up unto everlasting 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.

“The cross speaks life and not death to the soul that believes in Jesus. Welcome the precious, life-giving rays that shine from the cross of Calvary. God would not deprive his people of blessings. It is Satan that interposes his shadow of darkness and creates misgiving and doubts, in order that we may not discern the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining from the cross of Calvary. Reach up for the blessing, believe for the blessing. Your Saviour who died upon the cross is God's gift to a fallen world, and that gift embraces all heaven. Walk not in the shadow of the cross. Do not give expression to weeping, lamentation, and woe; but encourage your soul to hope and joy. The cross points you upward to a living Saviour, who, as your advocate, is pleading in your behalf.”

I remember that my husband sometimes used to halt in the shadow of the cross, and he could see nothing but the dark side. He was sore tried and perplexed. He suffered being tempted. So sorely were we tried that I thought death would be preferable to the sufferings we endured. Clouds surrounded us, and everything was unfavorable to the light, hope, and courage of the soul. We are in the same danger now of not discerning the light that shines from the cross of Calvary. We have been halting in the shadow of the cross. At times we have failed to gather about us the warm, bright rays which come to us from an uplifted Saviour. Brethren, the cross speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, in behalf of every soul that receives Jesus Christ. When you are deeply shadowed, it is because Satan has interposed himself between you and the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness. In times of trouble the brightness is eclipsed, and we do not understand why the assurance seems to be withdrawn. We are led to look at self and at the shadow of the cross, and this prevents us from seeing the consolation that there is for us. We complain of the way, and withdraw the hand from the hand of Christ. But sometimes God's favor breaks suddenly upon the soul, and the gloom is dispelled.

Let us live in the sunlight of the cross of Calvary. Let us no longer dwell in the shadow, complaining of our sorrows, for this only deepens our trouble. Let us never forget, even when we walk in the valley, that Christ is as much with us when we walk trustingly there, as when we are on the mountain top. The voice said to us, “Will you not roll your burden upon the burden bearer, the Lord Jesus? Will you not live on the sunny side of the cross, saying: I know him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day? Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”

I have indeed been halting under the shadow of the cross. It is not a common thing for me to be overpowered, and to suffer so much depression of spirit as I have suffered for the last few months. I would not be found to trifle with my own soul, and thus trifle with my Saviour. I would not teach that Jesus has risen from the tomb, and that he is ascended on high, and lives to make intercession for us before the Father, unless I carry out my teaching by practice, and believe in him for his salvation, casting my helpless soul upon Jesus for grace, for righteousness, peace, and love. I must trust in him irrespective of the changes of my emotional atmosphere. I must show forth the praises of Him who has called me out of darkness into his marvelous light. My heart must be steadfast in Christ my Saviour, beholding his love, his gracious goodness. I must not trust him now and then, but always, that I may manifest the results of abiding in Him who has bought me with his own precious blood. We must learn to believe the promises, to have an abiding faith, so that we may take them as the sure word of God.

Many who love God, and who seek to honor God, fear that they have no right to claim his rich promises. They dwell upon their painful struggles, and the darkness which encompasses their path, and in so doing they lose sight of the light of the love that Jesus Christ has shed upon them. They lose sight of the great redemption that has been purchased for them at infinite cost. Many are standing afar off, as if they were afraid to touch even the hem of Christ's garments; but his gracious invitation is ever extended to them, and he is pleading, "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." Granville, N. S. W.

August 1, 1895

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." These comforting words of Christ are addressed not to the proud, not to the boastful and self-conceited, but to those who realize their own weakness and sinfulness. Those who mourn, the meek who feel themselves unworthy of the favor of God, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, are all included in "the poor in spirit."

But thousands of souls know not their poverty. They are filled with a craving for something which they do not possess. The wealth that men accumulate does not satisfy, although it preoccupies the soul, and keeps it from the possession of true riches. But those who are accounted blessed are those who empty themselves, who have room for spiritual and eternal riches. They are the hungry, thirsty souls who reach out for the strength and grace of Christ. They are not among those who think themselves whole and are satisfied with their own righteousness. They are not of those who feel no need of higher attainments. They are those who feel the need of forgiveness, and who long for the grace of Christ that bringeth salvation.

There is forgiveness for the penitent, for Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.... If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Christ came to this fallen world to contest the claims of Satan for the sinful human race. He knows the conflict of every soul with the powers of darkness, and through the gift of his Holy Spirit has undertaken to make men more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. For God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him, than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. But the battle of overcoming is one that is presented to every soul who would enter into the kingdom of God. "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." The followers of Christ are to war against every evil tendency which they have inherited or cultivated; for evil practices defile the soul. Many have been deceived in themselves, and have considered their character to be as good as the average. Though the word of God lifts up the danger-signal to warn them, they yet press on from one point of resistance and disobedience to another, and while living in sin they flatter themselves that they have acted in a meritorious way, that they are not depending upon any one for help, but can of themselves be good and do good. They do not believe the word of Christ when he says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Those who strive for eternal life will practice self-denial, because they love Jesus. They will count themselves as pilgrims and strangers in this world. They center their hopes above, and are looking for the day of God. Where the heart is, there will the treasure be also.

The young ruler who came to Christ flattered himself that he had placed his hopes upon heavenly things, and that he needed little in order to gain eternal life. He came to Christ and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?"

The world's Redeemer knew that while the young man had a theory of religion, and flattered himself that he was keeping God's commandments, he was very far from doing so.

He did not love God with his whole heart, might, mind, and strength, nor his neighbor as himself. Jesus brought to bear upon him a test that would expose to the young ruler the weakness and poverty of his heart. Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." When the young man asked of Christ, "What lack I yet?" he thought himself a perfect man. The words of Christ revealed to him his idol; but did he quickly expel it from his heart, that he might be perfect? Jesus looked with pity upon the young ruler, for he loved him. "But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions! Though Jesus had come to the world to save him, he rejected the Saviour and yielded to his inclination to cling to his idols. The young man loved his possessions more than he loved God.

There are many in the same danger, who allow their means to come between them and their Saviour, and when the test is brought to bear upon them, and Christ bids them "sell all that thou hast, and come and follow me," they draw back. They love money more than they love God and his righteousness.

Many profess to believe the Bible, and with the young ruler they are saying, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" They address Christ as Lord, and yet they fail to recognize his claims in the poor and the oppressed, and thus cut themselves off from true union with Christ. They will not practice the self-denial that is necessary in order to keep the commandments of God. Like the young ruler, they turn away from the treasures of heaven, because they allow their spiritual eyesight to be perverted, and value the earthly treasure above the heavenly. Christ offers to them the precious treasure of his grace; but they have no room for his rich gift. Their attitude is that of the young ruler, as he asked, "What lack I yet?" Christ turns from those who feel whole to those who acknowledge their poverty of spirit, who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and he will supply their needs from his immense storehouse of grace.

Longing for God

The poor in spirit feel their poverty, their want of the grace of Christ. They realize that they know little of God and his great love, and that they need light in order that they may know and keep the

way of the Lord. They dare not face temptation in their own strength, for they realize that they have not moral force to resist evil. They have no pleasure in reviewing their past life, and little confidence in looking to the future, for they are sick at heart. But it is to such that Christ says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Christ saw that those who feel their poverty may be made rich.

The true Witness delineates the condition of those who feel that they are "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Of them he says, thou "knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." They are a class who have had great privileges, who have been blessed with light and knowledge, and who have not responded, who trust in their own righteousness, and boast of their spiritual advantages. But the true Witness says, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire [faith and love] that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed [that is the righteousness of Christ], and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

What great privileges are within the reach of those who feel the poverty of their soul and submit to the will of God! The remedy for soul-poverty is found alone in Christ. When the heart is sanctified by grace, when the Christian has the mind of Christ, he has the love of Christ, which is spiritual riches, more precious than the gold of Ophir. But before there can be an intense desire for the wealth contained in Christ, which is available to all who feel their poverty, there must be a sense of need. When the heart is full of self-sufficiency, and preoccupied with the superficial things of earth, the Lord Jesus rebukes and chastens in order that men may awake to a realization of their true condition.

A Work of Faith

Whom Christ pardons he first makes penitent, and it is the office work of the Holy Spirit to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The sinner acknowledges the perfection of God, the righteousness of Christ, and thus glorifies God. By beholding this perfection the sinner sees his sins, and repents, and believes in the atonement of Jesus Christ, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

The Jewish nation were under a fatal deception in flattering themselves that they were the elect of God, when in character they were wholly unchristlike. They refused to accept the virtues of Christ, and rejected him who alone could help them; for it is through the acceptance of Christ that faith makes us partakers of the divine nature. Cain presented an offering to God, and thereby acknowledged him as his sovereign; but he made no confession of sin, no acknowledgment of guilt, expressed no desire, and felt no need of a Mediator who could cleanse him from sin. But he who does not see Christ as his all-sufficiency will become attracted and ensnared by the things of earth that can not satisfy the soul. He will not experience the blessing that is pronounced upon all those who have a sense of their deep soul-poverty. But those who distrust self, who feel that they have not strength for the burdens of life, will find strength by looking to Jesus. Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He bids you exchange your soul-poverty for the riches of his grace. No one is worthy of his favor, but Christ, our surety, is worthy, and is abundantly able to save all who shall come unto him. He says, "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.”

You may come to Jesus in faith, and without delay. His provision is rich and free, his love is abundant, and he will give you grace to wear his yoke and to lift his burden with cheerfulness. You may claim your right to his blessing by virtue of his promise. You may enter into his kingdom, which is his grace, his love, his righteousness, his peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. If you feel in deepest need, you may be supplied with all his fullness; for Christ says, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Jesus calls you to come. “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

August 8, 1895

“Blessed Are They That Mourn”

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” It is not pleasing to the Lord that we should cover the altar with tears, even when we are oppressed with a sense of unworthiness. The mission of Christ to this world was to heal the broken-hearted. He received mourners, and comforted those who were sorrow-stricken, those who had lost courage and hope. Upon such he pronounced his blessing, and declared they should be comforted.

The Lord works through human instrumentalities, and has commissioned to his followers the duty of ministering to those who are desponding and distressed. There are hearts all around us that need to be uplifted, that need the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. The Lord looks to those whom he has comforted and blessed to enlighten those who are in darkness, and to relieve those who are in sorrow. Those who have received light and peace and joy are not to pass by those who mourn, but are to come close to them in human sympathy, and help them to see a sin-pardoning Saviour, a merciful God.

Christ has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and he will give joy and gladness to those who mourn. Will you, my brother and sister who have felt the sorrows of earth, do service for Christ in helping the very ones who need your help? Will you who are strong bear the infirmities of the weak? Our Saviour was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He identified his interests with those of the weak and suffering. In looking to Jesus we look to one who comforts all who mourn in Zion. How many more might have been comforted and blessed if human messengers had performed the service which Christ had enjoined upon them to suffering humanity! “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

Those who love Jesus will have the mind of Christ, and will comfort all who mourn; those who are poor, tempted, and discouraged they will help to walk in the light of the cross, and not in the shadows and in the darkness. They will point out to them the fact that the blood of Christ speaketh in their behalf “better things than that of Abel.” Christians are to minister to all that mourn, to comfort many sorrowful hearts whose memory is filled with pictures of disappointment, of forfeited friendships, and of bitter bereavements, whose history has been one of sorrow and mourning.

The Lord Jesus has given to his people the special work of comforting all that mourn. Christ is working for this class, and he calls upon human beings to become his instrumentalities in bringing

light and hope to those who are mourning in the midst of apparently dark providences. Christ calls upon us to show them a bright side by our sympathy and love, and prevent the troubled soul from charging God with unfaithfulness. Our heavenly Father is never unmindful of those whom sorrow has touched. But many think that God has no care for them, as a result of the negligence of his professed followers; for these fail to act their part as colaborers with Christ in comforting those who mourn.

When David went up by the Mount Olivet, "and wept as he went up, and had his head covered," and went barefooted, the Lord was looking pityingly upon him. He was clothed in sackcloth, and his conscience was scourging him. The outward signs of humiliation testified of his contrition and brokenness of heart. He would not consent that the ark of God should be borne before him as an emblem of the presence of God. He said to the ark bearers, "Carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." He was not willing that the ark should be imperiled by his vicissitudes. The precious symbol, the hallowed burden, was to be taken back to its temple. If his trouble, his expulsion from the throne, had been the work of human power, if his conscience had been clear and without reproach, he would gladly have welcomed the ark, and would have permitted the bearers to carry it before him; but because of consciousness of sin, in his repentance and contrition, he could not consent to the presence of the ark. When Shimei uttered curses upon him, he hears them in silence, and will not consent that the man shall be requited according to his course of action. David said: "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seekest my life; how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." David was looking to God, before whom he humbled himself, and the Lord saw his submission and did not desert his servant. The Lord wrought out a victory for David.

The furnace fire may kindle upon the servants of God, but it is for the purpose of purifying them from all dross, and not that they may be destroyed and consumed. The High and Holy One says: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." We honor God by trusting in him when all looks dark and forbidding. Let those who are afflicted look unto him, and talk of his power, and sing of his mercy. "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness [cleansed from all earthly defilement] as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

Never was David dearer to the heart of infinite love than when, conscious [conscience] smitten, he fled for his life from his enemies, who were stirred into rebellion by his own son. In tearful, heartbroken utterances, he presented his case to God, and pursued his sorrowful course; but no word of repining escaped from his lips. The Lord says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." There is a blessing pronounced upon all who mourn. Had there been

no mourners in our world, Christ could not have revealed to man the parental character of God. Those oppressed by the conviction of sin are to know the blessedness of forgiveness, and to have their transgressions blotted out. Had there been none who mourn, the sufficiency of Christ's expiation for sin would not have been understood.

(Concluded next week.)

August 15, 1895

"Blessed Are They That Mourn

(Concluded.)

The Lord has special grace for mourners, and its power is to melt hearts, to win souls. His love opens a channel into the wounded and bruised soul and becomes a healing balsam to those who sorrow. His love is as a precious link which binds the souls of the finite to the throne of the Infinite, from whom all blessings flow to the needy and distressed; for he comforts all who mourn. The Lord Jesus is a restorer of all that was lost, and identifies his interests with those of suffering humanity. He lifts up the contrite heart, and refines the mourning soul until it becomes his abode.

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." To all outward appearances the cause of mourning does not seem to be a blessing. Bereavements come in manifold form, and we ask in mournful tones, Why are we thus afflicted? Jesus answers, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." The Lord "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." God has manifested his love for man in giving to the human family as their substitute and surety his beloved Son. "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," a life that runs parallel with the life of Jehovah. Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory, and in order that he might abide with him through the ceaseless ages of eternity, he came to the world to care for our apostate race. All heaven was given to us in Christ, and the Lord is bestowing rich and free mercies upon us, making every provision, in order that we shall individually stand as his representatives, making manifest to the world the efficiency and power of the grace which God alone can bestow. In view of what the Lord would make his people, it is not strange that the moral powers are disciplined by trial and sorrow. When the spiritual powers are dwarfed and crippled, when they fasten upon temporal and inferior things, the Lord permits affliction to come, just as the pruning knife is thrust into the vine branches. The tendrils entwined about earthly things must be unclasped, and earthly supports must be removed in order that the tendrils may entwine about God, and that the branch may bring forth much fruit. Christ says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

The Lord sees that we are in danger of deceiving ourselves, and that a change must be brought about in our life or spiritual death will be the consequence. The Lord has endowed men with varied capabilities and talents, and has designed that they should be sanctified to his use, but they are perverted from the Master's service, and employed in the service of self. The needs of the future are presented in such pressing urgency that men devote their might, mind, soul, and strength to acquiring that which must perish with the using. Their God-given talents are absorbed in that which is earthly and temporal, and the Lord draws nigh with affliction, and urges them not to drop eternity out of their reckoning. The Lord permits affliction and sorrow for the purpose of attracting minds to

the only source of strength. He would have the human agents become acquainted with the great Physician, and realize what healing there is in the balm of Gilead. He would draw the mind away from earth. He would reveal himself in all human affliction as the Comforter.

Those who are comforted of God, who experience peace and rest in him, will bear rich clusters of fruit in comforting others with the consolation which they themselves have received from the compassionate Saviour. The Lord Jesus often draws souls to himself through some human agent to whom he has given a valuable experience in mourning and sorrow. He often reaches hearts by causing those who have suffered to come close to others who are passing through affliction, who can point the mourners to the bow of promise that encircles the throne of God. They can tell those who are in bereavement or in physical suffering that there is One who knows their weakness, and who will be to them hope, comfort, peace, and joy. They can encourage them to trust in God, who desires that the frail human sufferer shall lean hard upon his everlasting arms. Christ would encourage the timid disciples to look up to him. For the purpose of uplifting and encouraging others the Lord has prepared helpers for every emergency. Let every one in the Lord's service be ready to see the needs of others, and to draw from their experience that which will be a blessing to those that mourn. Let them shed forth the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

When the ways of the Lord are understood, his providences will not obscure our faith, even though they be full of suffering and sorrow. They will purify the heart, refine and elevate the character, ennoble the thoughts and practices, so that much fruit shall be borne to the glory of God. Satan has cast his hellish shadow of corruption and iniquity, and has covered the earth with darkness as with a funeral pall, but the Sun of Righteousness still shines, and God would have every afflicted soul look to the brightness of Calvary's cross. Faith, hope, and courage may be drawn from the Source of all light and truth.

Let every mourner look up and be comforted. Every service rendered to the Master in helping others, is blessing yourself, and the benediction that is spoken to those that mourn, will result in your own comforting. You will discern the invisible, and know the reality there is in Christian experience. Let there be rejoicing amid affliction until even amid the shadows that have thickened about you, you may have a truly grateful spirit. Christ himself will brighten your gloom with bright gleams of light, and his divine light will be all the more precious and glorious as it shines forth amid clouds and darkness. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

August 22, 1895

Blessed Are the Meek

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." The meekness that is born of sorrow, when the heart has been exercised aright through yielding submission to the will of God, brings forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Those who have humbly sought God for comfort and peace in the midst of trial, have had imparted to them the gentleness of Christ. Those who have learned of Him who is meek and lowly of heart, express sympathy, and manifest gentleness toward those who are in need of consolation; for they can comfort others with the consolation wherewith they are comforted of God. In seeking to save souls who are ready to perish, they make Jesus their pattern in all things. They respond to the comfort given them of God, and become inheritors of his kingdom.

Through the operations of the Holy Spirit a new nature is implanted within them, and they are sanctified of soul, and the Lord gives grace for grace.

Jesus expects that his gentleness and condescension will be reproduced in those whom he blesses. Jesus came to our world, and chose the lowliest life, took the humblest position, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps. The Majesty of heaven was meek and lowly in heart, and he expects all his followers to catch his spirit of meekness and lowliness, and become wise in helping those that mourn. There is no time in life when we shall not need to cultivate meekness and lowliness of heart. Those who minister in connection with Christ, will be called upon to manifest meekness and lowliness, that they may reveal this attribute to those who are learners in the school of Christ. A possession of the gentleness of Christ means the possession of true dignity. The adorning that is of value with God is a meek and quiet spirit, and it is of more value than gold and silver and precious gems. The attributes of God are goodness, mercy, love, long-suffering, and patience, and his followers are to possess the same attributes of character, representing Christ in true spirituality. Meekness, the treasure of inward wealth, may be possessed in the midst of poverty and sorrow. The soul reveals the source of its strength in the manifestation of meekness and lowliness of heart; for the grace of meekness has its origin in the source of all blessedness, and those who possess this grace are in harmony with Christ and the Father. The followers of Christ thus become one with each other. If meekness and love are not a part of our character, we are not the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our whole experience is feeble and uncertain.

Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit, and an evidence that we are branches of the living God. The abiding presence of meekness is an unmistakable evidence that we are branches of the True Vine, and are bearing much fruit. It is an evidence that we are by faith beholding the King in his beauty and becoming changed into his likeness. Where meekness exists, the natural tendencies are under the control of the Holy Spirit. Meekness is not a species of cowardice. It is the spirit which Christ manifested when suffering injury, when enduring insult and abuse. To be meek is not to surrender our rights; but it is the preservation of self-control under provocation to give way to anger or to the spirit of retaliation. Meekness will not allow passion to take the lines.

When Christ was accused by the priests and Pharisees, he preserved his self-control, but he took his position decidedly that their charges were untrue. He said to them: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" He knew that his position was right. When Paul and Silas were beaten and thrust into prison without trial or sentence, they did not surrender their right to be treated as honest citizens. When there was a great earthquake, and the foundations of the prison were shaken, and the doors were opened, and every man's bands were loosed, and the magistrates sent word to the prisoners that they might depart in peace, Paul entered a protest, and said: "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.... And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city." Through the action of Paul and Silas the name of God was magnified and the authorities were humbled. It was necessary that the honor of God should be vindicated at this time.

At all times and in all places the Christian should be that which the Lord designs that he should be,— a free man in Christ Jesus. Duty performed in the Spirit of Christ will be done with sanctified

prudence. We shall be guided as with a light from heaven when we have a vital connection with God. Holy men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit. To be meek does not mean that we shall regard ourselves as in a servile condition; for Christ is our sufficiency. Christ pronounced his benediction upon those who felt their need of divine grace. He pronounces a blessing upon the weary and heavy laden of every age. Human agents who accept his guidance, who hear his word, will be led into clear light, and will bear fruit to the glory of God. Those who have repented of their sins, who have cast their weary, heavy-burdened souls at the feet of Christ, who have submitted to his yoke, and become his colaborers, will be partakers with Christ in his sufferings, and partakers also of his divine nature. In the world the Christian will be slighted and dishonored, and will consent to be least of all and servant of all. He will submit to be injured, to be despitefully used and persecuted, but wearing the yoke of Christ he will find rest unto his soul, and the yoke will not be galling. He will hear the Saviour saying: "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." Jesus not only commands his followers, but he instructs them, he helps the helpless, he invigorates the fainting, he inspires the faithless with faith and hope. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." If men have mourned with godly sorrow, the fruit of meekness and humility will be manifest in the character. Their affections will be drawn from earthly things, and they will have learned, through trial and testing, the precious lesson that great truths can be brought into the little things of life as well as into the great things. Practical religion is far-reaching in its influence, and will aid us in fulfilling the duties of daily life. Daily we are to learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and find rest unto our souls. It is in obeying the word of God that peace and rest come in. O, what fragrance might be brought into the daily life if all were to follow simply and completely the teachings of the word of God, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path! Like the rays of the sun in heaven, which brighten the earth, so are the commandments of God exceeding broad.

In the audience to whom Jesus spoke in his sermon on the mount there were not only those who were weary and heavy laden, but the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the rabbis and rulers, and the so-called great men, who were ambitious to receive the honor of men. He knew that there was strife in the Jewish nation, and desire for supremacy in the hearts of men. He knew that there was unhappiness in homes because the precious jewel of meekness had been lost. Meekness and lowliness of heart serve as a shield, and break the fierce darts of the enemy. The meek often have a thorny path to travel; for meekness is often set down as weakness or insensibility, while those who lose self-control conclude that their pride is sensitiveness. But Jesus is our pattern, and it is from him that we receive strength and grace to walk in humility and contrition before God. But whatever may be our trials, God understands them, and invites us to share the blessing that he has pronounced upon the meek and lowly in heart.

August 29, 1895

Hungering for Righteousness

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Jesus says: "The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said

they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.” In these words is expressed a desire for the bread of life; but those who expressed this desire did not have that longing for spiritual life of which our text speaks. The true bread of life is found only in Christ. Those who do not recognize that the bounties of rich grace, the heavenly banquet, have been prepared at an infinite cost to satisfy those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, will not be refreshed.

“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.... And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son [by faith], and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.... I am that bread of life.... This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.... 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.... It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

While sitting at Jacob's well, Jesus uttered the same truths when speaking with the Samaritan woman. He said, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” The same truth is brought out again in the parable of the vine and the branches. Jesus says: “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” Christ is the vital principle by which spiritual health and strength and righteousness are imparted to the life, to be revealed in the Christian's daily practice.

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled with a longing desire to become Christlike in character, to be assimilated to his image, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgment. We should ever cultivate an earnest desire for the righteousness of Christ. No temporal wants should attract and divert the mind to such a degree that we should not experience this soul hunger to possess the attributes of Christ. The command is, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” Everything else must be subordinated to this end. We are not to be satisfied with the cheap, common things of daily occurrence. In witnessing the afflictions, the sufferings of humanity, and the prevalence of iniquity, we become heartsick and dissatisfied. It is unsatisfactory business to bring only wood, hay, and stubble to the foundation. When in trouble and affliction the soul longs for the love and power of God. There is an intense desire for assurance, for hope, for faith, for confidence. We would seek for pardon, for peace, for the righteousness of Christ. We long that a change shall take place in our circumstances, so that the trials of life shall not expose us to so many temptations. Every soul who seeks the Lord with the whole heart is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. “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 soul hunger will be satisfied when our hearts are emptied of pride, vanity, and selfishness; for faith will then appropriate the promises of God, and Christ will supply the vacuum, and abide in the

heart. There will be a new song in the mouth, for the word will be fulfilled, "A new heart also will I give you." The testimony of the believer will be: "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.... No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Christ was the representation of God. Beholding him we exercise faith, and affection entwines about him as seeing Him who is invisible. Without Christ the hunger and thirst of the soul would remain unsatisfied. The feeling of want, the craving after something not temporal, not tainted with earthliness and commonness, could never be appeased. The mind must grasp something higher and purer than anything that can be found in this world.

Jesus Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The world's Redeemer was symbolized in types and shadows through their religious services. The glory of God was revealed in Christ within the veil until Christ should appear in the world, and display to the world all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In Christ we behold the image of the invisible God; in his attributes we see the attributes of the character of the Infinite. Jesus said: "I and my Father are one." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Christ was crucified for the sin of the world, and after his resurrection and ascension, all the world were invited to look to him and live. We are enjoined to look at the things unseen, to keep before the mind's eye the most vivid images of eternal realities, that by beholding we may become changed into the image of Christ. Christ is the mystic ladder uniting the earth with the universe of heaven, and as our faith lays hold upon him, we see him standing as our advocate, our assurance, our life. Unless we keep our attention fixed upon Jesus, Satan will intercept the bright gleams of light from the throne of God, and we shall lose the knowledge of the character of God as it is revealed in the ten moral precepts, and as it is seen in the life of his only-begotten Son. Satan constantly seeks to obstruct the view of Christ by placing a representation of himself before us; but unless our faith shall pierce his hellish shadow, and we obtain a view of the holiness of God's character, we shall be divested of our strength, and become purposeless, helpless, weak, and inefficient, the deluded prey of Satan's temptations. We shall give to the world the strength of the faculties of soul, mind, and body, and deprive Christ of the service which he has purchased with his own blood.

(Concluded next week.)

September 5, 1895

Hungering for Righteousness

(Concluded.)

Those who yield to the temptations of Satan have a hungering and thirsting for the pleasures of the world. They crave earthly excitement, and many have their minds so thoroughly occupied with amusements, with feverish desires for earthly pleasure, with ambitions that are tainted and corrupted, that they drop into their graves not having an experimental knowledge of God. They listen to the great deceiver as he lays out his plans to them line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until they devote their whole life to doing the service of the great apostate. They hunger and thirst for selfish indulgences until all their powers are perverted. But "blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

How carefully should every soul for whom Christ has died, watch and pray lest the moral taste should become perverted, lest by feeding the thoughts upon earthly, common things they come at last to desire nothing better! It is necessary that we follow out the command of Christ, and search the Scriptures; for in them "ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." That which Jesus accomplished for the people when he was upon the earth, he accomplished by opening the Scriptures to their understanding. Those who followed him became familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures, and thus fed upon the bread of life, and found strength to walk in the way of God's commandments. Those who continually feed upon the word of God will not turn aside, as did Adam and Eve, and disobey God's law. The word of God will give them grace and strength to work out the righteousness of Christ through the abundance of grace given unto them. The life of Christ was in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures. He was himself the living word. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

We ourselves may corrupt and pervert the moral taste so that there will be no hungering and thirsting after righteousness. If ever there was one who could live upon the earth and have no necessity for the written word, it was the Author of the word of God. Christ had the Spirit without measure, yet he used the Scriptures to prove the certainty and necessity of his sufferings, death, and resurrection. While in the wilderness of temptation he met and conquered Satan with the word of God, defeating his temptations by, "It is written." In his conflict with the Pharisees he continually presented the Scriptures, and revealed to them their true meaning. He said to them, 'How readest thou?' The life of God was manifested in the flesh, and was the living word, and the life of God was manifested in human speech. The human agent who becomes familiar with the Scriptures and who is a doer of the word, will find that the word is interwoven with the life of the soul; for he will have a personal experience in the things of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Obedience is doing the word of Christ. The word of God is a channel of communication with the living God. He who feeds upon the word will become fruitful in all good works. He who labors together with God will be the discoverer of rich mines of truth which he must work to find the hidden treasure. When surrounded with temptations, the Holy Spirit will bring to his mind the very words with which to meet the temptation at the very moment when they are most needed, and he can use them effectually with commanding power. The apostle says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Our hungering and thirsting after righteousness will be in proportion to the food upon which we feed the soul. We shall hunger and thirst after righteousness more and more as we separate from the world, its customs, its practices, and conform our lives to the standard of righteousness. Jesus clothed his divinity with humanity that through faith humanity might lay hold upon divinity, and through hungering and thirsting after righteousness, come into close union with the divine. The privileges of the human agent are very great. We cannot be satisfied without God, neither is the Lord satisfied without the love which he has purchased at an infinite price. God has given us Christ, and with him all heaven, in order that he might reclaim our lost race, and attach us to himself, that we also might be filled with all the fullness of God.

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." The words of God are wellsprings of the water of life. When we receive the word, obeying it in sincerity, it has power to reproduce itself and to multiply itself in the minds of men. Christ declared, "The words that

I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The words which he spoke from the pillar of cloud in the wilderness were the same as he spoke in his sermon on the mount. Through his human life he lived by faith, exercising a continual dependence upon the word. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Would you become assimilated to the divine image? Would you be one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Would you drink of the water which Christ shall give you, which shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life? Would you bear fruit to the glory of God? Would you refresh others? Then with heart hungering for the bread of life, the word of God, search the Scriptures, and live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Your soul's sanctification and righteousness will result from faith in the word of God, which leads to obedience of its commands. Let the word of God be to you as the voice of God instructing you, and saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

Christ found himself in fashion as a man, that he might represent to man in human life and character that which was expressed in his holy word. He was one with the Father; his life corresponded with the life of God, and his character was like unto that which was represented in the standard of righteousness, the ten moral precepts. Righteousness is living the law of God as Christ lived it; it is the health, the activity of every spiritual energy in the service of God. It is the uplifting of the soul to God in prayer, the turning of the soul to God, even as the flower turns to the light. There is health and heaven for the soul in abiding under the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; for thus shall we be uplifted from the low, dark cares of the earth, which bring depression and gloom, to dwell in the light that is above and beyond them. Righteousness is the possession of increasing usefulness. It is the hiding of the soul in Christ with God. It is experiencing fellowship with God. It is exemplifying to the world the fact that God has vindicated his word to the world, and has fulfilled his promise in saying, "We will come and make our abode with him." Righteousness prepares the human agent for the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for those who love him.

It is the opposite of righteousness, the transgression of the law of God, to seek so earnestly and persistently for temporal advantages as to exclude things of eternal interest. How languid, how feeble are the efforts of the professed people of God to attain unto the likeness of Christ in character! How few seem to realize that life eternal depends upon our course of action in probationary time! But those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will purify their souls through obeying the truth. It is by beholding that we become changed into the likeness of Christ. By looking unto Jesus, by talking with Jesus, by fashioning the life after Christ's example, we become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, for our taste is perfected for the purity of heaven.

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness become fitted for ministering upon the earth. We have no need for those who are weak and unchristlike in character. We are to look unto Jesus and live. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." By beholding the perfection of Christ, hunger and thirst for righteousness are to be created in the heart. The Lord alone can give us the bread and water of life, that we may be filled. This fullness is the glory which Christ declares he has given to his disciples,—the character which is to fashion them after the divine similitude. Those who experience soul hunger are to be blessed with satisfaction. Their earnest, prayerful struggles will not be in vain; for there is no failure with God. For all our imperfections there is forgiveness with God. We are to believe that a rich satisfaction awaits us. He

who is truth says that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. It is for us to comply with the condition upon which the promise is to be fulfilled. We are to come to God with a contrite spirit, and as soon as we seek him in earnest he will fill us.

Christ is standing at the door, knocking, and inviting us to accept his presence. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." With Christ abiding in the soul, the human agent becomes a partaker of the divine nature, and is a coworker with Jesus Christ. He manifests ardor and earnestness, and possesses that perseverance, so that, like his Master, he will not fail nor be discouraged. Let all turn away from the heart cravings for selfish gratification; let all empty the soul of self-love, selfish desires and ambitions, and Christ will supply the vacuum; he will reign in the heart that is emptied of self, and from his divine presence will flow forth living streams to revive and refresh the souls of those who are ready to perish. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

September 12, 1895

Blessed Are the Merciful

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." We are continually receiving rich mercies from the hands of God. "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 has commanded, saying, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." The merciful man does good to his own soul; for the merciful shall obtain mercy. The possession of this precious grace produces the fruit of kindness and love. The hardness, the coldness of heart that many professing Christians cherish, is a characteristic of the great apostate. Were Christlike mercy exercised by all who profess to be Christ's followers, the world would bear an altogether different aspect. Praise would ascend to God from many voices that are now silent. The love and tenderness of Christ revealed in the characters of those who are his followers, would beget love in others. It is impossible for us to represent Christ, and be cold, unsympathetic, and bound about by selfishness.

We are placed in this world, and surrounded by men and women who need our compassion, and we are responsible for putting into exercise the tender mercies of our God. He has richly bestowed upon us his love, and deposited with us his mercy, that we may become stewards of the same, in ministering his love to others. Paul writes: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries, and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." Suffering humanity continually surrounds us, and demands the exercise of mercy. "The poor ye have always with you."

It is the duty of the children of God to be all light in the Lord, and scatter blessings upon the path of others. They are not to say, "Be ye warmed, and be ye fed," and do nothing to relieve the necessities of those who are in want. The Lord would have his children actively engaged in works of mercy. There are broken-hearted ones who need the expression of kindly words, who need practical help to relieve their necessities. With many life is a painful struggle. They feel their deficiencies, and are miserable and unbelieving. They think they have nothing for which to be grateful. Let the sons and daughters of God reveal the Christlike attributes of character, administering to these needy souls.

Let them show what a great debt of gratitude they owe to God as recipients of temporal and spiritual good.

We are the Lord's purchased possession, and as his human agents it is our positive duty to administer in temporal and spiritual things from the store which God has given us. Love must be kept in constant exercise to inspire faith in God, that praise may be called forth from human hearts to God, and that the golden chain of love may bind the hearts of humanity together. Those who are recipients of the mercy, sympathy, and compassion of God should pass it along to others. But many who claim to love God and to be keepers of his commandments, are cold and unsympathetic and unchristlike. They have little love to exercise except for a few who are congenial to them, and their affection for these few whom they fancy does more harm than good. They do not manifest love towards those who would appreciate the least manifestation of affection. Those who are truly Christlike possess an underlying principle of love. But however closely related human beings may be, they are not to be idolized, they are not to be surrounded with superabundant affection, while other souls who are just as dear to the heart of Infinite Love are not embraced within their circle. Selfish love is a snare to the souls of those who are entangled in it. The life and practice of Christ show that the circle for our love should be unlimited. Christ does not acknowledge that love as sanctified which is showered without stint upon a few favorites, while the heart is cold toward the very ones who need a manifestation of love.

The Son of the infinite God is our Pattern. Heaven is full of mercy, and it is constantly outflowing not only to a favored few, but for the blessing of those who need it most, for the benefit of those who have the least pleasantness and happiness brought into their lives. The life of God is bound up with the life of those for whom Christ died. He whose life is hid with Christ in God will possess the attributes of the divine character, and will be a partaker of the divine nature, making it manifest to the world that God is merciful, full of tender compassion, abundant in grace and truth. The severity which God manifests through his providences toward those who are rebellious and wicked, is manifested for the salvation of the wayward. O, how Christ yearned over the souls whom he came to save, with intense desire that they might understand eternal life! "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Satan is a vigilant watcher and worker, and seeks to intercept every ray of heaven's light in order that it shall not come to the soul; but Christ is also working, and by mercies given, and by mercies withheld, he seeks to lead men and women to look above the earthly to the heavenly and eternal. Every man is intrusted with capabilities, with a stewardship for the great Householder, and he is to look to the great Counselor for directions and for wisdom. Christ would have his servants work for those who understand him not; for he looks with infinite compassion upon the human family under the deceptive wiles of Satan. He sees them employing their God-given probationary time in seeking everything but the one thing essential. The voice of Jesus pleads with men, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." No creature that God has created is looked upon with indifference. God has an intense desire to relieve the woes of mankind and apply his balsam to their wounds. His love is ever exercised for the needy and oppressed. His heart is full of joy when the sinner breaks with Satan, and looks up to God as to a merciful, sympathizing, loving Father. Jesus declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The Lord is ever active in exercising his mercy; he would have every soul become acquainted with the paternal character of God. When men obtain

a correct view of the unceasing mercy of God, they will be attracted, and by beholding will become changed into the same image. Those whom God has made stewards of capabilities and means, he commands, for their own interest, to lay up their treasure in heaven, and as he has given freely to them of his bountiful mercy, to give freely to others. Instead of living for themselves, Christ is to live in them, and his Holy Spirit is to lead them to dispense wisely their goods, being merciful to others even as he is merciful to all. No man can be a follower of Christ and live for himself. The Christian is to be an agent for God, dispensing his blessings to others, and thus laying up for themselves treasure in heaven. His treasure will thus never be lost, but will ever accumulate increasing interest, and a good foundation be laid against the time to come.

How much better it is to deposit uncertain riches in the bank of heaven, by rendering benefit to the Lord's heritage, than to use up God-given wealth in the gratification of self by obtaining those things which perish in the using. In blessing others, they are made glad with the thought that God has not forgotten them, and gratitude springs up in the hearts of those who have been suffering and oppressed. It is thus we make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and the very wealth which we dispense to others is that which has been lent in trust to be used as the Householder shall direct, that his faithful servants shall use it in works of mercy and compassion. But in working on these lines a welcome is insured into the everlasting habitations. In proportion as goods are intrusted they should be dispensed to others. The humblest men and women are to trade upon the Lord's talents, realizing that what has been lent to them should be returned with usury to God. Though we have but one talent, if it be faithfully consecrated to God, and employed in acts of mercy in temporal or spiritual things, we thus ministering to the wants of the needy, our talent will increase in value, and be noted upon the heavenly record as exceeding our powers of computation. Every merciful action, every sacrifice, every self-denial, will bring a sure requital, a hundred-fold in this time, and in the world to come everlasting life.

September 19, 1895

Exercise Compassion

“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.” The Lord honors his human agents by taking them into partnership with himself. The heart of Christ is full of forgiving mercy and truth. He is afflicted in all the afflictions of his people. We are to be compassionate, and find joy in coming with a kindly interest to bind up the wounds of those who have been pursued and left half dead by the ruthless hand of the destroyer. We are to be ready to heal the bruises that sin has made. Those who do this are Christ's ministers, and the world has a living testimony of the love of God before them in his representatives. God is revealed before the world in those who practice the works of Christ, and through his messengers he is known as a God of mercy, goodness, and forgiveness. “He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? God in Christ is ours, and his bounties of love and mercy are inexhaustible. He desires that every one shall be benefited by the rich provisions that he has made for those who love him; he invites us all to share with him in his glory. The bliss of heaven has been provided for every soul who loves God supremely and his fellow-men as himself.

Men would no longer be the slaves of sin if they would but turn from Satan's alluring, delusive attractions, and look to Jesus long enough to see and understand his love. New habits will be formed, and powerful propensities for evil will be held in check. Our Leader is a conqueror, and he

guides us on to certain victory. Our Advocate, Jesus, is pleading before his Father's throne in our behalf, and he is also pleading with the sinner, saying, "Turn ye, for why will ye die?" Has not God done everything possible through Christ to win men from Satanic deception? Has he not given himself? Did he not for our sake become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich? Is he not a risen Saviour, ever living to make intercession for us? Is he not ever following up his great work of atonement by the work of the Holy Spirit on every heart? The bow of mercy still arches the throne of God, testifying to the fact that every soul who believes in Christ as his personal Saviour, shall have everlasting life. Mercy and justice are blended in God's dealing with his heritage.

Those who are partakers of the divine nature are one with God in Christ, and one with each other to work the works of God, which are works of mercy and tender compassion. It is mercy that has saved us, and when we manifest mercy toward our fellow-men, we are only working in Christ's lines. Mercy is continually active throughout the vast universe. Mercy abounds in the heart of God, and it is from this source that all our happiness comes. God's family upon earth is large, and his children are suffering in the suffering mortals around us; and every soul who is imbued with the Holy Spirit, will practice works of mercy, and reveal to others tender love, pity, and compassion. From the true Christian heart every fiber of selfishness will be uprooted, because it is opposed to the practice of Christ. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

O, that men could know what they might do for the Master by practicing mercy and love! Could they realize what Christ has done, they would move along broader lines than they now do in the practice of benevolence. True, it will seem to be at great cost, because self must be denied, and individual pleasure must become a secondary matter. Satan is continually urging us into the service of self, and many who should be examples in bearing good fruit in self-denial and self-sacrifice, are full of pride and self-esteem, and the record in heaven of them is, "Ye despise the poor, the afflicted, and the suffering, for whom Christ has died, who are under the heavenly benediction, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.'"

How many who profess to be followers of Christ climb upon the judgment seat, and pronounce condemnation, magnifying some fault which to finite beings seems to be an offense against God! But this work, that is so pleasing to the great adversary of souls, would all cease if the Spirit of Christ were in the heart. Mercy rejoices not in iniquity. We imagine that others do not appreciate us; we magnify our mites of merciful actions into something very great, and excuse ourselves from the duty of showing mercy, because others manifest ingratitude toward us. Suppose, because of our ingratitude, God should work upon this same plan? We do not appreciate his many mercies and benevolences toward us; but he continues to deal out of his abundance his riches of grace. Suppose the human agent who dispenses the gifts of God to those who need them, does meet with ingratitude, let him remember that he is not using his own goods but his Lord's, and God looks down from heaven to see how his steward is treating his heritage, for whom he has given his precious life. God has made ample provision to supply the necessities of the poor, and there is no case of need for which some one is not responsible. Men should yield to the controlling influence of the Spirit of God in order that mercy and compassion may be shown to the sufferer. We should trade upon the Lord's goods by relieving, as far as possible, the woes of humanity. Every Christian brother and sister should step into his own place, and stand at his own post of duty. We might do much more than has been done to alleviate the sorrows of those who are hungry, naked, and in peril, in temporal and

spiritual things. The channel is constantly open, and streams of mercy ever flow from Him who has a treasure of supply, and He will give to those who are dispensers of His bounties. But God's glory will not be advanced if men and women appropriate to their own individual selves his matchless mercy and rich gifts. Such are not the ones upon whom is pronounced the heavenly benediction. O, that the cold hearts of men which are hardened by selfishness might be warmed by the love of Jesus! O, that their hearts might be broken and sanctified! O, that they might come under the control of the divine will! O, that every church member might have the understanding enlightened, that the stony heart might be exchanged for the heart of flesh, and the fierce, wicked, Satanic spirit might be cast out, and the mercy and love of Christ possess and control the soul! O, that the temple of the soul might be cleansed, and become the habitation of the Spirit!

“As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” He who believes in Jesus becomes a living channel of light and blessing to confer benefits upon the needy and suffering. He becomes a laborer together with God. The branch bears the same clusters of fruit as the vine. The Christian becomes one with Christ in God, and God loves him as he loves his own Son. When the disciples of Christ become one with him, as he is one with the Father, they will be a power in the world in revealing God's mercy, forgiveness, and truth. Those who do the works of Christ are accepted in the Beloved. Union with Christ means the dispensing of his blessings. The bright beams from the Sun of Righteousness shine forth in mercy and love. The fruits of the Spirit are “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

Multitudes must enter into the Saviour's Spirit; for he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. When they are imbued with the Spirit of Christ, they will value men as Christ has valued them; they will work as Christ has worked; they will not fail nor be discouraged. They will see open doors through which mercy and grace are ever flowing. They will gaze upon the cross of Christ, and estimate the value of the souls by the cost of redemption. They will be sharers with Christ in his intense earnestness to save the souls of the perishing, who know not God. The love, pity, and tenderness of Christ will break every barrier down, and men, women, and youth will respond to the truth, and will present themselves to share the burden with Christ. The love and pity of Christ will constrain them to be partakers with him of his self-denial and sufferings.

September 26, 1895

Bible Study

“Given by inspiration of God,” “able to make us wise unto salvation,” rendering “the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”—the Book of books has the highest claims to our reverent attention. Superficial study of the word of God can not meet the claims it has upon us, nor furnish us with the benefit that is promised. We should seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, and to drink deep the spirit of the holy oracles. To read daily a certain number of chapters, or to commit to memory a stipulated amount of Scripture, without careful thought as to the meaning of the text, will profit but little. To study one passage until its significance is clear to the mind, and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. We can not obtain wisdom from the word of God without giving earnest and prayerful attention to its study. It is true that some portions of Scripture are, indeed, too plain to be misunderstood; but there are many

portions whose meaning can not be seen at a glance; for the truth does not lie upon the surface. In order to understand the meaning of such passages, scripture must be compared with scripture; there must be careful research and prayerful reflection. Such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers precious veins of metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure find truths of the greatest value which are concealed from the careless seeker.

You must dig in the mine of truth till you find its greatest treasure, and by comparing scripture with scripture you may find the true meaning of the text. But if you do not make the sacred teachings of God's word the rule and guide of your life, the truth will be nothing to you. Truth is efficient only as it is carried out in practical life. If the word of God condemns some habit you have indulged, a feeling you have cherished, a spirit you have manifested, turn not from the word of God, but turn away from the evil of your doings, and let Jesus cleanse and sanctify your heart. Confess your faults, and forsake them wholly and determinedly, believing the promises of God, and showing your faith by your works. If the truths of the Bible are woven into practical life, they will bring the mind up from earthliness and debasement. Those who are conversant with the Scriptures will be men and women who exert an elevating influence.

In searching for Heaven-revealed truths, the Spirit of God is brought into close connection with the sincere searcher of the Scriptures. An understanding of the revealed will of God enlarges the mind, expands, elevates, and endows it with new vigor, by bringing its faculties into contact with stupendous truth. No study is better to give energy to the mind, to strengthen the intellect, than the study of the word of God. No other book is so potent in elevating the thoughts, in giving vigor to the faculties, as is the Bible, which contains the most ennobling truths. If God's word were studied as it should be, we would see breadth of mind, stability of purpose, nobility of character, such as are rarely seen in these times.

October 3, 1895

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” Impurity in thought or practice obscures spiritual vision, so that the soul can not contemplate and be charmed with the character of God. The world is full of disobedience, and the understanding of men has become so darkened by a sinful course of action that righteousness is not clearly discerned, and is not therefore appreciated above unrighteousness. The pure in heart shall see God, whose character is represented in the law. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe 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.”

He who has an eye single to heavenly and divine things, will delight in beholding God in Christ Jesus, and by beholding he will become changed into his image. “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful

hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." He is seeking to be like the Pattern. When in perplexity he inquires, "How would Jesus do under similar circumstances? It is important that I follow Christ, that I conform my conduct to the model of his example. Without holiness no man shall see God. I must obey the commandments of God; for his law is a transcript of his character."

The pure in heart shall see God. While all men shall behold Christ as a judge, the pure in heart shall behold him as a friend; for Jesus has said, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." The pure in heart shall see Christ as a friend and elder brother. Those who are constantly looking unto Christ for his counsel, who pray in sincerity for his Holy Spirit, will be grieved if a cloud hides him from their sight. Satan will pass his hellish shadow across their pathway in order that the human agent shall not discern God, but may behold him who obtrudes himself between the soul and God, suggesting, as he did to Adam, his lying sophistry to lead men into transgression. He frames lies to substitute for a "Thus saith the Lord."

The Christian world in this age are inclined to accept the sophistries of Satan in the place of the words of God. Many have separated themselves from God by wicked works, and they love not to behold God, or to retain him in their knowledge. They do not want to see God any more than did Adam when he hid himself from the approach of his heavenly Father. But let us not follow the example of Adam; for not one of the human family can hide himself from God. You may turn your face from God so that you can not see him, but you can not place yourself where God will not see you; for the darkness is as the light to him, and he knoweth every secret thing.

Pure through Christ

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." What kind of fear? Not servile fear. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Every human being should fear to offend God, should fear to lose his favor by engaging in anything of an impure character. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

We are to look unto Jesus as our only hope for the taking away of our sins; for in him is no sin. He became sin for us, that he might bear our guilt, standing before the Father as guilty in our place, while we who believe in him as a personal Saviour shall, because of his merits, be accounted as pure from the contaminating influence of sin. Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, we are accounted guiltless. Christ has given to every human being the evidence that he alone is able to bear human grief, sorrow, and sin. Those who claim Christ as their substitute and surety, hanging their helpless souls upon Christ, can endure as seeing him who is invisible. The benediction, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," belongs to them.

When you are betrayed into sin, do not despair. Do not delay and mourn in hopeless unbelief, but take your case at once to Jesus. "We have not an high priest which can not be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities," but in order that he might be a perfect Saviour for humanity, he was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." He understands every device that the enemy prepares for the unwary. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities; he himself suffered being tempted. Though he was without sin, and was not tainted with guile, yet by a painful experience he understands what it means to come into conflict with the arch-deceiver. He suffered, resisting his temptations, and he knows what man will meet in resisting evil. He gives encouragement to the souls who trust in him as their Saviour, promising that they shall not be tempted above that which they are able to bear. "With every temptation," he says, "I, your Lord and Saviour, have made for you a way of escape."

Christ passed over the ground where Adam failed, and redeemed his disgraceful failure. He was made perfect through suffering, and is able to succor all who shall be tempted, and to make a way of escape, that they may be able to endure temptation. Though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. He knows how to sympathize with every human being; for he has identified his interest with the interests of those he came to save. What a wonderful high priest is Jesus! We may lay our very soul burden upon him. We may lay our hand of faith upon the promise of God, that he will pardon the guilty, and impute to us the purity of Christ. Through the faith that works by love the soul is purified, and the human agent can discern God; for he is a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The one great need of the sinner is righteousness, and the word of God is called "the ministration of righteousness;" for it presents a sinless Saviour to the defiled soul, One who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The righteousness of Christ is a free gift; we can obtain it without money and without price. Christ himself has become the sin bearer. In his own person he answered all the claims of the law, and through the offering of himself, he made it possible for the human agent to keep the law of God, and to stand before God as innocent, accepted in the Beloved.

Power from Christ

Though men have fallen through transgression, they may receive moral power from Christ, and return to their allegiance. They may receive the Holy Spirit as the representative of the Lord. If they believe the testimony of the Spirit, obey the requirements of the Gospel, following on in the ways of purity and holiness, they shall know that "his goings forth are prepared as the morning." The Holy Spirit leads men to Christ, links the soul to the Saviour, and causes the human agent to identify himself with Christ.

Christ alone can save from sin; for he can make over to us his righteousness, and place it to our account. God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son for us, that by this infinite sacrifice he might not only show the terrible character of sin, but condemn sin in the flesh. Men can not continue in sin and stand faultless before God; for God will not tolerate sin. The human agent must separate himself from sin, crying out with earnest soul hunger, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." The Lord will answer such a cry, saying, "A new heart also will I give thee."

If men in responsible positions of trust, no matter in what line they may work, would cultivate that faith which works by love, and purifies the soul, they would experience the creating power of the Holy Spirit. What a change would be made in families! What a wonderful change would be made in our churches! It is because there is so great a lack of the purity and righteousness of Christ that there are unhappy families and polluted churches that stand in need of cleansing. Unless this

cleansing shall take place, the building can not be fitly framed together, can not grow into an holy temple unto the Lord. Many hold the truth in unrighteousness; they have a theory of the truth, but are not sanctified, soul and body, through the truth. Being destitute of heart purity, they do not discern sin in its true character, and have not correct views of righteousness and of judgment to come. Controlled by the spirit of the world, their hearts are impure, earthly, sensual, and they can not commune with the only true God, can not know God, nor Jesus Christ, whom he has sent.

There is hope for a man who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, who is longing for heart purity, who is desirous of having fellowship with the Spirit of God. Such a man prays, and watches unto prayer. He seeks for strength to keep the heart with all diligence knowing that out of it are the issues of life. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Fellowship with God means much, and those who have this fellowship with God, hear the voice of invitation saying "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." The more lowly the soul in its own estimation, the more distinctly and clearly will God be discerned. He who is in communion with God will recognize the divine excellence of heavenly things, and respond to the invitation, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." The word of God comes in power to the soul, impressing the mind with the exceeding great and precious promises. Those who learn of Christ, look earnestly unto him that they may catch his Spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. Their feelings become pure, their words pure and tender, and the earnest of the inheritance leads them to walk in love, drawing near to God, to listen to the voice of the true Shepherd.

The Pure in Heart Shall See God

He who has taken no pleasure in contemplating God in this world, who has felt it no privilege to commune with God, will not be prepared to see God or to appreciate his character in the future life. Those who are occupied with earthly things, enjoy a low, cheap level, and their souls could not bear the purity of the saints in light. The conversation of heaven would be a language which they could not understand, and they could not endure the purity of infinite holiness. Heaven would not be a place of perfect bliss to them; for the faculties of the mind would not be capable of dwelling upon heavenly things.

"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." If we were breathing in the atmosphere of the world, we should not be regarded by the world as strangers, but if our affections are set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, we will be misunderstood by the world. But we shall see God, because our eye is single to his glory. Our whole body will be full of light; for we are dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Purified by the faith that works by love, we shall see and appreciate the preciousness of Christ. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

October 10, 1895

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

“Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.” How many are there who are truly desirous of being blessed, who would not only hear but do the words of Christ? Those who will not rely upon themselves, but who will put their trust in a power out of and above themselves, will be enabled to become doers of the words of Christ. Those who have glimpses of the perfection of Christ's character, will be filled with a longing to become like him. They will desire to be peacemakers and to receive the blessing he has promised to the peacemakers.

If the grace of Christ is abiding in the soul, we shall have the mind of Christ. “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.”

If the mind which was also in Christ Jesus be in you, you will practice the lessons of Christ, and because you appreciate his great mercy and love, you will be peacemakers. You will look to Jesus, and will draw nourishment from him, the living Vine, and as a branch you will bear the same kind of fruit as does the parent stock. The enemy of all righteousness will be ready to lead you into a course that will be the very opposite of that which the peacemaker should take. He who loves discord and strife, will tempt you to act a part in connection with himself to stir up strife. He will lead you to think that you see in some brother or sister something that is wrong, and Satan will urge you to go and tell it to others; but Christ has told you to go to your brother and “tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” Which leader are you going to obey? It is not in accordance with the natural heart to deal frankly and faithfully one with another. It appears easier to tell your brother's fault to some one else than it does to tell it to him alone; but it is his ear alone that should hear your accusation. He who departs from the plain light which Christ has caused to shine upon his pathway, loses the privilege of becoming Christ's missionary, and becomes the agent of the evil one. How many church trials might be saved, how much bitterness and wrath might be saved, if Christ's professed followers would only obey his words! “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.” They who are blessed are those who work in harmony with God, who are laborers together with Christ. The grace which the Spirit of God imparts is a wellspring of life to the soul, and will refresh all who come in contact with the peacemaker.

How many souls have been lost because those who profess to be the followers of Christ have been busy in carrying out the plans of Satan, and have thereby stirred up strife, and have discouraged souls, and driven them on to Satan's battle ground, when they might have helped them by words of kindness and consolation. Satan is the one who works up strife. He lost heaven because he was filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmising, because he desired to be equal with God. It is important that we consider that the spirit we cherish now, the works that we now do, will testify to our fitness or unfitness for the future life. We are now upon trial, and it is to be seen whether or not we will fulfill the Lord's prayer, and do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven. Those who are carrying out Satan's plans, and are hurting and bruising souls by their course of action, prove that they are not

the children of Christ. Whoever has the word of God, the appointed instrument of salvation, abiding in him, will overcome the wicked one, and he will grow up into Christ in all things. But of how many may it be said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God"! How many when beset by temptation do wrong by not being peacemakers! Their weakness is found in the fact that they do not study the Scriptures for the purpose of practicing them in their daily life. The Psalmist says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee;" but how many are destroyed for lack of knowledge!

It is best that every one of us should do right because it is right, and thus we may create about us an atmosphere of peace. We shall not then be found pressing to the side of Satan's human agents, to catch their spirit and to repeat their words of accusation and reproach against those who are seeking to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord. We shall not link in with the adversary of souls, and aid him in stirring up suspicion and strife, and in causing souls who love God to be tempted to do evil. Through the grace of Christ, these souls would be raised up to sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus; but if the agents of Satan come to them as accusers of others, they may fall from their steadfastness, and be turned out of the path of holiness.

Those who are filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmising, and who indulge in evil speaking, make it manifest that they are unfit for the kingdom of heaven because they are not peacemakers. Through trial and test, it is proved that they are weighed in the balances and found wanting.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (not for their coarse, harsh spirit that leads them to stir up strife and dissension, but "for righteousness' sake"). The righteous are those who desire peace, and will have peace at the cost of everything save the sacrifice of principle. Truth they can not sacrifice, though adherence to it costs them distress, reproach, suffering, and even death. "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, place the commandments of God first in their lives, and they allow no human policy, no promise of reward, no offer of honor, to come between them and their God. They can not be induced to deny Christ and to betray his cause. The rich promises of God have a place in their memory, and when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him. The Holy Spirit opens to the understanding the preciousness of the Scriptures.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." These words are full, and broad, and deep, and you are not to be downcast, not to be shaken in faith, not to be filled with murmuring or complaining. Time and courage and faith are all precious, too precious to sacrifice to dejection, to mourning. Christ tells you to rejoice, and to be exceeding glad. All heaven is watching, and is ready to help you. "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."

The church itself needs converting, so that its members may be made channels of light, may be blessed and made a blessing. A vague reliance upon God's mercy will not obtain for us access to the throne of grace, or draw down the blessing from God the Father which he has provided for those who do his will. Faith must center in the word of God, which is spirit and life. Every page of the

sacred word is illumined with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. The word of God is to be the support of the afflicted, the comfort of the persecuted. God himself speaks to the believing, trusting soul; for God's Spirit is in his word, and a special blessing will be received by those who accept the words of God when illuminated to their mind by the Holy Spirit. It is thus that the believer eats of Christ, the Bread of Life. Truth is seen in a new light, and the soul rejoices as in the visible presence of Christ.

Christ chose twelve men from among the multitude, whom he named his apostles. They were to catch the words from his lips, and receive them into their hearts, that they might be witnesses of him to the world. While those who listened to Christ in the multitude were deeply impressed with his teaching, though the crowd constantly pressed close upon Christ, yet the disciples understood that they were not to be crowded away from his presence. They pressed close to his person, in order that they might not lose a word of the instruction that was of so much importance. They were eager, attentive listeners. They understood that "the flesh profiteth nothing," but that the words he spoke unto them were "spirit and life." They came unto him because he had the words of eternal life.

October 17, 1895

Controversy Awakened By Truth

The congregation that assembled to hear Christ's sermon on the mount was a mixed multitude. Christ's heart yearned over them with pitying tenderness; for he knew how great were their needs. He used illustrations from the things of nature and from their daily practices to make clear to their minds matters of eternal importance. His utterances were full of tender love as he spoke to the weary and the oppressed. He was often interrupted by appeals from the sick and the afflicted, and while he healed their physical maladies, he administered comfort to their hungry souls. His words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," fell like a refreshing shower upon some thirsting souls, who knew not what to do to obtain salvation. And he began to teach them many things. He spoke unto them of the kingdom of God, presenting righteousness as of the first consideration. He laid open before them the claims of the law of God. The commandments of God had been buried up under a mass of human sayings, and it was necessary that as a detector he should separate the sacred from the common.

His discourses created discussion among the people, and though discussion is not the most desirable thing, yet it is preferable to cold, dead apathy. Christ's interpretations of the Scriptures were as new to those who claimed to be expositors of the law as they were to the multitudes that thronged his steps; for truth had been mutilated in the hands of the scribes and rabbis. Christ came to remove the rubbish, and to let the jewels of truth shine out in their priceless beauty. He knew that his discourses would create controversy, and excite the passions of the scribes and Pharisees; but he knew also that controversy would be better than calm, when no one inquired, "What is truth?" Calm comes after storm, and inquiry must be roused in order that advanced truth may be discovered. When controversy is awakened, the advocates of truth are accredited with causing disturbance. Those who are engrossed with business, who are seeking for gratification of the carnal senses in following after pleasure, care nothing for eternal realities; but should not eternal matters be presented to those who are, as it were, sleeping the sleep of death? Let earnestness be awakened even amid contention, and many will search for truth as for hidden treasure. In every audience where Christ presented the truth in clear lines, there were angry interruptions on the part of the priests and

rulers, and their protests led to sharp contention, but in these audiences there were many who said, "This is the Christ of God."

The Scriptures were sufficiently clear to prove that Christ was the Son of God, the Messiah, the "light to lighten the gentiles," and "the glory of thy people Israel;" but the minds of men were so darkened by the misapplication of Scripture, that, although prophecy was fulfilling before their very eyes, in the teachings and miracles of Christ, yet they failed to recognize the fulfillment of prophecy and remained in darkness. At times they were convinced of the truth, but the humiliation of acknowledging the truth was greater than they would endure.

Why did not the Jewish nation accept of the evidences that were so clear and convincing? The Holy Spirit bore witness in the miracles that Christ did. All the divine attributes were revealed in him, and though he bore the sufferings of humanity, he was the Majesty of heaven. He did not find a select few to whom to teach the great eternal truths, but he set these matters before the multitude; for the world was his field. He set forth the law of his kingdom before both saint and sinner, before the great men of the world and before the common people. The truth he taught was sent home to the hearts of those who heard by the power of the Holy Spirit, to search their hearts as with a lighted candle. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Christ taught the mysteries of the kingdom of God by presenting truth to the minds of men through some natural object that unfolded its spiritual nature. His was not a subtle, man-invented theory that but few could perceive; it was the presentation of that which met the needs of the suffering and oppressed. However prejudiced men were, they yet realized that his words met their want. His words were simplicity itself, and the most unlearned could comprehend their import as he promised rest to the weary, and blessing upon the poor and mournful. He did not present truth in ambiguous language. There was too much at stake to do this; for the ignorant are many, and the life of peace and rest is obtained by the reception of truth. It was necessary that it should be made so plain that no one of his hearers should be misled.

Priests and rulers had interposed themselves between the people and God, and they sought to interpose between them and the great Teacher, even as they do in this day. How great will be the responsibility of men who seek to hinder souls from entering into the kingdom of heaven! The whole tenor of Christ's teaching was contrary to that of the rabbis. In his sermon on the mount he tore away the middle wall of partition that separated men one from another through national prejudices, and taught the exercise of a love that was to embrace the human race. He said to the people: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Christ teaches that we are to recognize our neighbor in every race and condition of men. No distinction is to be made as to who is our neighbor, on the ground of poverty, or wealth, or position. The followers of Christ are to see their neighbor in any one who needs their help. "All ye are brethren." The Lord has not established a kingdom merely for the rich, and the one essential thing for an entrance into his kingdom is Christlikeness of character. The Lawgiver explained the meaning

of the divine precepts, and showed that they were not arbitrary requirements, but that in the doing of them there is life; for Christ from the pillar of cloud had distinctly told them that those who did them should live in them. The Ten Commandments are called in the New Testament the royal law of liberty. In obeying the divine precepts, men will assimilate to the divine character; for the character of God is expressed in his holy law. In substituting their own ideas, in erecting their own standard, they will come to misrepresent the Father and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, coming far short of Christlikeness of character. In erecting a standard for themselves, they will cling to their own deficiencies, practice their former habits, and fall far below the perfection of Christ's character. But through the grace of Christ, we should ever strive to reach the perfect standard.

We are in a world of imperfection, and on every hand is the image of false Christs,—Christians who are Christians only in name; for they are retaining objectional attributes of character, that mark them as subjects of the enemy, rather than subjects of the Prince Emmanuel. Were they under the control of Christ, they would bear his image and superscription; but they are false Christs, misrepresenting Jesus, denying him every day in character, although professing to believe on his name. Christ expounded the precepts of the law in his sermon on the mount; for he knew that some who were departing from it, would return to allegiance, and become representatives of the Son and the Father.

October 24, 1895

Spiritual Worship Essential

The Lord Jesus in his lessons of divine truth sought to lead the minds of his hearers to look beneath the typical sacrificial offerings to the essential things which were symbolized by the Jewish ordinances. He exalted the law of God, showing that it is more comprehensive in its character than any civil law for the government of earthly kingdoms. He had inspired the prophets to discern the pure and holy principles which they had communicated to the world. He had presented before them his work of divine instruction; but notwithstanding the fact that Christ had laid down line upon line and precept upon precept, yet the Jewish nation had sunk into painful idolatry. They made everything of form and ceremony and neglected spiritual worship. They clothed themselves with zeal in making rigid external observances, and concluded that their nation had fallen into decay because they had been too lax in their outward forms. The teachers made a study of formulating new exactions in their religious ceremonies. The people were called upon to go through a weary round of offerings for purification. The rabbis were not content to follow the specifications that had been given through Moses to the people; but they made minute specifications that must be fulfilled. They must engage in long, tedious prayer, take part in various fasts, in the washing and cleansing of vessels, and in many meaningless ceremonies.

When the Lord chose John the Baptist as the forerunner of Christ to prepare his way before him by announcing to the world the coming of the divine Teacher, he was specially directed not to receive his education in the schools of the rabbis; for they had mutilated the law, burdening it down with such requirements that men could not obtain a correct idea of truth. He must go far back of their teachings, and on no account be moulded by their imposing display. Their religion was barren of spirituality, was a mere mechanical piety. John must obtain his education in the wilderness, breathing the pure air, and studying the unadulterated word of God through his prophets. Christ had taught them righteousness,—love to God and their neighbor, which were the requirements of the

law. When the great Teacher himself came from heaven, he stripped the law of the rubbish of men's opinions, and repudiated their human traditions. He lifted up the royal law, which had been degraded by priest and rabbi, and presented it as the expressed character of the only true God. He showed that in its least as well as in its greatest enactments it would be forever binding upon the inhabitants of both heaven and earth.

The rabbis saw that the teaching of Christ was counteracting the traditions of the elders, and making of no effect the religious ceremonies that they had been taught as all-essential. Christ's explanation as to what constitutes true virtue and true principles condemned them in their mere external observances. He openly rebuked their hypocrisy, saying to his disciples, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The Pharisees were charged with breaking the commandments of God. Christ himself was the divine Word, and had instructed Israel; but they had interpreted the word of God in their own way. In their blindness, in their separation from God, they sought to make the holy teachings of the prophets, seem to sustain them in their unrighteous course of action. Thus they were misleading the nation and causing them to drink from corrupted fountains. They were confused in their conceptions of truth. The rabbis magnified trifles into mountains of importance, while matters of eternal moment were depreciated in their eyes. The true principles of morality were boldly undermined.

But Jesus presented the law in its original significance. In clear, distinct language he opened before the multitudes the misleading principles of these hypocritical teachers, who were twisting the plainest precepts of the royal law, through the means of their traditions, so that an entirely opposite conclusion would be reached than the plain precept of God required. The man who was punctilious in the matter of observances was looked up to with the greatest reverence, although his inner life was selfish, immoral, and depraved. The teachings of the prophets were not regarded, and the principles not obeyed which wrought holiness of life. All these were set aside as unessential; but the exactions of the rabbis, in which was not a particle of divinity, in which was only darkness, were regarded with superstitious reverence.

With what pity and sympathy the Lord looked upon these misled people; but in the sermon on the mount he announced the royal law in clear and decided utterances. Those who served under his banner must possess a piety, a righteousness beyond anything presented in the precept or example of the scribes and Pharisees. He would not permit men to think that he had come to do away with the law of the prophets. This was not his errand. 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."

The principles of Christ's kingdom are to be carried out in practical life, in the practice of self-denial and self-sacrifice for the good of others. Christ revealed the Father as one who loved humanity from the very beginning of the world. The love of God was made evident by the flowers growing in beauty around them. He had given them these beautiful things. He cares for the flowers and the birds, and would he not have a greater love for one formed in his own image? The whole world, the evil and the good, lay in the sunshine of his eternal love. In view of the Father's love, we are exhorted by the Saviour to love others. In the sermon on the mount he said: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and

persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

October 31, 1895

The Ascension and Coming Again

Christ had sojourned in the world for thirty-three years; he had endured its scorn, insult, and mockery; he had been rejected and crucified. Now, when about to ascend to his throne of glory—as he reviews the ingratitude of the people he came to save—will he not withdraw his sympathy and love from them? Will not his affections be centered on that world where he is appreciated, and where sinless angels adore him and wait to do his bidding?—No; his promise to those loved ones whom he leaves on earth is, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Before his conflict he had prayed the Father that they might not be taken out of the world, but should be kept from the evil which is in the world.

At length the little company reached the Mount of Olives. This place had been peculiarly hallowed by the presence of Jesus while he bore the nature of man. It was consecrated by his prayers and tears. When he had ridden into Jerusalem, just prior to his trial, the steeps of Olivet had echoed the joyous shouts of the triumphant multitude. On its sloping descent was Bethany, where he had often found repose at the house of Lazarus. At the foot of the mount was the Garden of Gethsemane, where he had agonized alone, and moistened the sod with his blood.

Jesus led the way across the summit, to the vicinity of Bethany. He then paused, and they all gathered about him. Beams of light seemed to radiate from his countenance, as he looked with deep love upon his disciples. He upbraided them not for their faults and failures; but words of unutterable tenderness were the last which fell upon their ears from the lips of their Lord. With hands outstretched in blessing them, and as if in assurance of his protecting care, he slowly ascended from among them, drawn heavenward by a power stronger than any earthly attraction. As he passed upward, the awestruck disciples looked with straining eyes for the last glimpse of their ascending Lord. A cloud of glory received him out of their sight, and at the same moment there floated down to their charmed senses the sweetest and most joyous music from the angel choir.

While their gaze was still riveted upward, voices addressed them which sounded like the music which had just charmed them. They turned, and saw two beings in the form of men; yet their heavenly character was immediately discerned by the disciples, whom they addressed in comforting accents, saying, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” These angels were of the company that had been waiting in a shining cloud to escort Jesus to his throne; and in sympathy and love for those whom the Saviour had left, they came to remove all uncertainty from their minds, and to give them the assurance that he would come to earth again.

All Heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As he ascended he led the way, and the multitude of captives whom he had raised from the dead at the time when he came forth from the tomb, followed him. The heavenly host, with songs of joy and triumph, escorted him upward. At the portals of the city of God an innumerable company of angels awaited his coming. As they approached the gates of the city, the angels who were escorting the Majesty of heaven, in

triumphant tones addressed the company at the portals: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.!"

The waiting angels at the gates of the city inquire in rapturous strains, "Who is this King of glory?" The escorting angels joyously reply in songs of triumph: "The Lord, strong and mighty! The Lord, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!" Again the waiting angels ask, "Who is this King of glory?" and the escorting angels respond in melodious strains: "The Lord of hosts! He is the King of glory! Then the portals of the city of God are widely opened, and the heavenly train pass in amid a burst of angelic music. All the heavenly host surround their majestic Commander as he takes his position upon the throne of the Father.

With the deepest adoration and joy, the hosts of angels bow before him, while the glad shout rings through the courts of heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!" Songs of triumph mingle with music from angelic harps, till heaven seems to overflow with delightful harmony and inconceivable joy and praise. The Son of God has triumphed over the prince of darkness, and conquered death and the grave. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!"

He is seated by the side of his Father on his throne. The Saviour presents the captives he has rescued from the bonds of death, at the price of his own life. His hands place immortal crowns upon their brows; for they are the representatives, and samples, of those who shall be redeemed, by the blood of Christ, from all nations, tongues, and people, and come forth from the dead, when he shall call the just from their graves at his second coming. Then shall they see the marks of Calvary in the glorified body of the Son of God. Their greatest joy will be found in the presence of Him who sitteth on the throne; and the enraptured saints will exclaim, My Beloved is mine, and I am his! He is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely!

The most precious fact to the disciples in the ascension of Jesus was that he went from them into heaven in the tangible form of their divine Teacher. The very same Jesus who had walked, and talked, and prayed with them, who had broken bread with them, who had been with them in their boats on the lake, who had sought retirement with them in the groves, and who had that very day toiled with them up the steep ascent of Olivet, had ascended to heaven in the form of humanity. And the heavenly messengers had assured them that the very same Jesus whom they had seen go up into heaven, should come again in like manner as he had ascended. This assurance has ever been, and will be to the close of time, the hope and joy of all true lovers of Christ.

November 7, 1895

Salt is Good

"Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out." Salt possesses preservative qualities which prevent corruption. Christ, who was the light of the world, who was a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of all who believe in him, said, "I sanctify myself, that they may also be sanctified through the truth." Christians should have a vital connection with God; their lives, their character,

purified through the truth, should possess saving qualities that would keep the world from going into utter moral corruption. Christians receive instruction from Jesus their Example. They should pray in faith that they may be connected with his saving grace, that the righteousness of Christ may be imparted to them. Their influence will save the world from a large amount of crime and iniquity, and work the reformation of many souls.

But of how much value is salt that has lost its savor? When those who claim to be Christians, do not in their words and actions reveal the attributes of Christ, they are represented as salt that has lost its savor. Whatever may be their profession, they are looked upon by men and angels as insipid and disagreeable. Of such Christ says: "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." They have a form of godliness, a profession of religion; but it is contradicted by their lives. Any attempt on their part to advocate truth has no weight; for they have lost their connection with God. The sincere believer diffuses vital energy, which is penetrating, and imparts new moral power to the souls for whom he labors. It is not the power of the man himself, but the power of the Holy Spirit, that does the transforming work. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." The salt has retained its savor, and it has an influence that is perceived and estimated upon the characters of those who possess it. The Lord says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." He who receives Christ by living faith has a living connection with God, and is a vessel unto honor. He carries with him the atmosphere of heaven, which is the grace of God, a treasure that the world can not buy. He who is in living connection with God may be in a humble station, yet his moral worth is as precious as was that of Joseph and Daniel, who were recognized by heathen kings as men with whom was the Spirit of God. They were representative men, and were intrusted with the most important responsibilities. Because of their living connection with God, they had power with God and with men, and of them it could truly be said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." They represented the character of Christ, and were as salt possessing saving qualities essential for the transformation of the character of those with whom they associated.

Daniel was beloved of God. He who brought in everlasting righteousness, the Anointed, the Holy One of God, gladly accepted the consecrated agency of his servant, through whom he worked by imbuing him with his Holy Spirit and imparting to him grace for grace. Of Daniel and his companions in Babylon the heavenly record states, "God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Thus was the Lord God of heaven represented in the courts of Babylon. He was also represented in the kingdom of Egypt by his servant Joseph. These men were representatives of what it means to be "the salt of the earth." Through these agents God could and did work to make known his majesty to the heathen kingdoms of the world.

It was their moral integrity that constituted them the "salt of the earth." Joseph would not sacrifice his purity of character. When tempted to evil, he met the tempter, saying, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Jesus of Nazareth is the representative of the Father. He is the vital chain by which man is bound to God. In him all fullness dwells, and from him the Christian may receive a constant supply of grace, that is represented by the saving properties of salt. Those who have a personal interest in Jesus Christ will possess those qualities of character which are represented by salt, which will work for the saving of the world. Thus it is that Christians become

living witnesses for heaven. By their life they testify, saying, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

But Christ uttered a sorrowful fact when he said, "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?" How shall the world be preserved from moral corruption? Let these words have due weight upon the mind. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Anointed One of God, is seeking to assimilate our characters to his own. Although we profess great things, we are represented as salt that has lost its savor, and as entirely worthless, unless the Holy Spirit can use us as channels by which to communicate to the world the truth as it is in Jesus. By precept and example we are to reveal to the world that Christ has made reconciliation for sin, that he is our only hope, the One who has brought in everlasting righteousness. He is the Anointed Priest that ever liveth to make intercession for every individual soul. Our only efficiency is Jesus Christ. We are to represent to the world his love, both in words and works. We are constantly to express to the world our appreciation of God's unspeakable gift, which he has given to us because of the great love wherewith he hath loved us. "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."

In the gift of Jesus is included the whole heavenly treasure. But what a fearful responsibility rests upon those who hear the truth, and who claim to believe it, and who are yet not sanctified through the truth. They testify to the world that the truth which they claim to believe has no sanctifying power, and thus they make of none effect the truth of God. It is the privilege of those who accept of Christ to reach a high standard in character, and thus become living epistles, known and read of all men, as were Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon. There is no reason why we should not possess fragrance of character through the merits of Christ, and be recognized in heaven as laborers together with God. Through Jesus Christ we may have a saving influence upon the world. Christ would have every one of us a savor of life unto life. He would impute to us his righteousness, in order that we may communicate his goodness, mercy, and love to fallen humanity. When we enter into the joy of our Lord, praise will ascend to the throne of God, and we shall say, "No credit belongs to us; Christ did it all, and to his name be all the glory."

November 14, 1895

"Fear God, and Keep His Commandments"

"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." God has tested the character of men from the time of Adam unto the present time, and he has always blessed the loyal and obedient. But those who keep the law of Jehovah are not in favor with the world, or with professed Christians who are making void the law of God. Abel kept the commandment of the Lord, and was hated by his brother Cain, and from the time of Abel's persecution and death at the hands of his brother, there have been two classes upon the earth who have manifested the same characteristics as were displayed by these two brothers. Righteous men have always been the objects of the combined assaults of evil men and evil angels. Christ himself was betrayed, insulted, mocked, scourged, and crucified through the instigation of evil angels working through a class of men who, while they professed great sanctity, were the worst of hypocrites and deceivers.

After the fall of Adam in Eden, the Lord said, "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 is developed and made manifest in one class by the reception of truth, while it is developed in others by their antagonism to truth and righteousness. One class vindicate the law of God, preserving order, arresting wickedness, and vindicating the honor of God. The other class make void his law, and persecute those who render obedience to God's commandments. The Searcher of hearts 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, to do justice and judgment." There would be on the part of Abraham no betrayal of sacred trust, no yielding to any power or any guide but One. Abraham recognized the fact that Jehovah had a law, and he determined that he would keep that law as the apple of his eye. He recognized the fact that he was amenable to the Lawgiver, and he would not be turned aside from his duty. God rules by the combined influence of authority and affection, and blessings follow in the track of those who obey his law. The Holy One has given us rules by which we are to be guided to the courts of heaven, and these rules form the standard, from which there can be no turning aside. The first principles of holiness are yet to be learned when God's voice is not heard and obeyed as the supreme authority.

Satan, with all his masterly power, has interposed himself between man and the law of God, that through falsehood and sophistry he may inspire men with the same rebellion against God and his law as actuates himself. Those whom he can not deceive, he hates. He misinterprets their words and actions, and causes the world to persecute and destroy, in order that earth may hold no soul who is not in league with the prince of this world and the ruler of its darkness. History testifies to the fact that no man can serve God without coming in conflict with the united forces of evil. The conflict between the believer and his foes may be painful and protracted, and at times the soul may, through manifold temptations, yield to the power of the evil one; but God will not give his servant up to be the prey of the destroyer as long as he cries unto him. The pitiful Saviour knows his weakness, and through his servant John, he has sent the repenting sinner a message of consolation: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments."

Of those who honor Jesus, and keep the commandments of the Lord, Christ has said, "Marvel not if the world hate you." We can expect no better treatment from the world than the treatment given to the law of God. Those who vindicate the law of God by keeping the commandments, will be targets for the wrath of the dragon, and opposition to righteousness will not end until evil is destroyed; for as long as human nature is under the control of the enemy of all righteousness, enmity to the righteous will be manifested through the children of men. The offense of the cross has not ceased by any means. Satan has his most efficient batteries masked under pretensions to godliness, and he will cause them to open fire upon the followers of Jesus Christ. The servants of God must expect that they will be reviled, misrepresented, maligned, persecuted, and oppressed; for all who "will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The people of God will stand firm to the faith only through the grace of God. "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." The great rebel against God is leading his armies to the conflict; but let the followers of

Christ bear in mind the fact that he can bruise only the heel, while those who are loyal to Christ by their fidelity and piety shall bruise the head of the serpent. While men are making void the law of God, we must pray, as did David, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." Through Christ believers will gain the mastery, and inch by inch they will contest the ground, and obtain the victory.

Let the followers of Christ do all that is possible to teach repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. One soul gained brings joy to the Father and to the Son, and there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of heaven, and an anthem of praise goes up from countless harps and voices through the heavenly courts. Those who break the law of God, and teach others to break God's commandments, are not following Jesus, who says, "I have kept my Father's commandments;" they are following another leader. It was Christ's own voice that proclaimed on Mount Sinai the Ten Commandments, and he will not countermand his statutes. Satan in his rebellion in heaven sought to find some flaw in the law of God, in order to support his argument that the law of God must be changed; but his efforts were in vain. He did not succeed, and after he had deceived thousands of angels, and had drawn them to his side, he was cast out of heaven. But the law of God was not changed in one jot or tittle. God is wise and unchangeable, and those who flatter themselves that they can find a safer rule of life than that which God has given, are deceived by the same delusions that led the angels of heaven to join the ranks of Lucifer in questioning the authority of God's law and the justice of his government.

Those who have true Bible religion will yield their will to God's will as supreme, and will reverence God by rendering obedience to his righteous and just laws. They will place themselves under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel, and acknowledge themselves as under the control of the Ruler, not only of earthly intelligences but of the hosts of heaven. Can man frame a constitution for the governing of the world that is better adapted to the purpose than that which God has framed? In what particular is the moral code wanting? Can it be amended by finite men? If so, then man can exalt himself to the place of God. Can the human family afford to do without one of the commandments that God has given? Read the Ten Commandments carefully, and see which one can be dropped out. The man of sin thinks himself able to change the times and the laws of God, and the Protestant world have accepted the authority of the papal power, and in so doing have apostatized from God. All nations have been made drunk by partaking of the wine of Babylon, by accepting the presumptuous work of the man of sin, who has tampered with the law of God, and thought to change the precepts of Jehovah.

But the original law of God is safely deposited in the ark in the heavenly sanctuary, and will be presented to man just as God engraved it on the tables of stone. To the king on his throne and the humblest of his subjects, the law of righteousness will constitute the standard of character, and by its precepts will every work be tried and every thought be brought into examination. The fourth commandment will be found in the bosom of the Decalogue just as it was written by the finger of God, and every soul who has presumed to exalt the false sabbath above the Sabbath which was sanctified and blessed and given to mankind for respect and observance, will be found out of harmony with the law of God. God gave the Sabbath to be a sign between him and his people, that they might know that it was the Lord who was their sanctifier. Those who have knowingly trampled upon the true Sabbath, while they have exalted to its place a spurious institution, will have to

answer for their action before the Lord who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein. God has proclaimed himself a jealous God.

Can men presume to think that a better path can be found than that which Jehovah has marked out for them? Obedience to God's commandments places the feet of man in the royal path that leads to holiness and heaven. Paul inquires, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Well may this question be asked of those who have minds by which to search for reasons as to why men should depart from God. Satan could present no defined reasons as to why he wished the law of God changed or abolished. He simply declared his conviction that the angels would be better off without the law, but could not tell in what way they would be advantaged. He desired to exalt himself above God, and to convince the hosts of heaven that his wisdom was superior to that of the Omnipotent. The human family have been made drunk with the wine of Babylon, and drunken men will not reason. They have taken large drafts of Satan's sophistry, and they are determined that they will not see the foolishness of accepting another standard, while casting aside the law of the Lord of hosts.

True sanctification is found in yielding the will to the will of God, in rendering obedience to his commandments, and in making his standard of righteousness the aim of our life. If men would consent to follow the Lord fully, if they were not confused with the wine of Babylon, they would see that to tamper with the Lord's standard, to depart from his commandments, is the worst species of rebellion. This is well represented as the wine of the wrath of the abomination of Babylon, the cup which she has presented to all nations to drink. Were it not for this, thousands, yes, millions, would be found in the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. But the will of God, expressed in his law, the direction which he has given to guide men in the path to heaven, is authoritative and divine. We have more than a royal road to heaven, we have a divine pathway in which to travel. The opinions of men are not to weigh as amendments to the law of God; for the law of God is the expression of the will and mind of God, of him who is unchanging in counsel. The precepts of the law are not given to the human family as propositions to criticize. They are the positive declarations and decisions of an infallible Judge, and they will stand through eternal ages. They are the very laws that will test character, by which we are to be judged for the deeds done in the body. Who hath bewitched you, that you who are finite by nature, who are sinful and erring, should presume to handle the law of God in the manner in which you do? How is it that you think yourselves at liberty to cancel the decisions of Jehovah, to remove the ancient landmarks, and substitute in place of the true guideboards false waymarks that will lead men to follow the path of the first great apostate in place of following Jesus Christ? God has not left his law to be endorsed, reviled, or annulled according to the pleasure of his creatures. The wise man declares the true attitude of man to the law, and says: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: 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."

November 21, 1895

"After that Thou Shalt Cut it Down"

Christ spoke a parable to convey to the people a truth which would ever be remembered. He said: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking

fruit on this fig tree, and find none; cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." For three years Christ had carefully sought for fruit among the Jewish people. Rich opportunities and privileges had been granted them. For three years and a half Christ had tabernacled among men. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." He was as the shadow of a great rock in a desert land, where no water is. He constantly refreshed humanity by opening to men the cool streams of the brook flowing from Lebanon. He was ever seeking to refresh his vineyard. He sought to leave his imprint upon the hearts and characters of his followers. He identified his interest with that of fallen humanity. Their weakness was his weakness. Their necessity was his necessity. As a humble suppliant who sought divine strength from the hand of his Father, he took the attitude of petitioner, that he himself might be invigorated and refreshed by converse with God.

Christ took upon himself human nature, but daily he linked it with the divine nature. He devoted whole nights to prayer, leaving an example for all humanity; for as he relied upon God, the Source of all strength, so are we to be invigorated and refreshed, to be strengthened for duty and braced for trial, through communion with God.

Christ labored for his vineyard. The Prince of heaven, he was yet the intercessor for man, and he had power with God, and prevailed for himself and for his people. Morning by morning he communicated with his Father in heaven, receiving from him daily a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Lord awakened him from his slumbers in the early hours of the new day, that his soul and his lips might be anointed with grace which he should impart to others. His words were given him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that he might speak in season to those that were weary and oppressed. Of Christ we read, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know to speak a word in season to him that is weary; he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

The Son of God, having humanity upon him, lived in our world as a human agent. He passed over the ground which man must travel. He supplicated for suffering humanity till his humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. He uttered supplications for a people over whom the prince of darkness was striving for mastery. He healed the sick, relieved the suffering and oppressed, consoled the bereaved, and restored the backslider, seeking and saving that which was lost. Christ worked for his vineyard, speaking words in season. But what an ominous sentence is this—"And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down"! Our Saviour was calling the Jewish nation to repentance. To them he said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." In the parable of the vineyard Christ represented to them the manner in which God had dealt with them. He showed them the blessings that God had given them; for the vineyard was a symbol of the Jewish nation.

Well might the Jewish nation inquire, "What mean these words, And after that thou shalt cut it down." They might have been answered, "O inhabitants of Jerusalem, this is your day of opportunity and privilege, your day of merciful visitation." It was still time for them to know the things which belonged unto their peace. Jesus was in the midst of them, the only one who had power to save them; but their unbelief, their resistance, was bringing to them its sure results of hardness of heart

and impenitence, and was filling them with stubbornness and rebellion. Jesus was diffusing light, scattering his blessings upon every hand, showering mercies upon the unthankful and the evil. His mercies were unacknowledged, and Jesus, the Light, the Way, and the Truth, was rejected. Still a brief space was theirs before the irrevocable words should be spoken. Shall the season of trial close, and after that the mandate from heaven be pronounced. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" They had fulfilled the word, "They would none of My counsel; they despised all My reproof." They had none to blame but themselves if they perished in their sins. Jesus had said to them, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."

The Lord had often punished the enemies of the Jewish nation, and had saved his people when their foes purposed to destroy them. As a mighty warrior he had raised his hand to press back the powers of darkness, working in behalf of his people in order that the Jews and that other nations might have an opportunity to see the character of God as represented in Christ Jesus. He gave them an opportunity to repent and to believe on the only-begotten Son of God. And "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." He bore long with the Jewish nation, even when they were given up to idolatry. He saw them not as fruit-bearing trees, but as cumberers of the ground. These were not merely useless, but decided hindrances. Their religion was misleading, and wrought ruin instead of salvation.

But the great Teacher had undertaken the task of correcting the evil that existed in the world. He sought to break the spell which paralyzed every spiritual energy. With what authority he spoke, with what winning grace he gave his invitations, his assurances, and promises! His commands and denunciations were alike clothed in language that was elevating and uplifting. His utterances were the expression of paternal tenderness and love. In no instance did he lower the standard of the law of God. He came to show the world its value, its elevated character. He was the Desire of nations, the world's only hope, and was obedient to all the commandments of God, thus showing forth the divine character. He came to test the Jewish nation, to try them after the plan of God. If they persisted in continuing in transgression, they would miserably perish. This will be the fate of all who turn a deaf ear to the words of invitation and warning sent of God. Those who refuse to listen in this their day of test and trial, will have to meet the results of their own perversity. They may grasp eagerly for the treasures of the earth, seek its honors and pleasures, but what a scene will the judgment present when the books are opened, and every man is rewarded according as his works have been!

The soul's value is estimated by the cross of Calvary. The Lord appreciates the souls for whom he died, and wants them to be the subjects of his kingdom; but the god of this world blinds the perceptive powers of men so that they do not see their peril. To them Christ is saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" He is still pleading that they may understand the day of their visitation, saying, as did the gardener concerning the unfruitful tree, "Let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

December 5, 1895

Take Heed to Yourselves

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.”

The class here mentioned by the apostle are not mere heathen. He describes them as “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” He says, “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” This is a delineation of the character that will be made manifest among those who profess godliness in the last days. But there will be another class. The apostle says: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”

Those who are deceivers are those who have turned away their ears from hearing the truth, and who have opened the door of their heart for the entrance of the sophistries of Satan. At first those who are finally deceived do not believe what they assume themselves; but as they misinterpret the Scriptures, as they claim to have received new light, as they enter into by-paths, as they repeat their own falsehoods, they come to look upon their theories as matters of importance. They deceive others, presenting the arguments that were prepared by the synagogue of Satan. Every repetition of their errors confirms them in their false theories. They are inspired by the Satanic agencies to present falsehoods before others, and finally come to believe a lie, deceiving and being deceived. But Paul enjoined Timothy, saying: “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.”

“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 [Spiritualism]; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

God has furnished every one with a full armor, but we are under the necessity of putting it on.

“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another.”

“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? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.”

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

As a people are we sufficiently considering this warning? If we neglect to take heed, if we regard the warning with indifference, if we allow earthly, temporal things to take our attention, and we lose our realization of the essential character of prayer, we shall be found among those who are not accounted worthy to escape. The righteousness of Christ should be our first consideration. The service of God should be our first business. Christ has 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.” How many admit that the commandments are of God, and yet neglect to fully obey them! John leaves no doubt as to what commandments we are required to obey. Years after the resurrection of Christ, he writes:

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins' and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 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. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.”

No change in the law has been made from the beginning. It is the same as it was before the fall of Satan; and in the heavenly courts the angelic family obey the law of God as they did when the foundation of the earth was laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

December 12, 1895

Character of the Law Revealed in Christ's Life

In the prayer of Christ for his disciples, he said concerning them: “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one [in spiritual union]; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

The glory of Christ is his character, and his character is an expression of the law of God. He fulfilled the law in its every specification, and gave to the world in his life a perfect pattern of what it is possible for humanity to attain unto by cooperation with divinity. In his humanity Christ was dependent upon the Father, even as humanity is now dependent upon God for divine power in attaining unto perfection of character. God's law is an exponent of his character, an expression of his holiness; but, viewed by him who has fallen through sin, it is a voice of condemnation, a ministration of death. It is not in the province of law to pardon the transgressor; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." "By the law shall no flesh be justified." No ray of hope shines forth from the law to the sinner, and its transgressor can find no answer from the law to his anxious inquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?" "How shall I be just with God?"

But through Christ a way of escape has been provided. Our Redeemer came in the flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, to lay hold of the repenting soul with an unyielding grasp, and at the same time to grasp the throne of God, becoming the connecting link between humanity and divinity, between earth and heaven. He is the only refuge for the guilty soul. In searching to know God, man is directed to Christ, who lived out the law of God, and manifested to the world the attributes of the Father. In the Son of God the inexpressible goodness of God is revealed; for in him mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ in the flesh, condemning sin in the flesh, was a perfect revelation of God to the world. Christ declared: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

In answer to the request of Philip, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus said: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? 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." The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of the glory of the Godhead. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. God has revealed himself to men; he stooped to take upon him our nature, and in his Son we see the glory of the divine attributes. Those who see not in Christ the divine character are in the shadow of Satan's misrepresentation of divinity. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature."

In Christ Jesus is a revelation of the glory of the Godhead. All that the human agent can know of God to the saving of the soul, is the measure of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to which he can attain; for Christ is he who represents the Father. The most wonderful truth to be grasped by men is the truth, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ is the wisdom of God. He is the great "I AM" to the world. As we contemplate the glory of the divine character as revealed in Christ, we are led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" This wisdom is displayed in the love that reaches out for the recovery of lost and ruined man.

The work of God in the creation of man needed no undoing. There was nothing imperfect, nothing incomplete. He spake and it was done. The very dust of the ground from which man was formed was pure, and the breath of life which God breathed into his nostrils was holy. He was placed in Eden, the garden of God, and its atmosphere was undefiled, and from the beams of the sun in the heavens which blessed and cheered the earth, to the fountains and streams that watered the garden, all was holy, all was clothed with spotless purity and unexcelled loveliness, and was in harmony with the character of the Father and the Son, by whom the worlds were made, and in whom was life, and the life is the light of men.

But in the transgression of man both the Father and the Son were dishonored. Man committed sin, and sin is the transgression of the law, which is holy, just, and good. Through sin the temple of God which he had builded for his own indwelling and glory, was reduced to ruin, was fallen and in decay. Satan beguiled the holy pair to their own destruction, and introduced an element of character that was antagonistic to God and to their fellow-creatures. Before the entrance of sin, the hearts of God's children had been filled with love toward their Creator, and they were in harmony with his will; but upon yielding to the tempter a warring element began to work in the human agent. Even the earth itself shows the curse of transgression, and signs of enmity appear. Darkness covers the earth like the pall of death, and will continue to shroud the glory of God until death is swallowed up in victory.

In the creation of God before the entrance of sin, every part of nature was in perfection; God had nothing to take down as unnecessary to his plan. He needed to set into operation no power by which to dispossess; he needed to inaugurate no opposing force. But through the calamity of sin, the work of disintegration was begun, and the beautiful temple of God's building was defiled and laid in ruins. God no longer was a dweller in the heart of man. To oppose and bring to naught the work of the enemy, the promise was given, "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."

In the councils of heaven, hope was furnished for the fallen race. Jesus Christ offered his life as a ransom for the lost, as the price by which he might purchase the right to re-create the sinner, and form again the image of God in the soul. Fallen man was to be renewed in the divine likeness. He was to be uplifted, to be pardoned and redeemed, not by the law, but by Jesus Christ, our Righteousness. Angels fly through the midst of heaven, proclaiming the glad tidings that a ransom has been found, and that the treasures that have been hidden from ages and generations in Christ, are to be displayed before a wondering universe.

In Christ is found a resource that has never before been called out. Clothing his divinity with humanity, with the wealth of the treasures of heaven at his command, he was to come to our world to counteract the ruin that Satan has wrought. What a scene was that when angels, cherubim, and a seraphim rejoiced as they hastened through the heavenly courts, proclaiming that a ransom had been found, and that God could be just, and yet be the justifier of him who believes in the ransom that had been provided! The law could be magnified and made honorable, and yet fallen man could be restored to more than his former dignity and glory, and exalted as an overcomer of the Satanic hosts. Every one who should believe in Jesus, should be recreated to walk in newness of life, and from the ruins that Satan had wrought through sin, should arise in purity and holiness the fallen temple of the Lord. Man was to be reconstructed, to be formed after the image of Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God. "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect,

precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”