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SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD

ELLEN G. WHITE

Sons and Daughters of God

Ellen G. White

1955

Information about this Book

Overview

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

Further Links

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Contents

Information about this Book	1
Overview	1
About the Author	1
Further Links	1
End User License Agreement	1
FOREWORD	6
January—We are Sons and Daughters of God	7
That God Created Man in His Own Image	7
That we should be Called the Sons of God	8
That when Christ Appears we Shall be Like Him	9
That we are Purified as Christ is Pure	10
That God Sent His Son to Die that we Might Live	11
That Power is Given us to Become the Sons of God	12
That the Church Is the Object of God’s Supreme Regard	13
We are His Sons and Daughters	14
If Children, then Heirs	15
He Knows our Needs Before we Ask	16
Every Good and Perfect Gift is from Him	17
He Manifests His Love Toward Us	18
He is Near to All that Call Upon Him	19
Enoch, a Son of God, Walked with the Father	20
He is the Express Image of the Father	21
If We Sin, He Pleads Our Case in Heaven	22
Belief in Him Means Everlasting Life	23
He Knows How to Help Us When We are Tempted	24
He is Stronger and More Mighty Than Our Adversary	25
He is the Embodiment of Truth	26
He is Ever Before Us, We Shall Not Be Moved	27
Sons of God Are Led By Him	28
He Guides Us Into All Truth	29
He Teaches Us	30
He Brings Wisdom and Understanding	31
He Imparts the Fruit of the Spirit	32
The Spirit Quickeneth	33
He Speaks to Those Who Listen	34
Countless Angels Ready to Help Us	35
They Minister to the Heirs of Salvation	36

They Constantly Ascend and Descend Heaven's Ladder 37

February—We Obey the Father's Law of Love **38**

The Commandments are Sure 38

The Law of God is Perfect 39

The Law is Holy, Just, and Good 40

The Law is Truth and Righteousness 41

Hasty Obedience Brings Rich Blessings 42

In the Home 43

To be a Strength to All Nations 44

Rejoices the Heart and Enlightens the Eyes 45

Statutes Given for Our Good Always 46

We Are Assured of Life Everlasting 47

Christ Magnified the Law and Made It Honorable 48

Love to Be Fulfilled in Our Lives 49

Law of Love Written in Our Hearts 50

We are to Love the Lord with All Our Hearts 51

We Will Love Our Neighbors as Ourselves 52

Mercy Shown to Thousands Who Love God's Law 53

We Love God's Commandments More Than Gold 54

Christ Came to Earth to Fulfill the Law 55

We Shall Have No Other Gods 56

We Shall Not Serve Any Graven Images 57

We Shall Not Take the Name of the Lord in Vain 58

We Shall Keep the Sabbath Day Holy 59

Long Life Promised for Honoring Parents 60

We Shall Not Kill 61

We Shall Be Pure 62

We Shall Not Steal 63

We Shall Not Lie, or Bear False Witness 64

We Shall Not Be Covetous 65

It Shall Be Our Righteousness 66

March—We Enroll in the School of Christ **67**

All Who Are Weary of Sin Are Urged to Enroll 67

We Learn of Christ 68

He Teaches Us His Yoke is Easy, His Burden, Light 69

Christ is the Heaven-Sent Teacher 70

We Receive a Faith that Works by Love 71

We Learn to Speak the Language of Canaan 72

We Learn to Beware of Vain Deceit and Flattery	73
Affliction Teaches Us to Long for Heaven	74
We are to Consider Nature’s Lessons	75
We Enter Into Christ’s Rest	76
Dependence Upon God	77
To Center Our Thoughts in Christ	78
To Resist Temptation	79
To Be Loving and Kind	80
Humility	81
Meekness	82
Thoughtfulness	83
Self-Control	84
Purity	85
Simplicity	86
Steadfastness	87
Patience	88
Self-denial	89
Forgiveness	90
Peter’s Sifting Resulted in His Conversion	91
Lazarus Raised to Testify to God’s Glory	92
Elisha’s Faithfulness Rewarded	93
Moses Endured as Seeing Him Who is Invisible	94
Though Severely Tried Job Remained Perfect and Upright	95
Paul Blinded so He Would See Christ	96
Moab a Failure because He Refused to Change	97

April—We are Transformed by God’s Grace 98

Our Heart the Most Precious Offering	98
Diligent Heart Keeping Essential to Growth in Grace	99
God Promises Us a New Heart of Flesh	100
The Renewed Heart Loves as Christ Loved	101
The Renewed Heart Bringeth Forth Good Things	102
The Renewed Heart is a Pure Heart	103
God’s Peace Keeps the New Heart	104
Transformed by the Renewing of the Mind	105
Mind Increases Strength by Continual Effort	106
Every Thought Obedient to Christ	107
The Mind Must Be Fed With Pure Food	108
We are to Take Time to Think About God	109
Turn Minds From the Artificial to the Natural	110

The Mind Fixed on Christ	111
Changes Us from Sinners to Saints	112
Changes Our Rudeness to Refinement	113
Changes Our Slothfulness to Dispatch	114
Changes Our Stubborn Wills to Sanctified Wills	115
Changes Our Constant Complaining to Praise	116
Changes Our Defiance to Submission	117
Changes Our Empty Lamps into Full Lamps	118
God's Grace Sufficient for Every Need	119
His Gifts are to Stablish and Strengthen Us	120
Let Us Come Boldly to the Throne of Grace	121
Rejoice in the Rich Treasures of Grace	122
We have Received of God's Fullness	123
We are Changed from Glory to Glory	124
Redemption Through the Riches of God's Grace	125
Blind Bartimaeus' Faith in God's Grace Rewarded	126
From a Slave to Sin, to a Prince of God	127

May—We Follow the Perfect Pattern **128**

He Depended Completely on Divine Power	128
He Submitted to Parental Authority	129
He Was Obedient and Respectful	130
He Was Industrious	131
His Simplicity Gave Him Favor	132
In Baptism	133
In the Study of the Scriptures	134
In the Study of Nature	135
In Communion With God	136
In Keeping His Father's Commandments	137
In Being the Light of the World	138
In Demonstrating God's Parental Attributes	139
In Physical Development	140
In Gaining Victory Over Appetite	141
In Positive Self-Control	142
His Principles are to Be Our Principles	143
When He Was Reviled, He Reviled Not	144
He Was Misunderstood and Often Stood Alone	145
He Did Not Interfere With Those in Power	146
In Love for Others	147
In Compassion	148

In Cheerfulness	149
In Soul Winning	150
In Doing Good and Blessing Others	151
In Recognizing God as the Giver of All Gifts	152
In Forgiveness	153
We are to be Perfect as Christ is Perfect	154
We are to be Holy as Christ is Holy	155
We are to Overcome as Christ Overcame	156
We Follow Christ in the Ordinance of Humility	157
We Follow Christ in the Communion Service	158

June—We Choose the Best **159**

Choose Today to Serve Christ Always	159
Choose Christ as our Captain	160
Counsel of a True Friend Rejoices the Heart	161
Seek the Company of the Wise	162
We Choose Our Associates Carefully	163
We Do Not Consent to Enticement of Sinners	164
We Choose a Life Companion Who Loves God	165
Not a Favored Few, But Many Friends	166
Jesus is a Friend That is Closer Than a Brother	167
Happy Home Atmosphere Promotes Health	168
Labor Results in Health and Happiness	169
Health and Happiness in the Out-of-Doors	170
By Preserving the Living Machinery	171
Careful Habits Ensure Good Health	172
We Are to Be Clean Inwardly and Outwardly	173
Daniel Blessed for Choosing the Best	174
We Choose to Please God, Not Ourselves	175
We Do All in the Name of Jesus	176
With Recreation That Results in Joy	177
With Good Books That Ennoble the Mind	178
With Good Music That Will Be a Blessing	179
With Holiness in All Conversation	180
With a Happy Sabbath Day of Worship and Rest	181
To Accept the Light God Sends	182
Divine Wisdom	183
True Beauty	184
Honesty	185
Discretion	186

Joseph Chose Life’s Best, Samson Did Not	187
The Better Inheritance	188

July—We Face the Future With Courage **189**

To Confess Christ	189
To Study the Scriptures	190
To Trust Him	191
To Walk in His Way	192
To Enjoy Perfect Love	193
To Live in Harmony With His Law	194
To Keep the Sabbath	195
God Gives Spirit of Power and Love	196
Sense of God’s Presence Banishes Fear	197
God’s Goodness and Mercy Inspire Courage	198
Praise to God Brings Courage	199
Walking in the Light Brings Courage	200
Gather Courage from the Coldness of Others	201
Be Strong, for God is With Us	202
Courage and Power are Needed Today	203
God Calls Youth Because They Are Strong	204
Courage of Obedience Demonstrated	205
Elijah Refused to Be Discouraged	206
We Need More Calebs and Joshuas	207
Two Brave Young Men Rout Philistines	208
We Need More Men Like Moses	209
Too Much Is at Stake to Waver Now	210
To Stand Firm in Spite of Ridicule and Scorn	211
To Take a Decided Stand for Temperance	212
To Stand for Principle Despite Opposition	213
To Call Sin by its Right Name	214
To Lift the Standard High	215
To Face Death With the Courage of Daniel	216
The Courageous Among God’s Jewels	217
God is With His Children	218
Renewal of Strength	219

August—We Glory in the Cross of Christ **220**

We See Christ on the Cross	220
All Men are Drawn to the Uplifted Saviour	221
All Who Look to the Cross will Live	222

Cross of Christ to Be Erected in Our Homes	223
We are Redeemed by Christ's Precious Blood	224
We are Cleansed by Christ's Blood	225
Atonement Through Christ's Blood	226
We are Justified by Christ's Blood	227
Sons of God Through Christ's Blood	228
We Are Reconciled to God by Christ's Death	229
Christ Has Delivered Us from Eternal Death	230
We Are to Glory Only in the Cross	231
We Are Not to Glory in Men	232
We Are Not to Glory in Worldly Wisdom	233
We Are Not to Glory in Riches	234
We Are Not to Glory in Ourselves	235
Glory Not in Talent and Influence	236
We Glory in the Resurrection of Christ	237
We Thank God for His Unspeaking Gift	238
Christ Is Our Only Access to the Father	239
The Cross and the Law	240
The Cross Helps Us Understand Nature	241
For Us Christ Endured the Cross	242
Mercy and Justice Met at the Cross	243
The Cross Unmasks Satan's Government	244
We Must Take Up Our Cross Daily	245
We Take Up the Cross and Deny Self	246
We Take Up Our Cross and Follow Christ	247
If We Shun the Cross, We Lose Eternal Life	248
The Cross that Simon Bore	249
Dying Thief Accepts Christ as His Saviour	250

September—We are Laborers Together with God **251**

Privilege of Working with God	251
True Missionary Effort Begins in the Home	252
Faithfulness in Little Things	253
Home Duties Well Done	254
Influence of a Christian Life at Home	255
Good Behavior at Home Influences Others	256
Job Offered Sacrifices for His Children	257
Far-reaching Influence of Christian Home	258
God Fills Us With His Love	259
God Allows Affliction and Trials	260

Persecution Helps Spread the Gospel	261
Righteous Church Members	262
We are to Be Zealous in Our Labors	263
God Places Benevolence Close Beside Prayer	264
Representatives of God’s Government	265
How We are to Work	266
We are to Do Good to Our Neighbors	267
We are to Labor With Love	268
Defenders of the Faith	269
We Are Blessed in Helping Others	270
We are Created to Do Good Works	271
God Blesses Those Who Consider the Poor	272
We Are Told To Go Into All the World	273
We are Witnesses for God	274
We Give Liberally To Spread the Gospel	275
We Are the Light of the World	276
We are to Work with Christ to Save the Lost	277
Truth Will Triumph	278
Christ Commends those Who Serve Him	279
When the Gospel is Preached to All	280

October—We Abide in Christ **281**

By Receiving Christ, the Source of Life	281
By Abiding in Christ, the Source of Power	282
By Walking as Christ Walked	283
By Walking in the Truth	284
By Keeping the Commandments in Every Detail	285
By Being United as Children of God	286
Christ is the True Vine	287
We Are the Branches	288
God Prunes Us to Make Us More Fruitful	289
We Bear Fruit Only as We Abide in Christ	290
Withered Branch Apart From Christ	291
We Confess Christ	292
We Bear the Fruit of Brotherly Love	293
Christ Prayed That We All Might Be One	294
Oneness with Christ	295
We Reflect Christ to the World	296
We Are Kept from Sinning	297
We Abide in His Love	298

We Dwell in Him and He in Us	299
Our Life is Hid with Christ in God through Baptism	300
The Poor in Spirit Inherit the Kingdom	301
Those Who Mourn Shall Be Comforted	302
The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth	303
The Hungry and Thirsty Shall Be Filled	304
The Merciful Shall Have Mercy	305
The Peacemakers are Called God’s Children	306
The Persecuted Receive the Kingdom	307
The Reviled are Blessed	308
Transgression is Forgiven, Sin is Covered	309
Christ in You the Hope of Glory	310
We are Glad in the Lord	311

November—We Make Constant Advancement 312

Seek Constantly to Improve Your Powers	312
Glorify God by Improving Health Habits	313
God’s Temple Is to Receive Constant Care	314
God Wants Us to Have the Best Manners	315
We are to Behave Ourselves Wisely	316
Mercies of God Preserve and Elevate Us	317
Adorned With Divine Loveliness	318
Rough Stones Polished for a Holy Temple	319
Joseph a Christian Gentleman	320
Abraham Ever Displayed Unselfish Courtesy	321
Capabilities Increase as Spirituality Increases	322
Seek New Heights in Faith	323
We are to Increase Spiritually	324
God Does Not Limit Our Advancement	325
Break Up the Fallow Ground	326
Continually Store Mind With Divine Truth	327
Put on the Whole Armor of God	328
God Works in Us to Do His Good Pleasure	329
We Put Away Childish Things	330
We Grow Up in Christ	331
Our Faith Grows Exceedingly	332
Seek to Excel	333
Attain to the Full Stature of Christ	334
Going Forth Is Prepared as the Morning	335
We Must Constantly Look to Jesus	336

Our Experience Will Reach Into Eternity	337
Look Upon Christ—Assimilate His Image	338
We Long to Catch Glimpses of His Glory	339
We Are Filled With Praise	340
We Become Like Him	341

December—We Receive Our Inheritance **342**

Now Is the Sealing Time	342
Seek the Lord While He May Be Found	343
Become God’s Sons, and Heirs Through Christ	344
Be as Trees Planted by Rivers of Water	345
Be Sober and Watch Unto Prayer	346
Live Righteously and Godly	347
Be Without Fault	348
Overcome the World Through Faith	349
And His Reward is With Him	350
Hold Fast and Be Ready	351
We Hasten His Return With Holy Conversation	352
He Returns as Protector and Avenger of His Own	353
He Will Be to Us a Sanctuary	354
Probation is Fast Closing	355
He Calls Us to the Marriage Supper	356
Christ Comes With Power and Great Glory	357
The Faithful of Earth Will Be Saved	358
The Dead in Christ Rise First	359
Caught Up to Be With Christ Forever	360
All Nations Are Gathered in Judgment	361
We Receive the Crown of Life	362
A Great Multitude Enter the City of God	363
We Inherit the Kingdom	364
We Eat of the Tree of Life	365
We Have Power Over the Nations	366
We are Given Life Without End	367
Because We are Worthy, We Shall Walk in White	368
We are Presented to the Father	369
We are Made Pillars in the Temple of God	370
We Sit With Christ on His Throne	371
We Shall Inherit All Things	372

FOREWORD

From a life rich in experience and a heart enlightened by divine revelations, Ellen G. White, as she journeyed along life's pathway, was ever ready to lend a helping hand or speak an encouraging word. Every Christian was to her a son or a daughter of God, with unlimited opportunities stretching before him, and angels of God by his side to guard and guide him. From her tireless and inspired pen there flowed a steady stream of messages of encouragement, counsel, instruction, and enlightenment. From week to week through the *Youth's Instructor* she spoke to the youth of the church, and in the *Review and Herald* addressed its members generally. Her books preserved the instruction and warning in more permanent form for all to read. Many benefited by communications addressed to them personally.

In this volume, with its daily devotional readings, have been assembled appropriate counsel and instruction drawn from these accumulated E. G. White writings as kept on file in the office of the Ellen G. White Publications. Many times the message of the day reflects a freshness of approach as Ellen White, under the varied circumstances of her experience, passed on words of cheer and encouragement. In each case, whether drawn from book, periodical article, or manuscript, the source reference is given. The volume has been compiled under the direction of the Trustees with whom Mrs. White left the care of her writings, and in harmony with her directions to this Board.

It can readily be seen that in an endeavor to hold the reading of each day to one printed page and at the same time give a well-rounded presentation, it has been necessary at times to shorten some of the statements selected. Such omissions are indicated by marks of ellipsis.

That this volume may lead each reader to a deeper appreciation of what it means to be a child of God, is the sincere wish of the Publishers and

The Trustees of the Ellen G. White Publications.

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January—We are Sons and Daughters of God

That God Created Man in His Own Image

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. Genesis 1:27.

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth. They were to live in close communion with heaven, receiving power from the Source of all power. Upheld by God, they were to live sinless lives.

The holy pair were not only children under the fatherly care of God, but students receiving instruction from the all-wise Creator. They were visited by angels, and were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between.... The mysteries of the visible universe—“the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge”—afforded them an exhaustless source of instruction and delight. The laws and operations of nature, which have engaged men’s study for six thousand years, were opened to their minds by the infinite Framer and Upholder of all. They held converse with leaf and flower and tree, gathering from each the secrets of its life. With every living creature, from the mighty leviathan that playeth among the waters, to the insect mote that floats in the sunbeam, Adam was familiar. He had given to each its name, and he was acquainted with the nature and habits of all. God’s glory in the heavens, the innumerable worlds in their orderly revolutions, “the balancings of the clouds,” the mysteries of light and sound, of day and night,—all were open to the study of our first parents.

God created man a superior being; he alone is formed in the image of God, and is capable of partaking of the divine nature, of cooperating with his Creator and executing His plans.

That we should be Called the Sons of God

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not; because it knew him not.1 John 3:1.

As John thought of the love of Christ, he was led to exclaim, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”

People think it a privilege to see a royal personage, and thousands go great distances to see one. How much greater privilege it is to be sons and daughters of the Most High. What greater privilege could be conferred on us than to be given entrance into the royal family?

In order to become the sons and daughters of God, we must separate from the world. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate,” the Lord says, “and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.” ...

There is a heaven before us, a crown of life to win. But to the overcomer only is the reward given. He who gains heaven must be clothed with the robe of righteousness. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” In the character of Christ there was no discord of any kind. And this must be our experience. Our lives must be controlled by the principles that controlled His life.

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....

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 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.”

That when Christ Appears we Shall be Like Him

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.¹ John 3:2.

We are not to settle down, expecting that a change of character will come to us by some miraculous work, when Jesus shall appear in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. No, my young friends, we are judgment-bound, and probation is granted to us here in this life, in order that we may form characters for the future, immortal life.

Let none imagine that selfishness, self-esteem, and self-indulgence are compatible with the Spirit of Christ. Upon every truly converted man or woman there rests a responsibility that we cannot rightly estimate. The maxims and ways of the world are not to be adopted by the sons and daughters of the heavenly King.

In separating from the world, we shall encounter difficulties on every hand. But here is comfort for us: “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.”

We should show by our words and works that we recognize the great responsibility laid upon us. Our light should shine so clearly that others can see that we glorify the Father in our daily lives; that we are connected with heaven and are joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

To have fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ is to be ennobled and elevated, and made a partaker of joys unspeakable and full of glory. Food, clothing, station, and wealth may have their value; but to have a connection with God ... is of priceless value.... And although it “doth not yet appear what we shall be;” “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear,” “we shall be like him.”

That we are Purified as Christ is Pure

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.1 John 3:3.

Christ would elevate and refine man's mind, purifying it from all dross, that he may appreciate the love that is without a parallel.

Through repentance, faith, and good works he may perfect a righteous character, and claim, through the merits of Christ, the privileges of the sons of God. The principles of divine truth, received and cherished in the heart, will carry us to a height of moral excellence that we had not deemed it possible for us to reach.... "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Holiness of heart and purity of life were the great subjects of the teachings of Christ. In His sermon on the mount, after specifying what must be done in order to be blessed, and what must not be done, He says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Perfection, holiness,—nothing short of this would give them success in carrying out the principles He had given them. Without this holiness, the human heart is selfish, sinful, and vicious. Holiness will lead its possessor to be fruitful, and abound in all good works. He will never become weary in well-doing; neither look for promotion in this world; but he will look forward to be promoted by the Majesty of heaven when He shall exalt His sanctified and holy ones to His throne.... Holiness of heart will produce right actions.

As God is pure in His sphere, so man is to be pure in his. And he will be pure if Christ is formed within, the hope of glory; for he will imitate Christ's life and reflect His character.

The princely dignity of the Christian character will shine forth as the sun, and the beams of light from the face of Christ will be reflected upon those who have purified themselves even as He is pure.

Purity of heart will lead to purity of life.

That God Sent His Son to Die that we Might Live

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.1 John 4:10.

In redemption God has revealed His love in sacrifice, a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son...”

When Adam’s sin plunged the race into hopeless misery, God might have cut Himself loose from fallen beings. He might have treated them as sinners deserved to be treated. He might have commanded the angels of heaven to pour out upon our world the vials of His wrath. He might have removed this dark blot from His universe. But He did not do this. Instead of banishing them from His presence, He came still nearer to the fallen race. He gave His Son to become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, ... full of grace and truth.” Christ by His human relationship to men drew them close to God. He clothed His divine nature with the garb of humanity, and demonstrated before the heavenly universe, before the unfallen worlds, how much God loves the children of men.

The gift of God to man is beyond all computation. Nothing was withheld. God would not permit it to be said that He could have done more or revealed to humanity a greater measure of love. In the gift of Christ He gave all heaven.

The Highest, who was with the Father before the world was, submitted to humiliation, that He might uplift humanity. Prophecy withdraws the veil, that we may behold the throne of heaven, that we may see upon that throne, high and lifted up, One who in human form, came to our world to suffer, to be lacerated with stripes, and bruised for our iniquities.

Thus God showed His love for man. With Christ He gave all heaven, that the moral image of God might be restored in man.... His grace in all its vastness is provided for all.

That Power is Given us to Become the Sons of God

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. John 1:12.

Divine sonship is not something that we gain of ourselves. Only to those who receive Christ as their Saviour is given the power to become sons and daughters of God. The sinner cannot, by any power of his own, rid himself of sin. For the accomplishment of this result, he must look to a higher Power. John exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Christ alone has power to cleanse the heart. He who is seeking for forgiveness and acceptance can say only,—

"Nothing in my hand I bring;

Simply to Thy cross I cling." But the promise of sonship is made to *all* who "believe on his name." Every one who comes to Jesus in faith will receive pardon.

The religion of Christ transforms the heart. It makes the worldly-minded man heavenly-minded. Under its influence the selfish man becomes unselfish, because this is the character of Christ. The dishonest, scheming man becomes upright, so that it is second nature to him to do to others as he would have others do to him. The profligate is changed from impurity to purity. He forms correct habits; for the gospel of Christ has become to him a savor of life unto life.

God was to be manifest in Christ, "reconciling the world unto himself." Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness. But Christ, after having redeemed man from the condemnation of the law, could impart divine power, to unite with human effort. Thus by repentance toward God and faith in Christ, the fallen children of Adam might once more become "sons of God."

When a soul receives Christ, he receives power to live the life of Christ.

That the Church Is the Object of God's Supreme Regard

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:27.

The church, enfeebled and defective though it be, is the only object on earth on which Christ bestows His supreme regard. He is constantly watching it with solicitude, and is strengthening it by His Holy Spirit. Will we, as members of His church, allow Him to impress our minds and to work through us to His glory?

Christ loves His church. He will give all needed help to those who call upon Him for strength for the development of Christlike character. But His love is not weakness. He will not serve with their sins or give them prosperity while they continue to follow a wrong course of action. Only by faithful repentance will their sins be forgiven; for God will not cover evil with the robe of His righteousness. He will honor faithful service. He will abundantly bless those who reveal to their fellowmen His justice, mercy, and love. Let those who are engaged in His service walk before Him in true humility, following faithfully in His footsteps, cherishing the holy principles which will live through the eternal ages. Let them in word and action show that they obey the laws which are obeyed in heaven.

The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God.... The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world.... It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.

God's love for His church is infinite. His care over His heritage is unceasing.

We are His Sons and Daughters

I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.

The Creator of the universe addresses you as an affectionate Father.... Your heavenly Father proposes to make you a member of the royal family, that through His exceeding great and precious promises you may be a partaker of the divine nature.... The more you partake of the character of the pure, sinless angels, and of Christ your Redeemer, the more vividly will you bear the impress of the divine, and the more faint will be the resemblance to the world.

“I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters....” What a promise is here made upon condition of obedience!.... He promises to be a Father unto you. Oh, what a relationship is this! higher and holier than any earthly tie. If you make the sacrifice, if you have to forsake father, mother, sisters, brothers, wife, and children for Christ’s sake, you will not be friendless. God adopts you into His family; you become members of the royal household, sons and daughters of the King who rules in the heaven of heavens.

If you call God your Father, you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom, and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest. It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father, and to every member of His family.

God is our Father, a tender parent, solicitous for His spiritual children. He is pledged to be the protector, counsellor, guide, and friend, of all who are obedient to Him.

If Children, then Heirs

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. Romans 8:17.

All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them. They are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They pledge themselves to become active members of His church in the earth. They are to be dead to all the allurements of worldly desires; but in conversation and godliness, they are, through sanctification of the Spirit to exert a living influence for God.

“Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,”—what an exalted, dignified position! Separate and distinct from the world, secure from the wily snares of Satan! By their baptismal vows, God’s professed followers have pledged themselves to stand in opposition to evil. The enemy of souls will work with all craft to corrupt their minds. He will seek to introduce his methods into their service for the Master. But there is safety for them if they will heed the injunction: “... be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Man is honored by being made a co-partner in God’s firm, by being accepted as a worker in the great centers He has established.... By appointment, the Lord our Redeemer is heir of God, and those who are co-laborers with Him in the work of saving souls, are joint heirs with Him.... To be an overcomer is to be placed in the ranks of those who have the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

To what greater honor could we aspire than to be called the children of God? What greater rank could we hold, what greater inheritance could we find, than that which comes to those who are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ?

He Knows our Needs Before we Ask

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. Matthew 6:8.

If God, the divine artist, gives to the simple flowers, that perish in a day, their delicate and varied colors, how much greater care will He have for those who are created in His own image? ... If men love and obey God, and do their part, God will provide for all their wants.... No man can add one cubit to his stature, no matter how solicitous he may be to do so. It is no less unreasonable to be troubled about the morrow and its needs. Do your duty, and trust in God; for He knows of what things you have need.... He watches over us with more tenderness than does a mother over an afflicted child.... God is a friend in perplexity and affliction, a protector in distress, a preserver in the thousand dangers that are unseen to us.

God dwells in every abode; He hears every word that is spoken, listens to every prayer that is offered, tastes the sorrows and disappointments of every soul, regards the treatment that is given to father, mother, sister, friend, and neighbor. He cares for our necessities, and His love and mercy and grace are continually flowing to satisfy our need.... In His care we may safely rest.

God helps the feeble, and strengthens those who have no strength. In the fields where the trials and the conflicts and poverty are the greatest, God's workmen must have increased protection. To those laboring in the heat of the conflict, God says, "The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand."

Our Lord adapts Himself to our special needs. He is a shade on our right hand. He walks close by our side, ready to supply all our necessities. He comes very near to those who are engaged in willing service for Him. He knows every one by name. O what assurances we have of the tender love of Christ.

Every Good and Perfect Gift is from Him

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.,James 1:17.

The power of God is manifested in the beating of the heart, in the action of the lungs, and in the living currents that circulate through the thousand different channels of the body. We are indebted to Him for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life. The powers and abilities that elevate man above the lower creation, are the endowment of the Creator. He loads us with His benefits. We are indebted to Him for the food we eat, the water we drink, the clothes we wear, the air we breathe. Without His special providence, the air would be filled with pestilence and poison. He is a bountiful benefactor and preserver. The sun which shines upon the earth, and glorifies all nature, the weird solemn radiance of the moon, the glories of the firmament, spangled with brilliant stars, the showers that refresh the land, and cause vegetation to flourish, the precious things of nature in all their varied richness, the lofty trees, the shrubs and plants, the waving grain, the blue sky, the green earth, the changes of day and night, the renewing seasons, all speak to man of his Creator's love. He has linked us to Himself by all these tokens in heaven and in earth.

We may state to Him our temporal matters, asking Him for bread and raiment as well as for the bread of life and the robe of Christ's righteousness.... The gifts of Him who has all power in heaven and earth are in store for the children of God. Gifts so precious that they come to us through the costly sacrifice of the Redeemer's blood; gifts that will satisfy the deepest craving of the heart; gifts lasting as eternity, will be received and enjoyed by all who will come to God as little children. Take God's promises as your own, plead them before Him as His own words, and you will receive fulness of joy.

He Manifests His Love Toward Us

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.1 John 4:9.

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. The psalmist says:

“Strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.
Righteousness and judgment are the foundation of thy throne:
Mercy and truth go before thy face.
Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;
They walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.
In thy name do they rejoice all the day;
And in thy righteousness are they exalted.
For thou art the glory of their strength....”Psalm 89:13-18, R.V.

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God’s unchanging love.... The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love,—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience.... So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies.

He is Near to All that Call Upon Him

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. Psalm 145:18.

God is pleased when we keep our faces turned toward the Sun of Righteousness.... When we are in trouble and pressed down with anxieties, the Lord is near, and He bids us cast all our care upon Him, because He cares for us....

He comes to all His children in their affliction. In time of danger He is their refuge. In sorrow, He offers them joy and consolation. Shall we turn from the Redeemer, the fountain of living water, to hew out for ourselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water? When danger approaches, shall we seek for help from those as weak as ourselves, or shall we flee to Him who is mighty to save? His arms are open wide, and He utters the gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." ...

It is not the manifestation of His great and awful majesty and unparalleled power that will leave us without excuse if we refuse Him our love and obedience. It is the love, the compassion, the patience, the long-suffering that He has shown which will witness against those who do not offer Him the willing service of their lives. Those who turn to God with heart and soul and mind will find in Him peaceful security....

He knows just what we need, just what we can bear, and He will give us grace to endure every trial and test that He brings upon us. My constant prayer is for a greater nearness to God.

Every provision has been made to meet the needs of our spiritual and our moral nature.... Light and immortality are brought to light through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has said that He has set before us an open door, and no man can shut it. The open door is before us, and through the grace of Christ, beams of merciful light stream forth from the gates ajar.

Enoch, a Son of God, Walked with the Father

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Genesis 5:24.

Of Enoch it is written that he lived sixty-five years, and begat a son. After that he walked with God three hundred years.... After the birth of his first son, Enoch reached a higher experience; he was drawn into a closer relationship with God. He realized more fully his own obligations and responsibility as a son of God.

Enoch's righteous life was in marked contrast with the wicked people around him. His piety, his purity, his unswerving integrity were the result of his walking with God, while the wickedness of the world was the result of their walking with the deceiver of mankind. There never has been and never will be an age when the moral darkness will be so dense as when Enoch lived a life of irreproachable righteousness.

In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers.... After remaining for a time among the people laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart. Communing thus with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light, even the light that shineth in the face of Jesus. As he came forth from these divine communings, even the ungodly beheld with awe the impress of heaven upon his countenance.

We, too, are to walk with God. When we do this, our faces will be lighted up by the brightness of His presence, and when we meet one another, we shall speak of His power, saying, Praise God. Good is the Lord, and good is the word of the Lord.... And those who will be translated at the close of time, will be those who commune with God on earth.

He is the Express Image of the Father

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. Hebrews 1:3.

Who is Christ?—He is the only begotten Son of the living God. He is to the Father as a word that expresses the thought,—as a thought made audible. Christ is the word of God. Christ said to Philip, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” His words were the echo of God’s words. Christ was the likeness of God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.

As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son. Jesus, the outshining of the Father’s glory, “and the express image of his person” (Hebrews 1:3), was on earth found in fashion as a man. As a personal Saviour He came to the world. As a personal Saviour He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers “One like unto the Son of man.” Revelation 1:13.

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator.... Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. But not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it is revealed in Christ.

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man.... As Jesus was in human nature, so God means His followers to be. In His strength we are to live the life of purity and nobility which the Saviour lived.

If We Sin, He Pleads Our Case in Heaven

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.1 John 2:1.

The Lord Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, Christ's office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters.

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son.

This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God: that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's heart.

He who could not see human beings exposed to destruction without pouring out His soul unto death to save them from eternal ruin, will look with pity and compassion upon every soul who realizes that he can not save himself.

Christ is your Advocate. In this powerful, hearty recognition of God's love, take the hand of Christ, and hold it fast. His hand holds you much firmer than you can hold His hand.

Belief in Him Means Everlasting Life

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. John 3:36.

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.

Christ is ready to impart all heavenly influences. He knows every temptation that comes to man, and the capabilities of every human agent. He weighs his strength. He sees the present and the future, and presents before the mind the obligations that should be met, and urges that common, earthly things shall not be permitted to be so absorbing that eternal things shall be lost out of reckoning.

The gifts of His grace through Christ are free to all. There is no election but one's own by which any may perish. God has set forth in His Word the conditions upon which every soul will be elected to eternal life—obedience to His commandments, through faith in Christ. God has elected a character in harmony with His law, and any one who shall reach the standard of His requirement, will have an entrance into the kingdom of glory. Christ Himself said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

What an exalted position to be identified with one in whom is all perfection centered, who is indeed the Majesty of heaven, but who loved us, although fallen, so much that language cannot express it! He for our sakes laid aside His royal robe, stepped down from the throne of heaven, and condescended to clothe His divinity with humility, and became like one of us except in sin, that His life and character should be a pattern for all to copy, that they might have the precious gift of eternal life.

He Knows How to Help Us When We are Tempted

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Hebrews 2:18.

Though enduring most terrible temptations, Christ did not fail or become discouraged. He was fighting the battle in our behalf, and had He faltered, had He yielded to temptation, the human family would have been lost.

The Bible gives but a bare mention of the conflict with Satan in the wilderness of temptation, but it was a terrible ordeal. Christ came off conqueror, bearing the test and trial in our behalf. How little is man able to comprehend the strength of the temptation of Christ! How little does he understand of that ordeal upon which hung the destiny of a lost world! The world's Redeemer was not warring against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. All heaven was interested in this conflict, and what joy, what rejoicing there was in heaven because help had been laid upon One who is mighty to overcome, mighty to save!

What an event was this when Christ placed Himself in the position of Adam, and endured the test where Adam had failed, and by this act placed man on a vantage ground, in favor with God, where he might overcome on his own account through the merits of Jesus. In His name, through His grace, man may be an overcomer, even as Christ was an overcomer. In Christ divinity and humanity were united, and the only way in which man may be an overcomer is through becoming a partaker of the divine nature.... Divinity and humanity are blended in him who has the spirit of Christ. The apostle Paul writes, "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." ... "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

He is Stronger and More Mighty Than Our Adversary

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Psalm 24:8.

Christ was strong to save the whole world. He wanted all. He could not endure the thought that one should be lost. He wept at the grave of Lazarus, that He could not save every one whom Satan's power had laid low in death. He had given Himself a ransom for many, even all who would avail themselves of the privilege of coming back to their loyalty to God.... When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He knew that for that life He must pay the ransom on the cross of Calvary. Every rescue made was to cause Him the deepest humiliation. He was to taste death for every man.

In His life on earth, Christ developed a perfect character, He rendered perfect obedience to His Father's commandments. In coming to the world in human form, in becoming subject to the law, in revealing to men that He bore their sickness, their sorrow, their guilt, He did not become a sinner. Before the Pharisees He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Not one stain of sin was found upon Him. He stood before the world the spotless Lamb of God.

From the light of His exalted purity, the world's Redeemer could see that the maladies from which the human family were suffering were brought upon them by transgression of the law of God. Every case of suffering He could trace back to its source. In every case He read the sad and awful end of unrepenting sinners. He knew that He alone could rescue them from the pit into which they had fallen. He alone could place their feet in the right path; His perfection alone could avail for their imperfection. He alone could cover their nakedness with His spotless robe of righteousness.... He is strong to deliver. Help has been laid on One that is mighty. He encircles man with His long human arm, while with His divine arm He lays hold of Omnipotence.

He is the Embodiment of Truth

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. John 18:37.

Christ's conscious superiority, even as He descended step by step in the path of humiliation, gave His words an amazing power. What lessons of instruction He gave, and with what authority He rebuked the sins of men in high position. Truth was truth to Him, and it never suffered in His hands; 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." ... He was the embodiment of truth and holiness. He who had stood in the councils of God, who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal, was speaking that whereof He knew....But the men who claimed to stand high in knowledge and spiritual understanding failed to comprehend His meaning; and that which had been evolved from eternity by the Father and the Son, they in their ignorance stood as critics to condemn.

Christ crucified is ever drawing souls to Him. On the other hand, Satan is drawing them away from Christ, that they may not walk in the light of His countenance, that they may not see Christ in His goodness and mercy, His infinite compassion and unsurpassed love. He intercepts himself by presenting the attractions of worldly inducements, that God in Christ may not be discerned. But Christ came that whosoever will believe in Him may be saved. As a flower turns to the sun that its bright rays may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should Christ's followers turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon them, perfecting their characters, and giving them a deep and abiding experience in the things of God. It is beyond our power to conceive the blessings that are brought within our reach through Christ, if we will but unite our human effort with divine grace.

He is Ever Before Us, We Shall Not Be Moved

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Psalm 16:8.

Amid the perplexities that will press upon the soul, there is only One who can help us out of all our difficulties, and relieve all our disquietude. We are to cast all our care upon Jesus, and bear in mind that He is present, and is directing us to commune with Him. We are to keep our minds stayed upon God; and in our weakness, He will be our strength; in our ignorance, He will be our wisdom; in our frailty, He will be our enduring might.

We may be assured that we need not go into the heavens to bring Jesus down to us, neither into the deep to bring Him up; for He is at our right hand, and His eye is ever upon us. We should ever seek to realize that the Lord is very near us, to be our counselor and guide. This is the only way in which we may have confidence toward God.

We need to educate and train the mind so that we shall have an intelligent faith, and have an understanding friendship with Jesus. Unless we continually cherish friendship between God and our souls, we shall separate from Him, and walk apart from Him. We shall make friends of those around us, and place our trust in humanity, and our affections will be diverted from the true object of worship. We must not allow coldness to chill our love for our Redeemer. If we have fellowship with Him, we must ever set the Lord before us, and treat Him as an honored Friend, giving Him the first place in our affections. We should speak of His matchless charms, and constantly cultivate the desire to have a better knowledge of Jesus Christ. Then His Spirit will have a controlling power upon life and character.... If ever there was a time when men needed the presence of Christ at their right hand, it is now.... We need the Captain of our salvation continually by our side.

Sons of God Are Led By Him

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14.

The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God.

The Lord has fulness of grace to bestow on every one that will receive the heavenly gift. The Holy Spirit will bring the God-entrusted capabilities into Christ's service, and will mold and fashion the human agent according to the divine Pattern, in proportion as the human agent shall earnestly desire the transformation.

Those who consent to be led by the Spirit of God will be illuminated and sanctified. They will discern the hatefulness of sin and the beauty of holiness. They will esteem it a great honor to be called the sons of God, knowing that they are wholly unworthy to be associated with Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father. Christ took upon Him our nature, that He might associate us with Himself. He suffered in the flesh ... that He might bring many sons and daughters to God.

It is the Spirit that causes to shine into darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened realization of the truths of eternity; that presents before the mind the great standard of righteousness, and convinces of sin; that inspires faith in Him who alone can save from sin; that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the eternal inheritance. The Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies human beings, fitting them to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.

He Guides Us Into All Truth

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. John 16:13.

Every servant of God is to be guided by the Holy Spirit. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Our path, however rugged it may be, is marked out for us by the Lord; and in it we must walk.

Christ has made provision that His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the light of heaven, possessing the glory of Immanuel. It is His purpose that every Christian shall be surrounded with a spiritual atmosphere of light and peace. There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God....

To us today, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Spirit belongs. God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the Day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word.

Teach your children that it is their privilege to receive every day the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Those who are under the influence of the Spirit of God will not be fanatical, but calm and steadfast, free from extravagance in thought, word, or deed. Amid the confusion of delusive doctrines, the Spirit of God will be a guide and a shield to those who have not resisted the evidences of truth, silencing every other voice but that which comes from Him who is the truth.

A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth.... The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to men.

He Teaches Us

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.1 John 2:27.

It is the Spirit itself that teaches and enlightens. The most powerful preaching of the Word, the reading of the Scriptures, will not be able to transform the character and save souls unless the Spirit works with and through the human agents. The planning and devising must not be of a character to draw attention to self. The Word is a power, a sword, in the hands of the human agent, but the Holy Spirit in its vital power is the efficiency to impress the mind. "They shall be all taught of God." It is God that causes the light to shine into hearts.... The reason why God can do so little for us is that we forget that living virtue in the Holy Spirit is to combine with the human agent.

With the great truth we have been privileged to receive, we should, and under the Holy Spirit's power we could, become living channels of light. We could then approach the mercy-seat; and seeing the bow of promise, kneel with contrite hearts, and seek the kingdom of heaven with a spiritual violence that would bring its own reward. We would take it by force, as did Jacob. Then our message would be the power of God unto salvation. Our supplications would be full of earnestness, full of a sense of our great need; and we would not be denied. The truth would be expressed by life and character, and by lips touched with the living coal from off God's altar. When this experience is ours, we shall be lifted out of our poor, cheap selves, that we have cherished so tenderly. We shall empty our hearts of the corroding power of selfishness, and shall be filled with praise and gratitude to God. We shall magnify the Lord, the God of all grace, who has magnified Christ. And He will reveal His power through us, making us as sharp sickles in the harvest-field.

He Brings Wisdom and Understanding

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11:2.

As the Holy Spirit opens to you the truth, you will treasure up the most precious experiences, and will long to speak to others of the comforting things that have been revealed to you. When brought into association with them, you will communicate some fresh thought in regard to the character or the work of Christ. You will have some fresh revelation of His pitying love to impart to those who love Him and to those who love Him not.

“Give, and it shall be given unto you;” for the word of God is “a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.” The heart that has once tasted the love of Christ, cries out continually for a deeper draught, and as you impart, you will receive in richer and more abundant measure. Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love. The continual cry of the heart is, “More of Thee,” and ever the Spirit’s answer is, “Much more.” For our God delights to do “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling. Our Lord Himself has given the command, “Be filled with the Spirit,” and this command is also a promise of its fulfilment. It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should “all the fulness dwell;” and “in him ye are made full.”

God has poured out His love unstintedly, as the showers that refresh the earth. He says: “Let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together.” ... “Of his fulness have we received, and grace for grace.”

He Imparts the Fruit of the Spirit

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.Ephesians 5:9.

Shall we consider that we are capable of fashioning our lives and characters to enter into the portals of glory? We cannot do it. We are dependent every moment upon the Spirit of God operating upon us and upon our children.

If parents would see a different state of things in their family, let them consecrate themselves wholly to God, and the Lord will devise ways and means whereby *a transformation may take place in their households.*

Your compassionate Redeemer is watching you in love and sympathy, ready to hear your prayers, and render you the assistance which you need in your life-work. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith and charity are the elements of the Christian character. These precious graces are the fruits of the Spirit. They are the Christian's crown and shield.... Nothing can give more perfect content and satisfaction.

As you receive the Spirit of Christ, ... you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely....

This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life.

“When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

The Spirit Quickeneth

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63.

Only the Holy Spirit of God can quicken the perceptive faculties.

Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive.

The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. Those only who are thus taught of God, those only who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, can stand as true representatives of the Saviour.

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God.

The believers will be of one heart and of one mind, and the Lord will make His Word powerful in the earth. New cities and villages and territories will be entered; the church will arise and shine, because her light has come, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon her.... If the Holy Spirit dwells in us, ... we shall lift up Jesus.

He Speaks to Those Who Listen

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.Revelation 2:29.

How man can be a counterpart of Jesus Christ is beyond human comprehension. But the Holy Spirit can strengthen our spiritual eyesight, enabling us to see what our natural eyes cannot see, or our ears hear, or our minds comprehend. By the Spirit which searches all things, even the deep things of God, have been revealed precious truths which cannot be described by pen or voice.

In all who will submit themselves to the Holy Spirit a new principle of life is to be implanted; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity.

But man can not transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven—something wholly from without—must be put into the meal before the desired change can be wrought in it. So the grace of God must be received by the sinner before he can be fitted for the kingdom of glory. All the culture and education which the world can give, will fail of making a degraded child of sin a child of heaven. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power.

Every heart that has been visited by the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will reveal the working of the Spirit of God in voice, mind, and character. The machinery will move as if oiled and guided by a masterly hand. There will be less friction when the spirit of the worker receives the oil from the two olive branches. The holy influences will be imparted to others in words of kindness, tenderness, love, and encouragement.

Countless Angels Ready to Help Us

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne ... and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.Revelation 5:11.

When Christ ascended to the Father, He did not leave His followers without help. The Holy Spirit, as His representative, and the heavenly angels, as ministering spirits, are sent forth to aid those who against great odds are fighting the good fight of faith. Ever remember that Jesus is your helper. No one understands as well as He your peculiarities of character. He is watching over you, and if you are willing to be guided by Him, He will throw around you influences for good that will enable you to accomplish all His will for you.

Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. God would send every angel in heaven to the aid of such a one, rather than allow him to be overcome.

Angels are God's ministers, radiant with the light ever flowing from His presence, and speeding on rapid wing to execute His will.

Angels are ever present where they are most needed, with those who have the hardest battle with self to fight, and whose surroundings are the most discouraging.

In all ages, angels have been near to Christ's faithful followers. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against all who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them. From what dangers, seen and unseen, we have been preserved through the interposition of the angels, we shall never know, until in the light of eternity we see the providences of God. Then we shall know that the whole family of heaven was interested in the family here below, and that messengers from the throne of God attended our steps from day to day.

They Minister to the Heirs of Salvation

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Hebrews 1:14.

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation.... The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan.

The work of these heavenly beings is to prepare the inhabitants of this world to become children of God, pure, holy, undefiled. But men, though professing to be followers of Christ, do not place themselves in a position where they can understand this ministry, and thus the work of the heavenly messengers is made hard. The angels, who do always behold the face of the Father in heaven, would prefer to remain close by the side of God, in the pure and holy atmosphere of heaven; but a work must be done in bringing this heavenly atmosphere to the souls who are tempted and tried, that Satan may not disqualify them for the place the Lord would have them fill in the heavenly courts. Principalities and powers in heavenly places combine with these angels in their ministration for those who shall be heirs of salvation.

Angels, who will do for you what you can not do for yourselves, are waiting for your co-operation. They are waiting for you to respond to the drawing of Christ. Draw nigh to God and to one another. By desire, by silent prayer, by resistance of satanic agencies, put your will on the side of God's will. While you have one desire to resist the devil, and sincerely pray, Deliver me from temptation, you will have strength for your day. It is the work of the heavenly angels to come close to the tried, the tempted, the suffering ones. They labor long and untiringly to save the souls for whom Christ has died. And when souls appreciate their advantages, appreciate the heavenly assistance sent them, respond to the Holy Spirit's working in their behalf; when they put their will on the side of Christ's will, angels bear the tidings heavenward.... And there is rejoicing among the heavenly host.

They Constantly Ascend and Descend Heaven's Ladder

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Genesis 28:12.

In this speck of a world, the heavenly universe manifests the greatest interest.... Yet we come in contact with the busy activity of our cities, we mingle with the multitude in the crowded thoroughfares, we enter marts of trade and walk the streets; and through all, from morning till evening, the people act as if business, sport, and pleasure were all there is to life,—as if this world were all there is to occupy the mind. How few contemplate the unseen agencies!

All heaven is intensely interested in the human beings who are so full of activity, and yet have no thought for the unseen.... Sometimes the heavenly intelligences draw aside the curtain that hides the unseen world, that our minds may be withdrawn from the hurry and rush, and consider that there are witnesses to all we do and say, when engaged in business, or when we think ourselves alone....

These heavenly beings are ministering angels, and they frequently disguise themselves in the form of human beings, and as strangers converse with those who are engaged in the work of God. In lonely places they have been the companions of the traveler in peril. In tempest-tossed ships they have spoken words to allay fear and inspire hope in the hour of danger. Many, under different circumstances, have listened to the voices of the inhabitants of other worlds. Time and again have they been the leaders of armies. They have been sent forth to cleanse away pestilence. They have eaten at the humble board of families, and often have they appeared as weary travelers in need of shelter for the night....

Heavenly angels are co-operating with us in every good work, and thus earth is connected with heaven.

February—We Obey the Father’s Law of Love

The Commandments are Sure

All his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. Psalm 111:7, 8.

Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God. It was printed on their hearts, and they understood its claims upon them. The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it. After the fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Our duty to obey this law is to be the burden of this last message of mercy to the world. God’s law is not a new thing. It is not holiness created, but holiness made known. It is a code of principles expressing mercy, goodness, and love. It presents to fallen humanity the character of God, and states plainly the whole duty of man.

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.

“All His commandments are sure....” Whatever is built upon the authority of man will be overthrown; but that which is founded upon the rock of God’s immutable word shall stand forever.

The sacred statutes which Satan has hated and sought to destroy, will be honored throughout a sinless universe.

The Law of God is Perfect

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Psalm 19:7.

The laws which God gave His ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God's law bears the stamp of the divine.

Says the psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect." How wonderful in its simplicity, its comprehensiveness and perfection, is the law of Jehovah! It is so brief that we can easily commit every precept to memory, and yet so far-reaching as to express the whole will of God, and to take cognizance not only of the outward actions, but of the thoughts and intents, the desires and emotions, of the heart. Human laws can not do this. They can deal with the outward actions only. A man may be a transgressor, and yet conceal his misdeeds from human eyes; he may be a criminal,—a thief, a murderer, or an adulterer,—but so long as he is not discovered, the law can not condemn him as guilty....

The law of God is simple, and easily understood. If the children of men would, to the best of their ability, obey this law, they would gain strength of mind and power of discernment to comprehend still more of God's purposes and plans. And this advancement would be continued, not only during the present life, but during eternal ages; for however far he may advance in the knowledge of God's wisdom and power, there is always an infinity beyond.

Since "the law of the Lord is perfect," every variation from it must be evil.

Obedience was the only condition upon which ancient Israel was to receive the fulfilment of the promises that made them the highly favored people of God; and obedience to that law will bring as great blessings to individuals and nations now as it would have brought to the Hebrews.

The Law is Holy, Just, and Good

Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Romans 7:12.

As the Supreme Ruler of the universe, God has ordained laws for the government not only of all living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything, whether great or small, animate or inanimate, is under fixed laws which cannot be disregarded. There are no exceptions to this rule; for nothing that the divine hand has made has been forgotten by the divine mind.... To man alone, the crowning work of His creation, God has given a conscience to realize the sacred claims of the divine law, and a heart capable of loving it as holy, just, and good; and of man prompt and perfect obedience is required.

This rule forbids all oppression from parents and all disobedience from children. The Lord is full of lovingkindness, mercy, and truth. His law is holy, just, and good, and must be obeyed by parents and children. The rules which should regulate the lives of parents and children flow from a heart of infinite love, and God's rich blessing will rest upon those parents who administer His law in their homes, and upon the children who obey this law. The combined influence of mercy and justice is to be felt. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Households under this discipline will walk in the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.

Let the youth look upon the divine standard, and never be content with a low aim.... Walk not hesitatingly, but firmly in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ. Unto Him is committed all power in heaven and in earth. Take refuge in Jesus Christ, and enter into a firm covenant with Him in faith, to love and serve Him.

Since the law of God is "holy, and just, and good," a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is the perfect example of such a character.

The Law is Truth and Righteousness

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth. Psalm 119:142.

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.... 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 God. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship....

The purity and holiness of the character of Christ stirred up the very worst passions of the human heart.... 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....

Those who become the sons of God cannot avoid coming into conflict with the hosts of apostasy.... 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.... When the advocates of truth reveal the efficiency of truth in their life and character, a blow is struck against the kingdom of Satan.

The character of God is righteousness and truth; such is the nature of His law. Says the psalmist, “Thy law is the truth;” “all thy commandments are righteousness.” ... Such a law, being an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.

Hasty Obedience Brings Rich Blessings

I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. Psalm 119:60.

Obedience to the laws of God develops in man a beautiful character that is in harmony with all that is pure and holy and undefiled. In the life of such a man the message of the gospel of Christ is made clear. Accepting the mercy of Christ and His healing from the power of sin, he is brought into right relation with God. His life, cleansed from vanity and selfishness, is filled with the love of God. His daily obedience to the law of God obtains for him a character that assures him eternal life in the kingdom of God.

In His earthly life the Saviour gives us an example of the hallowed lives that may be ours if we will devote our days to doing good to the souls that need our help. It is our privilege to bring joy to the sorrowful, light to the darkened, and life to the perishing. The Lord's message comes to us, "Why stand ye here all the day idle; work while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work." Every word we speak, every act we perform, that conduces to the happiness of others, will conduce to our own happiness, and make our lives like the life of Christ.

Our daily duties are to be cheerfully accepted and cheerfully performed. Our chief duty is to reveal in words and deportment a life which will make manifest the attributes of heaven. The Word of life is given to us to study and practice. Our actions are to be in strict conformity to the laws of the kingdom of heaven. Then heaven can approve our work; and the talents we employ in His service will multiply for greater usefulness. The consecrated life will shine amid the moral darkness of the world, guiding perishing souls to the truth of the Word....

In His Gift to the world the Lord has revealed how solicitous He is that we bear in our lives the marks of our heavenly citizenship by letting every ray of light we have received shine forth in good works to our fellow-men.

In the Home

And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. Deuteronomy 6:9.

From the earliest times the faithful in Israel had given much attention to the matter of education. The Lord had directed that the children, even from babyhood, should be taught of His goodness and His greatness, especially as revealed in His law and shown in the history of Israel. Through song and prayer, and lessons from the Scriptures, adapted to the opening mind, fathers and mothers were to instruct their children that the law of God is an expression of His character, and that as they received the principles of the law into the heart, the image of God was traced on mind and soul.

If it was essential for Moses to embody the commandments in sacred song, so that as they marched in the wilderness, the children could learn to sing the law verse by verse, how essential it is at this time to teach our children God's Word!

True happiness in this life and in the future life depends upon obedience to a "Thus saith the Lord." ... Let Christ's life be the pattern. Satan will devise every possible means to break down this high standard of piety as one altogether too strict. It is your work to impress upon your children in their early years the thought that they are formed in the image of God. Christ came to this world to give them a living example of what they all must be, and parents who claim to believe the truth for this time are to teach their children to love God and to obey His law. This is the greatest and most important work that fathers and mothers can do.

The great reformatory movement must begin in the home. Obedience to God's law is the great incentive to industry, economy, truthfulness, and just dealing between man and man.

A noble, all-round manhood does not come by chance. It is the result of the molding process of character building in the early years of youth, and a practice of the law of God in the home.

To be a Strength to All Nations

Thy God hath commanded thy strength; strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.Psalms 68:28.

His [God's] laws were not alone for the Jewish nation. The moral law was given before the people called Jews were in existence. The law of ten commandments was of universal obligation. The sacrificial ordinances were devised to represent the one great Sacrifice, the Lamb of God, that was to take away the sin of the world, and in behalf of the transgressor meet the requirements of divine justice.

The Lord would not have His people exclusive. Christ's delegated messengers are to proclaim the gospel of His grace to all nations, tongues, and people. We are to make it known that the Great Advocate is giving audience to the whole world. The Jewish church was called to be God's representative to an apostate world, and in order to fulfill this mission the Jewish people were to maintain their own existence as a nation distinct from all the idolatrous nations upon the earth. They were to stand in the world maintaining their peculiar and holy character. They could maintain their own spirituality by doing that which Adam and Eve failed to do,—by rendering obedience to all the commandments of God, and in their characters representing God's mercy, goodness, compassion, and love. Thus in excellence of character they could stand above every other nation; for through a pure and obedient people the Lord would manifest His rich blessings. Thus the principles of the laws governing His kingdom were to be exalted throughout the world. Just as surely as they responded to the mercy, the light, the grace given, they would become the light of the world. They would be constantly directing attention to God, as a wise, faultless, Supreme Ruler, and the praise of God would be in all the earth.... The Lord is our God, and He has the same purpose in regard to His believing, loyal people today.

Rejoices the Heart and Enlightens the Eyes

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Psalm 19:8.

We have only glimmering light in regard to the exceeding breadth of the law of God.... Many of those who claim to believe the testing truths for these last days, act as though God took no note of their disrespect of, and manifest disobedience to, the principles of His holy law. The law is the expression of His will, and it is through obedience to that law that God proposes to accept the children of men as His sons and daughters.... An infinite sacrifice has been made that the moral image of God may be restored to man, through willing obedience to all the commandments of God. Exceeding great is our salvation for ample provision has been made through the righteousness of Christ, that we may be pure, entire, wanting nothing.... If man will keep God's law through faith in Christ, the treasures of heaven will be at his disposal.

Open the eyes of your understanding; see the beautiful harmony in the laws of God in nature, and be awed, and reverence your Creator, the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. See Him, by the eye of faith, bending over you in love.... Your faith in Jesus will give strength to every purpose, consistency to the character. All your happiness, peace, joy, and success in this life are dependent upon genuine, trusting faith in God. This faith will prompt true obedience to the commandments of God. Your knowledge and faith in God is the strongest restraint from every evil practice, and the motive to all good. Believe in Jesus as one who pardons your sins, one who wants you to be happy in the mansions He has gone to prepare for you. He wants you to live in His presence; to have eternal life and a crown of glory.

In keeping God's commandments there is great reward, even in this life. Our conscience does not condemn us. Our hearts are not at enmity with God, but at peace with Him.

Statutes Given for Our Good Always

And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. Deuteronomy 6:24.

As the youth go out into the world, to encounter its allurements to sin,—the passion for money-getting, for amusement and indulgence, for display, luxury, and extravagance, the overreaching, fraud, robbery and ruin,—what are the teachings there to be met?

Spiritualism asserts that men are unfallen demigods; that “each mind will judge itself”; that “true knowledge places men above all law”; that “all sins committed are innocent”; for “whatever is, is right,” and “God doth not condemn.” The basest of human beings it represents as in heaven, and highly exalted there.... Multitudes are thus led to believe that desire is the highest law, that license is liberty, and that man is accountable only to himself.

With such teaching given at the very outset of life, when impulse is strongest, and the demand for self-restraint and purity is most urgent, where are the safeguards of virtue? ... At the same time anarchy is seeking to sweep away all law, not only divine, but human....

Such are the influences to be met by the youth of today. To stand amidst such upheavals they are now to lay the foundations of character. In every generation and in every land the true foundation and pattern for character-building have been the same. The divine law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, ... and thy neighbour as thyself,” the great principle made manifest in the character and life of our Saviour, is the only secure foundation and the only sure guide....

Here is the only safeguard for individual integrity, for the purity of the home, the well-being of society, or the stability of the nation. Amidst all life’s perplexities and dangers and conflicting claims, the one safe and sure rule is to do what God says.

We Are Assured of Life Everlasting

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.Revelation 22:14.

The affections of the pleasure lover are drawn away from heavenly to earthly things. He subordinates the glories of eternity to the engrossing interests of time. In his desire to possess earthly riches, the heavenly treasure is lost from view. The claims of the future life are disregarded, and the interests of this life hold sway....

Christ brings the nobler world to view. He presents the advantages of citizenship in that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. He takes us to the threshold of infinity, and shows us its glories, declaring them to be within the reach of all who will live in harmony with the laws of God. Through obedience to the laws of Jehovah, the human family may become a united, happy family in the city of God; but there is no room there for those who have no regard for the will of the Lord. All who will may gain everlasting life, but they must gain it by accepting the law of God as their guide in this life instead of seeking to follow their own laws.... To those who will live a life that is in harmony with the Father, Christ will impart the virtues of His life.

Think ye that the commandment-keepers will be sorry, and mourn when the pearly gates of the Golden City of God are swung back upon their glittering hinges, and they are welcomed in? No, never. They will then rejoice, that they are not under the bondage of the law, but that they have kept God's law, and therefore are free from it. They will have right to the tree of life, a right to its healing leaves.

The God of heaven has placed a benediction upon them that keep the commandments of God.

He who has been faithful over the "few things" of earth, will be made ruler over "many things" in the eternal world of glory.

Christ Magnified the Law and Made It Honorable

The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable. Isaiah 42:21.

The law of God's government was to be magnified by the death of God's only begotten Son. Christ bore the guilt of the sins of the world. Our sufficiency is found only in the incarnation and death of the Son of God. He could suffer, because sustained by divinity. He could endure, because He was without one taint of disloyalty or sin. Christ triumphed in man's behalf in thus bearing the justice of punishment. He secured eternal life to men, while He exalted the law, and made it honorable.

Every soul is under obligation to follow in the footsteps of Christ, the great example for the human family. He said, "I have kept my Father's commandments." The Pharisees thought that He was seeking to lessen the claims of the law of God, but His voice rang out upon their ears saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Christ came to magnify the law and to make it honorable; He came to extol the old commandment which ye had from the beginning. Then we need the law and the prophets. We need the Old Testament to bring us down along the line to the New Testament, which does not take the place of the Old Testament, but more distinctly reveals to us the plan of salvation, giving significance to the whole system of sacrifices and offerings, and to the word which we had from the beginning. Perfect obedience is enjoined upon every soul, and obedience to the expressed will of God will make you one with Christ.... Of Him it is written, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

Love to Be Fulfilled in Our Lives

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10.

How many are deficient in love! O, that love might eradicate from the heart hatred, emulation, and strife, and the root of bitterness, whereby many are defiled. Never can the love of Jesus be received and shed abroad in the heart until envious feelings, hatred, jealousies, and evil surmisings are put away....

Many are deceiving themselves; for the principle of love does not dwell in their hearts. They may close their eyes to their own errors and defects; but they cannot deceive God. There must be a reformation. The plowshare of truth must plow deep furrows in our proud hearts, and tear up the sod of our unsanctified natures, that the Spirit and love of Jesus may be planted in our hearts. Time is fast hastening on, and every work will soon be brought into judgment, and either our sins or our names will be blotted out of the Book of Life....

Pure love is simple in its operations, and separate from every other principle of action. When combined with earthly motives and selfish interests, it ceases to be pure. God considers more with how much love we work, than the amount we do. Love is a heavenly attribute. The natural heart cannot originate it. This heavenly plant only flourishes where Christ reigns supreme. Where love exists, there is power and truth in the life. Love does good, and nothing but good. Those who have love bear fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life.

It was the same Jesus who commanded that love should be the ruling principle in the old dispensation, that commanded that love should be the ruling principle in the hearts of His followers in the New Testament. The working out of the principle of love is true sanctification.

Law of Love Written in Our Hearts

After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.... I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jeremiah 31:33, 34.

The work Christianity is designed to achieve in the world is not to depreciate the law of God, not to detract from its sacred dignity in the slightest degree, but it is to write that law in the mind and heart. When the law of God is thus implanted in the soul of the believer, he is approaching eternal life through the merits of Jesus....

The object of the gospel is met when this great end is achieved. Its work from age to age is to unite the hearts of His followers in a spirit of universal brotherhood, through belief of the truth, and thus establish heaven's system of order and harmony in the family of God on earth, that they may be accounted worthy to become members of the royal family above. God, in His wisdom and mercy, tests men and women here, to see if they will obey His voice and respect His law, or rebel as Satan did....

God's object in giving the law to the fallen race was that man might, through Jesus, rise from his low estate to be one with God, that the greatest moral changes might be manifested in his nature and character. This moral transformation must take place, or man would not be a safe subject in the kingdom of God; for he would raise a revolt....

Here in this life is the testing, trying time. The angels of God are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. The whole question is settled in this, Is he obedient or disobedient to the commandments of God? has the sinner been transformed in this world, through the merits of Christ, to an obedient servant, so that he is fitted to join the heavenly society?

The law of God in our hearts will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations.

We are to Love the Lord with All Our Hearts

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Matthew 22:37.

He who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, will reflect the purity and love which exist in Jehovah, and which Christ represented in our world. He who has the love of God in his heart has no enmity against the law of God, but renders willing obedience to all His commandments, and this constitutes Christianity. He who has supreme love to God will reveal love to his fellow-men, who belong to God both by creation and redemption. Love is the fulfilling of the law; and it is the duty of every child of God to render obedience to His commandments....

The law of God, which is perfect holiness, is the only true standard of character. Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear. Those who love God, have the seal of God in their foreheads, and work the works of God. Would that all who profess Christianity knew what it means to love God practically.... They would have some realization of the infinite holiness of God, knowing that He is high and lifted up, and the train of His glory fills the temple. They would have a powerful influence upon the life and character of those around them, which would work as leaven amid the mass of humanity, transforming others through the power of Jesus Christ. Connected with the Source of power, they would never lose their vital influence, but would ever increase in efficiency.

Love to God must be a living principle, underlying every act and word and thought. If in the strength of Christ we are seeking to maintain such a consecration, we shall be daily holding communion with God.... The principles of God's law will dwell in the heart, and control the actions. It will then be as natural for us to seek purity and holiness, to shun the spirit and example of the world, and to seek to benefit all around us, as it is for the angels of glory to execute the mission of love assigned them.

We Will Love Our Neighbors as Ourselves

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Matthew 22:39.

The divine law requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. Without the exercise of this love, the highest profession of faith is mere hypocrisy.

The worshiper of God will find that he cannot cherish one fiber of the root of selfishness. He cannot do his duty to his God and practice oppression toward his fellow men. The second principle of the law is like unto the first, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "This do and thou shalt live." These are the words of Jesus Christ from which there can be no departure on the part of any man, woman, or youth who would be a true Christian. It is obedience to the principles of the commandments of God, that molds the character after the divine similitude....

To leave a suffering neighbor unrelieved is a breach of the law of God.... He who loves God will not only love his fellow men, but will regard with tender compassion the creatures which God has made. When the Spirit of God is in man it leads him to relieve rather than to create suffering.... We are to care for every case of suffering, and to look upon ourselves as God's agents to relieve the needy to the very uttermost of our ability. We are to be laborers together with God. There are some who manifest great affection for their relatives, for their friends and favorites, who yet fail to be kind and considerate to those who need tender sympathy, who need kindness and love. With earnest heart, let us inquire, Who is my neighbor? Our neighbors are not merely our neighbors and special friends, are not simply those who belong to our church or who think as we do. Our neighbors are the whole human family. We are to do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. We are to give to the world an exhibition of what it means to carry out the law of God. We are to love God supremely and our neighbors as ourselves.

Mercy Shown to Thousands Who Love God's Law

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:6.

The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai's mount were the revelation of the character of God, and made known to the world the fact that He had jurisdiction over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise. "This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan." There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO, and Live.... The Lord has given His holy commandments to be a wall of protection around His created beings.

Everything that God could do, He has done to manifest His great love and mercy to you. He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then rest in the assurance of the love of God.... Not because we first loved Him did God love us; but "while we were yet sinners," Christ died for us, making full and abundant provision for our redemption. Although by our disobedience we have merited God's displeasure and condemnation, yet He has not forsaken us, leaving us to grapple with the power of the enemy in our own finite strength. Heavenly angels fight our battles for us, and cooperating with them, we may be victorious over the powers of evil.... As we draw nigh to Him by faith, He draws nigh to us, adopting us into His family, and making us His sons and daughters.

To those who are faithful in His service, mercy is promised, not merely to the third and fourth generation ... but *to thousands of generations*.

The tender mercies of God are unmeasured, and those who appreciate the love of Christ will be renewed in true holiness, and brought into Christ, their living Head. They will be followers of God as dear children.

We Love God's Commandments More Than Gold

Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Psalm 119:127.

In these days of peril shall we show less devotion to the truth of God, and less fervent attachment to His law, than in former years? The very condition of things exists which Christ declared would be, prior to His second coming in power and glory. The prevailing ungodliness tends to paralyze and even to destroy true faith and piety. But this is the very time when the gold of Christian integrity will shine brightest, in contrast to the dross of hypocrisy and corruption. Now is the time for Christ's chosen to show their devotion to His service,—the time for all His followers to bear the noblest testimony for their Master by standing firm against the prevailing current of evil.

As we see the results which have followed a disregard of God's law,—dishonesty, theft, licentiousness, drunkenness, and murder,—we are prepared to say with the psalmist, "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold"; "in keeping of them, there is great reward." When the divine law is set aside, the greatest misery will result, both to families and to society. Our only hope of better things is to be found in a faithful adherence to the precepts of Jehovah. Infidel France once tried the experiment of rejecting the authority of God. What scenes of horror followed! Men cast aside the divine law as a yoke of bondage, and in their boasted liberty they placed themselves under the rule of the veriest tyrant. Anarchy and bloodshed ruled that terrible day. It was then demonstrated to the world that the surest way to undermine the foundation of order and government, is to set at naught the law of God....

Instead of feeling that we are now in the slightest degree excusable in further transgression, we shall realize as never before the justice of God's claims upon us, and the sacred character of His law, since Christ must die to maintain its authority. Ere long the obedient will see the blessed results that follow the keeping of all God's commandments.

Christ Came to Earth to Fulfill the Law

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Matthew 5:17.

God chose Israel as the depository of priceless treasure of truth for all nations, and He gave them His law as the standard of the character they were to develop before the world, before angels, and before the unfallen worlds.... Through disobedience and disloyalty God's chosen nation developed a character exactly opposite to the character God designed them to develop by obeying His law. They placed their own mold and superscription upon the truth, removing from it the superscription of God.... The law of God was being buried beneath the minutiae of outward forms,—such as the frequent washing of the hands before eating, and the washing of pots and cups. Tithes were exacted on simple garden herbs. To those who made so much of these minor things, Christ said, "...these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." ...

Amid all this confusing din of voices there was need of a teacher direct from the heavenly universe to speak from inspired lips to human hearts, and to proclaim the testing truths so important to every one....

As a Teacher sent from God, Christ's work was to explain the true significance of the laws of God's government.... Resetting truth in the framework of God's own law, He caused it to shine in its original, heavenly luster.... He enthroned the divine precepts in companionship with the royalty of eternal, uncorrupted truth bearing the sanction of God, the Source of all truth....

Christ came not only to vindicate the law before the inhabitants of this world, but by His life to settle forever the immutability of God's law.... He [God] never lets go one who commits the keeping of the soul to His care. Having loved them because of their love of Jesus, He loves them to the end.

We Shall Have No Other Gods

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3.

The ten commandments, Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not, are ten promises assured to us if we render obedience to the law governing the universe.

There is not a moral precept enjoined in any part of the Bible which is not engraved with the finger of God in His holy law on the two tables of stone. A copy was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The first four commandments enjoined upon man his duty to serve the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. This takes the whole man. This requires a love so fervent, so intense, that man can cherish nothing in his mind or affections in rivalry with God; and his works will bear the signature of heaven. Everything is secondary to the glory of God. Our heavenly Father is to be ever cherished as the first, the joy and prosperity, the light and sufficiency of our life, and our portion forever.

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not selfish pride be lifted up and served as a god. Let not money be made a god. If sensuality is not kept under the control of the higher powers of the mind, base passion will rule the being. Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a God chosen before the Lord.

Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is forbidden to give to any other object the first place in his affections or his service. Whatever we cherish that tends to lessen our love for God or to interfere with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.

We Shall Not Serve Any Graven Images

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. Exodus 20:4, 5.

Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. Anything which tends to abate our love for God, or to interfere with the service due Him, becomes thereby an idol. With some their lands, their houses, their merchandise, are the idols. Business enterprises are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. Family worship is neglected, secret prayer forgotten. Many claim to deal justly with their fellow-men, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the Decalogue. We are to love the Lord our God with all the heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept ... can satisfy the claims of the divine law.

There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the wants of their fellow-men. Professed Christians adorn themselves with jewelry, laces, costly apparel, while the Lord's poor suffer for the necessities of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Saviour's blood will squander the means intrusted to them for the saving of other souls, and then grudging dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor to themselves. These are idolaters.

Anything that diverts the mind from God assumes the form of an idol, and that is why there is so little power in the church today.

The second commandment forbids the worship of the true God by images or similitudes.... The mind, turned away from the infinite perfection of Jehovah, would be attracted to the creature rather than to the Creator.

God is a searcher of the heart. He distinguishes between true heart-service and idolatry.

We Shall Not Take the Name of the Lord in Vain

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Exodus 20:7.

The reason for this command is given: we are not to swear “by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black.” All things come of God. We have nothing that we have not received; and, more than this, we have nothing that has not been purchased for us by the blood of Christ.

Burning words of passion should never be spoken, for in the sight of God and holy angels they are as a species of swearing.

This commandment not only prohibits false oaths and common swearing, but it forbids us to use the name of God in a light or careless manner, without regard to its awful significance. By the thoughtless mention of God in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him. “Holy and reverend in his name.” All should meditate upon His majesty, His purity and holiness, that the heart may be impressed with a sense of His exalted character; and His holy name should be uttered with reverence and solemnity.

It is not men whom we are to exalt and worship; it is God, the only true and living God, to whom our worship and reverence are due. According to the teaching of the Scriptures, it dishonors God to address ministers as “reverend.” No mortal has any right to attach this to his own name, or to the name of any other human being. It belongs only to God, to distinguish Him from every other being.... “Holy and reverend is his name.” We dishonor God when we use this word where it does not belong.... The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted.

We Shall Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.Exodus 20:8.

God said, “The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God.” He placed His sanctity upon this day and blessed it and hallowed it as a day of rest....It is the only commandment in the whole Decalogue that tells who God is. It places God in distinction with every other god. It says the God that made the heaven and the earth, the God that made the trees and the flowers and that created man; this is the God that you are to keep before your children, and you have only to point to the flowers and tell them that He made these and that He rested on the seventh day from all His labors.... The seventh day is a God-given memorial.

Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him....

God has given men six days wherein to labor, and He requires that their own work be done in the six working days. Acts of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath, the sick and suffering are at all times to be cared for; but unnecessary labor is to be strictly avoided.... And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy days.

So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. “From one sabbath to another” the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up “to worship before me, saith the Lord.”

Long Life Promised for Honoring Parents

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exodus 20:12.

Those who would truly follow Christ must let Him abide in the heart, and enthrone Him there as supreme. They must represent His spirit and character in their home life, and show courtesy and kindness to those with whom they come in contact. There are many children who profess to know the truth, who do not render to their parents the honor and affection that are due to them, who manifest but little love to father and mother, and fail to honor them in deferring to their wishes, or in seeking to relieve them of anxiety. Many who profess to be Christians do not know what it means to “honour thy father and thy mother,” and consequently will know just as little what it means, “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” ... The Heart-searcher knows what is your attitude toward your parents; for He is weighing moral character in the golden scales of the heavenly sanctuary. O, confess your neglect of your parents, confess your indifference toward them, and your contempt of God’s holy commandment.

Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he who rejects the rightful authority of his parents, is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires the children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age.

The fifth commandment is binding upon children as long as their own lives and the lives of their parents are spared.

We Shall Not Kill

Thou shalt not kill. Exodus 20:13.

All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for “whoso hateth his brother is a murderer”); a selfish neglect of caring for the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health,—all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment.

Some sacrifice physical and moral obligations, thinking to find happiness, and they lose both soul and body. Others will seek their happiness in indulgence of an unnatural appetite, and consider the indulgence of taste more desirable than health and life. Many suffer themselves to be enchained by sensual passions, and will sacrifice physical strength, intellect, and moral powers, to the gratification of lust. They will bring themselves to untimely graves, and in the Judgment will be charged with self-murder.

The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan; and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit; and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in the seed.

The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action, because the opportunity, not the will, has been wanting. And these sinful emotions will be brought into the account in the day when “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.”

Christ is righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to those who believe in Him.... He set before us a perfect example of holy obedience to God’s law.

We Shall Be Pure

Thou shalt not commit adultery. Exodus 20:14.

This commandment forbids not only acts of impurity, but sensual thoughts and desires, or any practice that tends to excite them. Purity is demanded not only in the outward life, but in the secret intents and emotions of the heart. Christ, who taught the far-reaching obligation of the law of God, declared the evil thought or look to be as truly sin as is the unlawful deed.

When the thought of evil is loved and cherished, however secretly, said Jesus, it shows that sin still reigns in the heart. The soul is still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. He who finds pleasure in dwelling upon scenes of impurity, who indulges the evil thought, the lustful look, may behold in the open sin, with its burden of shame and heartbreaking grief, the true nature of the evil which he has hidden in the chambers of the soul. The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, does not create the evil that is revealed, but only develops or makes manifest that which was hidden and latent in the heart. As a man “thinketh in his heart, so is he”; for out of the heart “are the issues of life.” The heart in which Christ dwells, will be so filled, so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to attract sympathy and attention to itself. And through the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do.

So long as life shall last, there will be need of guarding the affections and the passions with a firm purpose. Not one moment can we be secure except as we rely upon God, the life hidden with Christ.

The nearer we live to Jesus, the more will we partake of His pure and holy character; and the more offensive sin appears to us, the more exalted and desirable will appear the purity and brightness of Christ.

We Shall Not Steal

Thou shalt not steal. Exodus 20:15.

Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns man-stealing and slave-dealing, and forbids wars of conquest. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the minutest details of the affairs of life. It forbids overreaching in trade, and requires the payment of just debts or wages. It declares that every attempt to advantage one's self by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as fraud in the books of heaven.

The eighth commandment is to barricade the soul, and hedge man in, so that he shall make no injurious encroachment—which his self-love and desire for gain would make on his neighbor's rights. It forbids every species of dishonesty, injustice, or fraud, however prevalent, however palliated by plausible pretenses.

“Thou shalt not steal” was written by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, yet how much underhand stealing of affections is practiced and excused. A deceptive courtship is maintained, private communications are kept up, until the affections of one who is inexperienced and knows not whereunto these things may grow, are in a measure withdrawn from her parents and placed upon him who shows by the very course he pursues that he is unworthy of her love. The Bible condemns every species of dishonesty.

To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God.

As we deal with our fellow men in petty dishonesty or in more daring fraud, so will we deal with God. Men who persist in a course of dishonesty will carry out their principles until they cheat their own souls and lose heaven and eternal life.

So long as heaven and earth continue, the holy principles of God's law will ... continue, a source of blessing, sending forth streams to refresh the earth.

We Shall Not Lie, or Bear False Witness

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Exodus 20:16.

The ninth commandment requires of us an inviolable regard for exact truth in every declaration by which the character of our fellow men may be affected. The tongue, which is kept so little under the control of the human agent, is to be bridled by strong conscientious principles, by the law of love toward God and man.

False-speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, as falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.

He [Jesus] teaches that the exact truth should be the law of speech. "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay." ... These words condemn all those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. They condemn the deceptive compliments, the evasion of truth, the flattering phrases, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. They teach that no one who tries to appear what he is not, or whose words do not convey the real sentiment of his heart, can be called truthful....

Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan.... We can not speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth.

We Shall Not Be Covetous

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's. Exodus 20:17.

The last commandment condemns covetousness. Every selfish desire, every degree of discontent, every act of overreaching, every selfish gratification works to the strengthening and developing of a character which will destroy the Christlikeness of the human agent, and close the gates of the city of God against him.

When ... angels come to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and witness the exhibition of selfishness, of covetousness, of overreaching, and benefiting self at others' disadvantage, they turn away in grief.... In no way could the Lord be better glorified and the truth more highly honored, than for unbelievers to see that the truth has wrought a great and good work upon the lives of naturally covetous and penurious men. If it could be seen that the faith of such had an influence to mold their characters, to change them from close, selfish, overreaching, money-loving men, to men who love to do good, who seek opportunities to use their means to bless those who need to be blessed, who visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and who keep themselves unspotted from the world, it would be an evidence that their religion was genuine.... Those who profess to be waiting and watching for the appearing of their Lord should not disgrace their profession by bantering in deal and standing for the last penny. Such fruit does not grow upon the Christian tree.

The tenth commandment strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God's law refrains from indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another, will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow-creatures.

It Shall Be Our Righteousness

And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us. Deuteronomy 6:25.

The happiness of man is found in obedience to the laws of God. In obedience to God's law he is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil.

The tempter's voice will be heard on every side, telling you that you are not now required to keep the law of God. This is a device of Satan. God has a law, and men must keep it. If they disregard these rules, they will not have that perfection of character ... required to become members of the royal family ... for God wrote these ten holy rules on tables of stone and kept them in the ark of God's testimony. The cover of this ark ... was called the mercy-seat, to signify that although death was the penalty for transgressing the law, mercy came through Jesus Christ to pardon the repentant, believing sinner.

The only hope of any man lies through Jesus Christ, who brought the robe of His righteousness to put upon the sinner who would lay off his filthy garments.... The pure and holy garments are not prepared to be put on by any one *after* he has entered the gate of the city. All who enter will have on the robe of Christ's righteousness.... There will be no covering up of sins and faults to hide the deformity of character; no robes will be half washed; but all will be pure and spotless.

When we bring our lives to complete obedience to the law of God, regarding God as our supreme Guide, the clinging to Christ as our hope of righteousness, God will work in our behalf. This is a righteousness of faith.... The commandments of God diligently studied and practiced, open to us communication with heaven, and distinguish for us the true from the false. This obedience works out for us the divine will, bringing into our lives the righteousness and perfection that was seen in the life of Christ.

March—We Enroll in the School of Christ

All Who Are Weary of Sin Are Urged to Enroll

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28.

It is today that the sweet voice of mercy is falling upon your ears. It is today that the heavenly invitation comes to you. It is today that in Heaven everything says, Come.

Come, for all things are now ready. Whosoever will, let him come and partake of the waters of life freely. It is now that we want childlike simplicity. We want to see everything like pride, and vanity, and folly, put away. We have the Judgment in view. Men and women will want strength that is greater than any human aid to lean upon. They must lean upon the mighty arm of Jehovah. We have in view that day when the works of men are to be tried, and tested; and we want you to get ready.... We make appeals to you to rid yourselves of the pride of the world, the pride and vanity, and folly, of life. Jesus loves you. Jesus pities you. The angelic host He sends to minister unto you. And now, while all Heaven is interested for you, will you be interested for yourselves?

Some men seem afraid to take God at His word as though it would be presumption in them. They pray for the Lord to teach us and yet are afraid to credit the pledged word of God and believe we have been taught of Him. So long as we come to our heavenly Father humbly and with a spirit to be taught, willing and anxious to learn, why should we doubt God's fulfillment of His own promise? ... When you have sought to know His will, your part in the operation with God is to believe that you will be led and guided and blessed in the doing of His will.... It is Christ who is guiding His people today, showing them where and how to work.

We Learn of Christ

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. Matthew 11:29.

Only by the aid of the divine Teacher can we understand the truths of God's Word. In His school we shall learn how to be meek and lowly. He shows us how to understand the mysteries of godliness.

Let those who desire an education of the highest kind, learn ... that God is nigh unto all who seek Him with the whole heart.

The more one sees of the character of God, the more humble he becomes, and the lower his estimation is of himself. This indeed is the evidence that he beholds God, that he is in union with Jesus Christ. Unless we are meek and lowly, we cannot in truth claim that we have any conception of the character of God. Men may think that they possess superior qualifications. Their splendid talents, great learning, eloquence, activity, and zeal, may dazzle the eye, delight the fancy, and awaken the admiration of those who cannot read beneath the surface; but unless humility and modesty is linked with these other gifts, self-glorification and self-exaltation will be seen. Unless each qualification is consecrated to the Lord, unless those to whom the Lord has entrusted gifts seek that grace which alone can make their qualifications acceptable to God, they are looked upon by the Lord ... as unprofitable servants. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise." ... Those whose hearts are melted and subdued, who have seen the glorious manifestation of God's character, will show no heedless presumption.... Self will be lost in the consciousness they have of God's wonderful glory, and their own utter unworthiness. All who value a happy and holy walk with God ... will leave nothing undone if only they may gain a glimpse of His glory. In every place and under every circumstance, they will pray to God that they may be allowed to see Him. They will cherish that meek and contrite spirit that trembles at the word of God.

He Teaches Us His Yoke is Easy, His Burden, Light

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:30.

We are to bear the yoke of Christ that we may be placed in complete union with Him. “Take my yoke upon you,” He says.... Wearing the yoke unites finite man in companionship with the dearly beloved Son of God. Lifting the cross cuts away self from the soul, and places man where he learns how to bear Christ’s burdens. We can not follow Christ without wearing His yoke, without lifting the cross and bearing it after Him. If our will is not in accord with the divine requirements, we are to deny our inclinations, give up our darling desires, and step in Christ’s footsteps....

Men frame for their own necks yokes that seem light and pleasant to wear, but they prove galling in the extreme. Christ sees this, and He says, Take My yoke upon you. The yoke you would place upon your own neck, thinking it a precise fit, will not fit at all. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me the lessons essential for you to learn; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. The Lord never makes a false estimate concerning His heritage. He measures the men with whom He is working. When they submit to His yoke, when they give up the struggle that has been unprofitable for themselves and for the cause of God, they will find peace and rest. When they become sensible of their own weakness, their own deficiencies, they will delight to do God’s will. They will submit to the yoke of Christ. Then God can work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure, which is often entirely contrary to the plans of the human mind. When the heavenly anointing comes to us, we shall learn the lesson of meekness and lowliness, which always brings rest to the soul.

Although you will have trials, yet these trials, well borne, only make the way more precious.

Christ is the Heaven-Sent Teacher

And 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 .John 6:35.

The mind is the best possession we have; but it must be trained by study, by reflection, by learning in the school of Christ, the best and truest educator the world has ever known.

“I am the Bread of life,” the Author, Nourisher, and Supporter of eternal, spiritual life.... To eat His flesh and to drink His blood means to receive Him as a heaven-sent teacher. Belief in Him is essential to spiritual life. Those who feast on the Word never hunger, never thirst, never desire any higher or more exalted good.

The truest, the most exalted, knowledge is found in the Word of God. In its simplicity there is eloquence. There are those who will grasp the words of the supposed great men of the world, and love to dwell upon their phraseology as something they need to esteem and value. You will hear men exalting human beings, extolling those who are called great by this world. In doing this, they lose sight of Christ in the Word. He is not to them all and in all,—the first, the last, the best, in everything. These need to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him whom to know aright is life eternal.

The Bible is our guide in the safe paths that lead to eternal life. God has inspired men to write that which will present the truth to us, which will attract, and which, if practised, will enable the receiver to obtain moral power to rank among the most highly educated minds. The minds of all who make the Word of God their study will enlarge. Far more than any other study, this is of a nature to increase the powers of comprehension, and endow every faculty with new vigor.... It brings us into close connection with all heaven, imparting wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding.... The gospel is adapted for spiritual food, to satisfy man’s spiritual appetite. In every case it is just what man needs.

We Receive a Faith that Works by Love

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Galatians 5:6.

When you present your petitions to the Lord, it should be in humility, without boasting of superior attainments, but with real soul hunger for the blessing of God. Christ always knows what is cherished in the heart. We must come in faith that the Lord will hear and answer our prayers; for “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Genuine faith is the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. A living faith will be a working faith. Should we go into the garden and find that there was no sap in the plants, no freshness in the leaves, no bursting buds or blooming flowers, no signs of life in stalk or branches, we would say, “The plants are dead. Uproot them from the garden; for they are a deformity to the beds.” So it is with those who profess Christianity, and have no spirituality. If there are no signs of religious vigor, if there is no doing of the commandments of the Lord, it is evident that there is no abiding in Christ, the living vine.

Faith and love are the essential, powerful, working elements of Christian character. Those who possess them are one with Christ, and are carrying forward His mission.... We are to sit at Christ’s feet as continual learners, and to work with His gifts of faith and love. We shall then wear Christ’s yoke, and lift His burdens, and Christ will recognize us as one with Him; in heaven it will be said, “Ye are labourers together with God.” Will our youth remember that without faith it is impossible to please God? and it must be faith that works by love and purifies the soul.

We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character obtains perfection.

We Learn to Speak the Language of Canaan

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Deuteronomy 32:2.

We are to be witnesses for Christ; and this we shall be when we grow up daily into the full stature of men and women in Christ. It is our privilege to grow more and more like Him every day. Then we shall acquire the power to express our love for Him in higher, purer speech, and our ideas will enlarge and deepen, and our judgment become more sound and trustworthy, while our testimony will have more of life and assurance. We are not to cultivate the language of the earthy, and be so familiar with the conversation of men, that the language of Canaan will be new and unfamiliar to us. We are to learn in the school of Christ; yet it is manifest that many are satisfied with very limited experience in spiritual things, for they reveal but little knowledge of spiritual things in their prayers and testimonies. There is less good judgment manifested in matters concerning our eternal interests, than in matters concerning our earthly, temporal affairs.

Christians are to be faithful students in the school of Christ, ever learning more of heaven, more of the words and will of God; more of the truth and how to use faithfully the knowledge that they have gained.

The chief requisite of language is that it be pure and kind and true—"the outward expression of an inward grace." ... The best school for this language study is the home.

Kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul. The Scripture says of Christ that grace was poured into His lips, that He might "know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." And the Lord bids us, "Let your speech be alway with grace," "that it may minister grace unto the hearers." When the heart is pure, rich treasure of wisdom will flow forth.

We Learn to Beware of Vain Deceit and Flattery

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Colossians 2:8.

Flattery is an art by which Satan lieth in wait to deceive and to puff up the human agent with high thoughts of himself.... Flattery has been the food upon which many of our youth have been nourished; and those who have praised and flattered have supposed that they were doing right; but they have been doing wrong. Praise, flattery, and indulgence have done more toward leading precious souls into false paths, than any other art that Satan has devised. Flattery is a part of the world's policy, but it is no part of Christ's policy. Through flattery poor human beings, full of frailty and infirmities, come to think that they are efficient and worthy, and become puffed up in their fleshly mind. They become intoxicated with the idea that they possess ability beyond what they do have, and their religious experience becomes unbalanced. Unless in the providence of God they shall be turned from these deceptions, and become converted, and learn the a-b-c of religion in the school of Christ, they will lose their souls. Many a youth has been flattered that he has ability as a natural gift; when the ability he thinks he has, can be attained only through diligent training and culture, learning the meekness and lowliness of Christ.... God permits him to be attacked by the enemy, in order that he may understand his own weakness. He is permitted to make some decided blunder, and is plunged into painful humiliation. But when he is writhing under a sense of his own weakness, he is not to be judged harshly.... This is the time when he needs a friend who ... will deal patiently and faithfully with the erring.... He is not to be lifted up by the aid of flattery.... Rather he is to be pointed to the first rounds of the ladder, and his stumbling feet are to be placed on the lowest round of the ladder of progress.... Through the aid of wise counselors, his defeat will be turned into victory.

Affliction Teaches Us to Long for Heaven

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.2 Corinthians 4:17.

While the Lord has not promised His people exemption from trials, He has promised that which is far better. He has said, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” ... If you are called to go through the fiery furnace for His sake, Jesus will be by your side, even as He was with the faithful three in Babylon. Those who love their Redeemer will rejoice at every opportunity of sharing with Him humiliation and reproach. The love they bear their Lord, makes suffering for His sake sweet.

In all ages Satan has persecuted the people of God. He has tortured them and put them to death; but in dying they became conquerors. They revealed in their steadfast faith a mightier One than Satan. Satan could torture and kill the body, but he could not touch the life that was hid with Christ in God. He could incarcerate in prison walls, but he could not bind the spirit. They could look beyond the gloom to the glory, saying: “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” ...

The church of God, hated and persecuted by the world, are educated and disciplined in the school of Christ. They walk in narrow paths on earth; they are purified in the furnace of affliction. They follow Christ through sore conflicts; they endure self-denial, and experience bitter disappointments; but their painful experience teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they look upon it with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ’s sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of His glory. In holy vision the prophet saw the triumph of the people of God. He says: “I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory ... stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.”

We are to Consider Nature's Lessons

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Matthew 6:28.

Natural science is God's storehouse from which every student in the school of Christ may draw. The ways of God in natural philosophy, and the mysteries connected with His dealings with man, are a treasury from which all may draw.

The flowers of the field, in their endless variety, are always ministering to the delight of the children of men. God Himself nourishes every root, that He may express His love to all who will be softened and subdued by the works of His hands. We need no artificial display. God's love is represented by the beautiful things of His creation.

Christ sought to draw the attention of His disciples away from the artificial to the natural: "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!" Why did not our heavenly Father carpet the earth with brown or gray? He chose the color that was most restful, the most acceptable to the senses. How it cheers the heart and refreshes the weary spirit to look upon the earth, clad in its garments of living green! Without this covering the air would be filled with dust, and the earth would appear like a desert. Every spire of grass, every opening bud and blooming flower is a token of God's love, and should teach us a lesson of faith and trust in Him. Christ calls our attention to their natural loveliness, and assures us that the most gorgeous array of the greatest king that ever wielded an earthly scepter was not equal to that worn by the humblest flower. You who are sighing for the artificial splendor which wealth alone can purchase, for costly paintings, furniture, and dress, listen to the voice of the divine Teacher. He points you to the flower of the field, the simple design of which cannot be equalled by human skill.

We Enter Into Christ's Rest

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Hebrews 4:9.

If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ's school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness, and ambition, must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation, and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibres, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind.

In being co-workers with Christ in the great work for which He gave His life, we shall find true rest. When we were sinners, He gave His life for us. He wants us to come to Him and learn of Him. Thus we are to find rest. He says He will give us rest. "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." In doing this you will find in your own experience the rest that Christ gives, the rest that comes from wearing His yoke and lifting His burdens.

A form of godliness without the power is a weariness and burden; but when the whole heart is enlisted in the service of Christ, there is rest to the soul; for God causeth such to triumph daily over the powers of darkness. God helps him who commits his soul unto the Lord as unto a faithful Creator.

To learn the lessons Christ teaches is the greatest treasure students can find. Rest comes to them in the consciousness that they are trying to please the Lord.

Dependence Upon God

For without me ye can do nothing, John 15:5, last part.

The first lesson to be taught ... is the lesson of dependence upon God.... As a flower of the field has its root in the soil; as it must receive air, dew, showers, and sunshine, so must we receive from God that which ministers to the life of the soul.

The presence of God is guaranteed to the Christian. This Rock of faith is the living presence of God. The weakest may depend upon it. Those who think themselves the strongest may become the weakest unless they depend on Christ as their efficiency, their worthiness. This is the Rock upon which we may build successfully. God is near in Christ's atoning sacrifice, in His intercession, His loving, tender ruling power over the church. Seated by the eternal throne, He watches them with intense interest. As long as the members of the church shall through faith draw sap and nourishment from Jesus Christ, and not from man's opinions and devisings and methods; if having a conviction of the nearness of God in Christ, they put their entire trust in Him, they will have a vital connection with Christ as the branch has connection with the parent stock. The church is established not on theories of men, on long-drawn-out plans and forms. It depends upon Christ their righteousness. It is built on faith in Christ, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." ...

The strength of every soul is in God and not in man. Quietness and confidence is to be the strength of all who give their hearts to God. Christ has not a casual interest in us but an interest stronger than a mother for her child.... Our Saviour has purchased us by human suffering and sorrow, by insult, reproach, abuse, mockery, rejection, and death. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. He will make you secure under His protection.... Our weakness in human nature will not bar our access to the heavenly Father, for He [Christ] died to make intercession for us.

To Center Our Thoughts in Christ

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.Ephesians 4:23.

The youth of today may be educated for the fulfilment of high and holy purposes.... They are pupils in the school of Christ, learning from day to day lessons of the divine Master.

It is in youth that the affections are most ardent, the memory most retentive, and the heart most susceptible to divine impressions; and it is during youth that the mental and physical powers should be set to the task in order that great improvements may be made in view of the world that now is, and that which is to come.

The amount of valuable knowledge that can be acquired by young men and young women can hardly be estimated; but to reach a high standard, they must close the door to the debasing thoughts that Satan would thrust into the mind, and refuse to yield to his temptations. The youth may acquire that which gold cannot buy, by cherishing a pure, strong purpose in endeavoring to be all that God designed they should be. The mind should be trained to dwell upon right themes of thought. They should study the Scriptures, and bring into daily life the divine rules which God has laid down for their guidance. He who has grown old in the service of God may find his mind a blank in regard to the things that are happening about him, and recent transactions may soon pass from his memory; but his mind is all awake to the scenes and transactions of his childhood. O that the youth may realize how important it is to keep the mind guarded, pure and clean, from corrupting thoughts, and to preserve the soul from all debasing practices; for the purity or impurity of youth is reflected upon old age.

The truths of the Bible, received, will uplift the mind from its earthliness and debasement. If the Word of God were appreciated as it should be, both young and old would possess an inward rectitude, a strength of principle, that would enable them to resist temptation.

To Resist Temptation

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7.

Satan still comes with his temptations to the children of men. He employs every means at his command to conceal himself from view, and this is why so many are ignorant of his devices. A few days since, the question was asked me, "Do you believe in a personal devil?" "I do," was the answer. "Well," rejoined the questioner, "I do not believe that there is any such being; our evil thoughts and impulses are all the devil we know anything about!" "But," I asked, "who suggests these thoughts? Whence do they originate, if not from Satan?" ...

Just as surely as we have a personal Saviour, we have also a personal adversary, cruel and cunning, who ever watches our steps, and plots to lead us astray. He can work most effectually in disguise. Wherever the opinion is entertained that he does not exist, there he is most busy. When we least suspect his presence, he is gaining advantage over us. I feel alarmed as I see so many of the youth yielding to his power while they know it not. Did they but see their danger, they would flee to Christ, the sinner's refuge.

Aim to be faithful students in the school of Christ, learning daily to conform your life to the divine Pattern. Set your faces heavenward, and press toward the mark for the prize of your high calling in Christ Jesus. Run the Christian race with patience, and rise superior to every temptation, however grievous it may be, that shall come to you. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God; and if you are desirous of taking the first upward step, you will find His hand stretched out to help you. It remains with you, individually, as to whether you walk in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, or in the darkness of error. The truth of God can be a blessing to you only as you permit its influence to purify and refine your soul.

To Be Loving and Kind

Let brotherly love continue. Hebrews 13:1.

No member of the family can inclose himself within himself.... If he is filled with the love of Christ, he will manifest courtesy, kindness, tender regard for the feelings of others, and will communicate to his associates, by his acts of love, a tender, grateful, happy feeling. It will be made manifest that he is living for Jesus, and daily learning lessons at His feet, receiving His light and His peace.

The most careful cultivation of the outward proprieties of life is not sufficient to shut out all fretfulness, harsh judgment, and unbecoming speech. True refinement will never be revealed so long as self is considered as the supreme object. Love must dwell in the heart. A thoroughgoing Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart-love for his Master. Up through the roots of his affection for Christ springs an unselfish interest in his brethren.

Of all things that are sought, cherished, and cultivated, there is nothing so valuable in the sight of God as a pure heart, a disposition imbued with thankfulness and peace.

If the divine harmony of truth and love exists in the heart, it will shine forth in words and actions.... The spirit of genuine benevolence must dwell in the heart. Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. Love illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the entire man. It brings him into harmony with God, for it is a heavenly attribute.

Allow no selfishness to live in the heart or find room in the home.... When all are members of the royal family, there will be true politeness in the home life. Each member of the family will seek to make it pleasant for every other member.

Humility

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. James 4:6.

You are safe only as, in perfect submission and obedience, you connect yourselves with Christ. The yoke is easy, for Christ carries the weight. As you lift the burden of the cross, it will become light; and that cross is to you a pledge of eternal life. It is the privilege of each to follow gladly after Christ, exclaiming at every step, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." But if we would travel heavenward, we must take the Word of God as our lesson-book. In the words of inspiration we must read our lessons day by day...

The humiliation of the man Christ Jesus is incomprehensible to the human mind; but His divinity and His existence before the world was formed can never be doubted by those who believe the Word of God. The apostle Paul speaks of our Mediator, the only begotten Son of God, who in a state of glory was in the form of God, the Commander of all the heavenly hosts, and who, when He clothed His divinity with humanity, took upon Him the form of a servant....

In consenting to become man, Christ manifested a humility that is the marvel of the heavenly intelligences. The act of consenting to be a man would be no humiliation were it not for the fact of Christ's exalted pre-existence. We must open our understanding to realize that Christ laid aside His royal robe, His kingly crown, His high command, and clothed His divinity with humanity, that He might meet man where he was, and bring to the human family moral power to become the sons and daughters of God. To redeem man, Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The meekness and humility that characterized the life of Christ will be made manifest in the life and character of those who "walk even as he walked."

Meekness

The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. Psalm 25:9.

You will have to learn the important lesson of what it is to be a man in the sight of God. It is to be like Jesus, meek and lowly of heart, to guard the interests of others more sacredly than your own.... It should be carried out in your daily life and practised, showing that you have not been playing truant or a dull scholar in the school of Christ.

Selfishness cannot exist in a heart where Christ dwells; if cherished, it will crowd out everything besides. It will lead you to follow inclination rather than duty, to make self the subject of thought, and to gratify and indulge yourself, instead of seeking to be a blessing to others. Your wants, your pleasures, will come before everything else.... True happiness is to be found, not in self-indulgence and self-pleasing, but in learning of Christ.... Those who trust to their own wisdom, and follow their own ways, go complaining at every step, because the burden which selfishness binds upon them is so heavy....

Jesus loves the young, and He longs to have them possess that peace which He alone can impart. He bids them learn of Him meekness and lowliness of heart. This precious grace is rarely seen in the youth of the present day, even in those who profess to be Christians. Their own ways seem right in their eyes. In accepting the name of Christ, they do not accept His character, ... therefore they know nothing of the joy and peace to be found in His service.

The meekness of Christ, manifested in the home, will make the inmates happy; it provokes no quarrel, gives back no angry answer, but soothes the irritated temper, and diffuses a gentleness that is felt by all within its charmed circle. Wherever cherished, it makes the families of earth a part of the one great family above.

Thoughtfulness

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. Colossians 3:12.

Look to Jesus as your guide and pattern.... Study how you can be like Him, in thoughtfulness for others, in meekness and humility. Thus may you “grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ”; you may reflect His image, and be accepted of Him as His own, at His coming.

When Jesus is comprehended by faith, and brought into the inner sanctuary of the soul, the Holy Spirit will mold and fashion the character after the likeness of Christ. Lessons will then be daily learned in the school of Christ. The character of the tree will be known by its fruits. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” The Christian will shine as a light amid the moral darkness of the world. He will be tender of heart, and considerate of the feelings of others. The Word of God instructs us to be “wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,” and it is the duty of every Christian to bring himself under discipline to the rules of the Bible, that he may be “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” The work coming from the hands of those who do this, will be as lasting as eternity. It will not be mingled with a shred of selfishness, and it will not be loose, careless work.

Tender affections should ever be cherished between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Every hasty word should be checked, and there should not be even the appearance of the lack of love one for another. It is the duty of everyone in the family to be pleasant, to speak kindly.

Cultivate tenderness, affection, and love that have expression in little courtesies, in speech, in thoughtful attentions.

It is the inward adorning, the graces of the Spirit, the kind word, the thoughtful consideration for others that God values.

Self-Control

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. Acts 24:16.

Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by his powers to subdue his feelings, not by the power of his feelings to subdue him.

Never should we lose control of ourselves. Let us ever keep before us the perfect Pattern. It is a sin to speak impatiently and fretfully or to feel angry—even though we do not speak. We are to walk worthy, giving a right representation of Christ. The speaking of an angry word is like flint striking flint: it at once kindles wrathful feelings.

Never be like a chestnut bur. In the home do not allow yourself to use harsh, rasping words. You should invite the heavenly Guest to come into your home, at the same time making it possible for Him and the heavenly angels to abide with you. You should receive the righteousness of Christ, the sanctification of the Spirit of God, the beauty of holiness, that you may reveal to those around you the Light of life...

Said a celebrated emperor when on his dying bed, “Among all my conquests there is but one which affords me any consolation now, and that is the conquest I have gained over my own turbulent temper.” Alexander and Caesar found it easier to subdue a world than to subdue themselves. After conquering nation after nation, they fell—one of them “the victim of intemperance, the other of mad ambition.”

The highest evidence of nobility in a Christian is self-control.

In the Lord’s work you are constantly in a school where you may learn lessons of self-control, of sanctified dignity, of gentlemanly manners and behavior.

Purity

He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands. Job 22:30.

He who deservedly bears the name of Christian, which signifies Christlike, will be filled with piety and purity, with love and reverence for God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; and his spirit, his words, his actions, will all bear the impress of Heaven. Others will see that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him, His prayers will be simple and fervent, and will ascend to God on the wings of faith. Learning in the school of Christ, he will have a humble opinion of himself; and though he may be poor in this world's goods, he may be rich in the graces of God's Spirit, and may bless and enrich others by his spirit and influence, because Christ is in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. He will shed about him an atmosphere of hope and courage and strength, and will put to shame those who are worldly, selfish, formal professors, who have a name to live and are dead.

The precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His Word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened, and subdued into humility, kindness, and love.... Being pure-minded, they will become strong-minded.

Purity of heart and loveliness of spirit are more precious than gold, both for time and for eternity. Only the pure in heart shall see God.

Simplicity

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3.

He who will observe simplicity in all his habits, restricting the appetite and controlling the passions, may preserve his mental powers strong, active, and vigorous, quick to perceive everything which demands thought or action, keen to discriminate between the holy and the unholy, and ready to engage in every enterprise for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity.

The little ones should be educated in childlike simplicity. They should be trained to be content with the small, helpful duties and the pleasures and experiences natural to their years. Childhood answers to the blade in the parable, and the blade has a beauty peculiarly its own. Children should not be forced into a precocious maturity, but as long as possible should retain the freshness and grace of their early years. The more quiet and simple the life of the child—the more free from artificial excitement and the more in harmony with nature—the more favorable it is to physical and mental vigor and to spiritual strength.

Parents should by their example encourage the formation of habits of simplicity, and draw their children away from an artificial to a natural life. Those children are most attractive who are natural and unaffected.

The greatest Teacher the world ever knew was admired for His simplicity; for He presented divine truth in such a way that even children could comprehend His words, and at the same time He drew the attention of the best educated and deepest thinkers of the world. By the use of familiar illustrations He made truth plain to the minds of the common people. In simplicity He sowed the seed of the gospel truth in the minds and hearts of His hearers, and it sprang up and yielded a harvest unto everlasting life.

His [Christ's] glory was in His simplicity.

Steadfastness

For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear. Job 11:15.

It is right for the youth to feel that they must reach the highest development of their mental powers. We would not restrict the education to which God has set no limit. But our attainments avail nothing if not put to use for the honor of God and the good of humanity....

What we need is knowledge that will strengthen mind and soul, that will make us better men and women. Heart education is of far more importance than mere book-learning. It is well, even essential, to have a knowledge of the world in which we live; but if we leave eternity out of our reckoning, we shall make a failure from which we can never recover.... If the youth understood their own weakness, they would find in God their strength.

There is a science of Christianity to be mastered,—a science as much deeper, broader, higher than any human science as the heavens are higher than the earth. The mind is to be disciplined, educated, trained; for we are to do service for God in ways that are not in harmony with inborn inclination. Hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil must be overcome. Often the education and training of a lifetime must be discarded, that one may become a learner in the school of Christ. Our hearts must be educated to become steadfast in God. We are to form habits of thought that will enable us to resist temptation. We must learn to look upward. The principles of the Word of God,—principles that are as high as heaven, and that compass eternity,—we are to understand in their bearing upon our daily life. Every act, every word, every thought, is to be in accord with these principles. All must be brought into harmony with, and subject to, Christ.

Patience

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Hebrews 10:36.

The lives of some are without peace or gladness because they never get out of the range of self. They are ever reaching out for sympathy from others. If they would go to work to see how helpful they could be, and would speak words of love and courage, their souls, now dry and sorrowful, would become like a watered garden.

You must learn in the school of Christ precious lessons of patience. Do not become discouraged, but keep at the work in all humility. It will drive you to Jesus; it will lead you to study the Pattern. You want to work as Jesus worked.

Trials will come, it is true, even to those who are fully consecrated. The patience of the most patient will be severely tested.... Often silence is the severest rebuke that could be given to the one who has sinned with his lips.

When they [the children and youth] lose self-control and speak words that are passionate, an attitude of silence is often the best course to pursue, not taking up a line of reproof or argument or condemnation. Repentance will come very soon. The silence that is golden will often do more than all the words that can be uttered.

When others are impatient, fretful, and complaining because self is not subdued, begin to sing some of the songs of Zion. While Christ was working at the carpenter's bench, others would sometimes surround Him, trying to cause Him to be impatient; but He would begin singing some of the beautiful psalms, and before they realized what they were doing, they had joined with Him in singing, influenced, as it were, by the power of the Holy Spirit which was there.

Christ's perfect example and the grace of God are given him [man] to enable him to train his sons and daughters to be sons and daughters of God.

Self-denial

Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. Mark 10:28.

All have daily lessons to learn in the school of Christ, and a daily experience to gain, that they may understand their duty as His children.

Many an honest, well-meaning person makes no advancement in the Christian life because he does not see the necessity of constantly learning more of Jesus. When first converted, he rejoices that he has taken his position on the Lord's side. A year later, he bears the same testimony. There is no evidence of spiritual growth; he is still weak as a child.... The first experience of the new convert is happy and joyous; but trials come; the perplexities of life are to be met; sinful traits of character that have not been controlled, strive for the mastery, and too frequently obtain it. Then come a loss of confidence and peace, neglect of prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. For want of the knowledge and experience which they should have, many are overcome by Satan. They do not know how to discern his temptations, or to resist them....

Have faith in Jesus as your helper. Remember that you are not to choose your own work, or follow your own ways, but to look to Jesus as your guide and pattern. Keep His example before you, and constantly ask what will be pleasing in His sight. Learn from Him lessons of self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Watch every moment, keeping your mind stayed upon God, instead of having it upon dress, and suffering pride to dwell in your heart. Seek to deny yourself; be holy; let your mind dwell upon heaven, and let your conversation be there also.... Those who follow Christ will choose the suffering, self-denying part, and will have His approbation here, and ... glory, immortality and eternal life hereafter.

Forgiveness

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Colossians 3:13.

The religion of Jesus Christ means progress; it means to be ever reaching upward to a holier and higher standard. The Christian whose heart has been touched with the beauty of the Saviour's character, is to put into practice that which he learns in the school of Christ. We must be apt pupils in the school of Christ, readily learning that which He teaches us from day to day.

We can never attain perfection of character if we do not hear the voice of God and obey His counsel. This instruction does not apply simply to those who have had no trials to meet which would create dislike to their brethren, but it applies to those who have been injured, who have suffered from financial wrong, from reproach and criticism, from misapprehension and misjudgment. These must not allow hatred to enter the heart, or permit unkind feelings to arise when they look upon those who have injured them....

Like Christ we shall forgive our enemies, and watch for opportunities to show those who have harmed us that we love their souls, and if we could, would do them good.... If those who have injured us, still continue in their course of wrong-doing ... we must make efforts to be reconciled to our brethren, following the Bible plan, as Christ Himself has directed. If our brethren refuse to be reconciled, then do not talk about them, nor injure their influence, but leave them in the hands of a just God, who judgeth all men righteously.... The youth may profess to have great love for the cause of God; but while they are unreconciled to their companions, they are unreconciled to God. It is these ... selfish feelings that are cherished, that keep the blessing of God out of our hearts and homes. Let the love of Christ flow into the heart and transform the character, or we shall not be children of God.

Peter's Sifting Resulted in His Conversion

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Luke 22:31, 32.

The reason so many of Christ's professed disciples fall into grievous temptation is that they have not a correct knowledge of themselves. Here is where Peter was so thoroughly sifted by the enemy. If we could understand our own weakness, we should see so much to do for ourselves that we would humble our hearts under the mighty hand of God. Hanging our helpless souls upon Christ, we would supplement our ignorance with His wisdom, our weakness with His strength, our frailty with His enduring might. Peter fell because he did not know his own frailty. He thought himself strong....

Had Peter walked humbly with God, hiding self in Christ; had he earnestly looked for divine help; had he been less self-confident; had he received the Lord's instruction and practised it, he would have been watching unto prayer.... Had he closely examined himself, the Lord would have given him divine help and there would have been no need of Satan's sifting.... There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God.

The watch-care of Christ for Peter was the cause of his restoration. Satan could do nothing against the all-powerful intercession of Christ. And the prayer that Christ offered for Peter He offers in behalf of all who are humble and contrite in heart.... Peter sinned against light and knowledge, and against great and exalted privileges. It was self-confidence that caused him to fail, and it is this same evil that is now working in human hearts. It may be our purpose to be right and to do right, but we shall most surely err unless we are constant learners in the school of Christ. Our only safety is in walking humbly with God.

Lazarus Raised to Testify to God's Glory

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. John 11:4.

Christ's two days' delay after hearing that Lazarus was sick was not a neglect or a denial on His part.... This should be an encouragement to us.... We are to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. The answer to our prayers may not come as quickly as we desire, and it may not be just what we have asked; but He who knows what is for the highest good of His children will bestow a much greater good than we have asked, if we do not become faithless and discouraged.

Christ had not only the loved ones at Bethany to think of; He had the training of His disciples to consider. They were to be His representatives to the world, that the Father's blessing might include all. For their sake He permitted Lazarus to die. Had He restored him from illness to health, the miracle that is the most positive evidence of His divine character would not have been performed.

Had Christ been in the sick-room, Lazarus would not have died; for Satan would have had no power over him. In the presence of the Lifegiver, death could not have aimed his dart at Lazarus.... He permitted Lazarus to pass under the dominion of death, and the suffering sisters saw their brother laid in the grave. Christ knew that as they looked on the face of their dead brother, their faith in their Redeemer would be severely tried. Thus He was pruning the branches, that they might bring forth more fruit. He knew that because of the struggle through which they were now passing, their faith would shine forth with far greater power.

To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest.... From every temptation and every trial He will bring them forth with firmer faith and a richer experience.

Elisha's Faithfulness Rewarded

So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.1 Kings 19:19.

The prophet Elijah was about to close his earthly labors. Another was to be called to carry forward the work for that time. In his course of travel, Elijah was directed northward.... Wherever Elijah looked, the land he saw was owned by one man,—a man who had not bowed the knee to Baal, whose heart had remained undivided in the service of God.... The owner of the land was Shaphat....

The attention of Elijah was attracted to Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who with the servants was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. He was educator, director, and worker. Elisha did not live in the thickly populated cities. His father was a tiller of the soil, a farmer. Far from city and court dissipation, Elisha had received his education. He had been trained in habits of simplicity, of obedience to his parents and to God.... But though of a meek and quiet spirit, Elisha had no changeable character. Integrity and fidelity and the love and fear of God were his. He had the characteristics of a ruler, but with it all was the meekness of one who would serve. His mind had been exercised in the little things, to be faithful in whatsoever he should do; so that if God should call him to act more directly for Him, he would be prepared to hear His voice.

The surroundings of Elisha's home were those of wealth; but he realized that in order to obtain an all-round education, he must be a constant worker in any work that needed to be done. He had not consented to be in any respect less informed than his father's servants. He had learned how to serve first, that he might know how to lead, instruct, and command.

Elisha stood in Elijah's place. And he who had been faithful in that which was least, proved himself faithful also in much.

Moses Endured as Seeing Him Who is Invisible

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Hebrews 11:27.

For the honor of God and the deliverance of His downtrodden people, Moses sacrificed the honors of Egypt. Then, in a special sense, God undertook his training.... He had yet to learn the lesson of dependence upon divine power. He had mistaken God's purpose. It was his hope to deliver Israel by force of arms. For this he risked all, and failed. In defeat and disappointment he became a fugitive and exile in a strange land.... Apparently cut off forever from his life's mission, he was receiving the discipline essential for its fulfilment.... He must obtain the experience that would make him a faithful, long-suffering shepherd to Israel.... In the stern simplicity of the wilderness ... Moses gained that which went with him throughout the years of his toilsome and care-burdened life,—a sense of the personal presence of the Divine One.... When misunderstood and misrepresented, when called to bear reproach and insult, to face danger and death, he was able to endure “as seeing him who is invisible.”

Moses stands forth superior in wisdom and integrity to all the sovereigns and statesmen of earth.... He was generous, noble, well-balanced; he was not defective, and his qualities were not merely half developed. He could successfully exhort his fellow-men, because his life itself was a living representation of what man can become and accomplish with God as his helper.... He spoke from the heart and it reached the heart. He was accomplished in knowledge and yet simple as a child in the manifestation of his deep sympathies. Endowed with a remarkable instinct, he could judge instantly of the needs of all who surrounded him.... Of the man who is noted for his meekness, Christ says, He can be trusted. Through him I can reveal Myself to the world. He will not weave into the web any threads of selfishness.

Though Severely Tried Job Remained Perfect and Upright

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. Job 1:1.

Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name....

Very early in the history of the world is given the life-record of one over whom this controversy of Satan's was waged. Of Job, the patriarch of Uz, the testimony of the Searcher of hearts was, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil."

Against this man, Satan brought scornful charge: "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" ...

The Lord said unto Satan, "All that he hath is in thy power." "Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."

Thus permitted, Satan swept away all that Job possessed,—flocks and herds, men-servants and maidens, sons and daughters; and he "smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown."

Still another element of bitterness was added to his cup. His friends, seeing in adversity but the retribution of sin, pressed on his bruised and burdened spirit their accusations of wrong-doing....

"When he hath tried me," he said, "I shall come forth as gold." So it came to pass. By his patient endurance he vindicated his own character, and thus the character of Him whose representative he was.... The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.... So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.

Paul Blinded so He Would See Christ

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 9:17.

In the military schools of Egypt, Moses was taught the law of force, and so strong a hold did this teaching have upon his character that it required forty years ... to fit him for leadership of Israel by the law of love. The same lesson Paul had to learn.

At the gate of Damascus the vision of the Crucified One changed the whole current of his life. The persecutor became a disciple, the teacher a learner. The days of darkness spent in solitude at Damascus were as years in his experience. The Old Testament Scriptures stored in his memory were his study, and Christ his teacher. To him also nature's solitudes became a school. To the desert of Arabia he went, there to study the Scriptures and to learn of God. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had shaped his life, and received instruction from the Source of truth.

His after-life was inspired by the one principle of self-sacrifice, the ministry of love. "I am debtor," he said, "both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." ...

While he possessed high intellectual endowments, the life of Paul revealed the power of a rarer wisdom. Principles of deepest import, principles concerning which the greatest minds of his time were ignorant, are unfolded in his teachings and exemplified in his life. He had that greatest of all wisdom, which gives quickness of insight and sympathy of heart, which brings man in touch with men, and enables him to arouse their better nature and inspire them to a higher life....

"Being reviled," he said, "we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat"; "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Moab a Failure because He Refused to Change

Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed. Jeremiah 48:11.

A man may refuse to hear the counsels and admonitions of God. He may choose to take the regulating of his conduct into his own hands.... Like Moab, he refuses to be changed.... He refuses to correct his defective traits of character, although the Lord has plainly pointed out his work, his privileges, his opportunities, and the advancement to be made. It is too much trouble to break up his old ways, and transform his ideas and methods. "His taste remained in him." He clings to his defects.

There are many who are not satisfied with the work that God has given them. They are not satisfied to serve Him pleasantly in the place that He has marked out for them, or to do uncomplainingly the work that He has placed in their hands. It is right for us to be dissatisfied with the way in which we perform duty, but we are not to be dissatisfied with the duty itself, because ... in His providence God places before human beings service that will be as medicine for their diseased minds.... Some He places where relaxed discipline and over-indulgence will not become their snare, where they are taught to appreciate the value of time, and to make the best and wisest use of it.

There are some who desire to be a ruling power, and who need the sanctification of submission.... They are being qualified to fill places where their disciplined ability will make them of the greatest service. Some God trains by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty....

Many are ignorant of how to work for God, not because they need to be ignorant, but because they are not willing to submit to His training process. Moab is spoken of as a failure because, the Word declares, "he hath been at ease from his youth."

April—We are Transformed by God’s Grace

Our Heart the Most Precious Offering

My son [my daughter], give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. Proverbs 23:26.

Give to God the most precious offering that it is possible for you to make; give Him your heart. He speaks to you saying, “My son, My daughter, give Me thine heart. Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; for I will cleanse you with My own blood. I will make you members of My family—children of the heavenly King. Take My forgiveness, My peace which I freely give you. I will clothe you with My own righteousness,—the wedding garment,—and make you fit for the marriage supper of the Lamb. When clothed in My righteousness, through prayer, through watchfulness, through diligent study of My Word, you will be able to reach a high standard. You will understand the truth, and your character will be molded by a divine influence.

The heart in which Jesus makes His abode will be quickened, purified, guided, and ruled by the Holy Spirit, and the human agent will make strenuous efforts to bring his character into harmony with God. He will avoid everything that is contrary to the revealed will and mind of God.

Such a life ... will be full of comfort, full of satisfaction, because you are bringing heaven into your life, peace into your soul.... I would that all the young could understand how precious is the offering of a youthful heart to God. How lovingly the angels guard the steps of God-fearing, God-loving youth. Jesus knows them by name, and their example is helping other youth to do right. The youth who has hidden within the heart and mind a store of God’s words of caution and encouragement, of His precious pearls of promise, from which he can draw at any time, will be a living channel of light.

Diligent Heart Keeping Essential to Growth in Grace

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23.

Diligent heart-keeping is essential to a healthy growth in grace. The heart in its natural state is a habitation for unholy thoughts and sinful passions. When brought into subjection to Christ, it must be cleansed by the Spirit from all defilement. This can not be done without the consent of the individual.

When the soul has been cleansed, it is the duty of the Christian to keep it undefiled. Many seem to think that the religion of Christ does not call for the abandonment of daily sins, the breaking loose from habits which have held the soul in bondage. They renounce some things condemned by the conscience, but they fail to represent Christ in the daily life. They do not bring Christlikeness into the home. They do not show a thoughtful care in their choice of words. Too often, fretful, impatient words are spoken, words which stir the worst passions of the human heart. Such ones need the abiding presence of Christ in the soul. Only in His strength can they keep guard over the words and actions. In the work of heart-keeping we must be instant in prayer, unwearied in petitioning the throne of grace for assistance. Those who take the name of Christian should come to God in earnestness and humility, pleading for help. The Saviour has told us to pray without ceasing. The Christian can not always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward. Our self-confidence would vanish, did we talk less and pray more.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart.

The Saviour of the world loves to have children and youth give their hearts to Him.

God Promises Us a New Heart of Flesh

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. Ezekiel 36:26.

The youth especially stumble over this phrase, “A new heart.” They do not know what it means. They look for a special change to take place in their feelings. This they term conversion. Over this error thousands have stumbled to ruin, not understanding the expression, “Ye must be born again.” ... When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—a changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride.

Then a spirit of kindness will be manifested, not by fits and starts, but continually. There will be a decided change in attitude, in deportment, in words and actions toward all with whom you are in any way connected. You will not magnify their infirmities, you will not place them in an unfavorable light. You will work in Christ’s lines....

Instead of exposing and publishing one’s faults to others, you will put forth the most patient efforts to heal and bind up.... A harsh-spirited man is unrefined, coarse; he is not spiritual; he has not a heart of flesh, but a heart as unimpressible as a stone. His only help is to fall on the Rock, and be broken. The Lord will place all such in the crucible, and try them in fire, as gold is tried. When He can see His own image reflected in them He will remove them.... The religion of Christ is to take possession of the whole being, and give force and power to all our faculties, renovating, cleansing, and refining. It manifests itself without parade, and high-sounding words, but is shown in an upright and unselfish life.

God’s power alone can change a heart of stone to a heart of flesh.

The Renewed Heart Loves as Christ Loved

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John 13:34.

Jesus says, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Love is not simply an impulse, a transitory emotion, dependent upon circumstances; it is a living principle, a permanent power. The soul is fed by the streams of pure love that flow from the heart of Christ, as a well-spring that never fails. O, how is the heart quickened, how are its motives ennobled, its affections deepened, by this communion! Under the education and discipline of the Holy Spirit, the children of God love one another, truly, sincerely, unaffectedly,—“without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” And this because the heart is in love with Jesus. Our affection for one another springs from our common relation to God. We are one family, we love one another as He loved us. When compared with this true, sanctified, disciplined affection, the shallow courtesy of the world, the meaningless expression of effusive friendship, are as chaff to the wheat.

To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks.... Genuine love is a precious attribute of heavenly origin, which increases its fragrance in proportion as it is dispensed to others....

Christ’s love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known, not only to those we hold most dear in sacred relationship, but to all with whom we come in contact. It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy.

The Renewed Heart Bringeth Forth Good Things

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things. Matthew 12:35.

True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another.

The qualities which it is essential for all to possess are those which marked the completeness of Christ's character,—His love, His patience, His unselfishness, and His goodness. These attributes are gained by doing kindly actions with a kindly heart.... Christians love those around them as precious souls for whom Christ has died. There is no such thing as a loveless Christian; for "God is love." ... "This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you." This is the fruit that is to be given back to God.

The Lord will help every one of us where we need help the most in the grand work of overcoming and conquering self. Let the law of kindness be upon your lips and the oil of grace in your heart. This will produce wonderful results. You will be tender, sympathetic, courteous. You need all these graces. The Holy Spirit must be received and brought into your character; then it will be as holy fire, giving forth incense which will rise up to God, not from lips that condemn, but as a healer of the souls of men. Your countenance will express the image of the divine.... God requires every soul in His service to kindle their censers from the coals of sacred fire. The common, severe, harsh words that come from your lips so readily must be withheld, and the Spirit of God speak through the human agent. By beholding the character of Christ you will become changed into His likeness. The grace of Christ alone can change your heart and then you will reflect the image of the Lord Jesus. God calls upon us to be like Him,—pure, holy, and undefiled. We are to bear the divine image.

The Renewed Heart is a Pure Heart

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matthew 5:8.

The wisdom that is from above is “first pure.” Into the city of God there will enter nothing that defiles. All who are to be dwellers there, will here have become pure in heart. In one who is learning of Jesus, there will be manifest a growing distaste for careless manners, unseemly language, and coarse thought. When Christ abides in the heart, there will be purity and refinement of thought and manner.

But the words of Jesus, “Blessed are the pure in heart,” have a deeper meaning,—not merely pure in the sense in which the world understands purity, free from that which is sensual, pure from lust, but true in the hidden purposes and motives of the soul, free from pride and self-seeking, humble, unselfish, childlike....

The pure in heart see God in a new and endearing relation, as their Redeemer; and while they discern the purity and loveliness of His character, they long to reflect His image. They see Him as a Father longing to embrace a repenting son, and their hearts are filled with joy....

The pure in heart discern the Creator in the works of His mighty hand, in the things of beauty that comprise the universe. In His written Word they read in clearer lines the revelation of His mercy, His goodness, and His grace. The truths that are hidden from the wise and prudent, are revealed to babes. The beauty and preciousness of truth ... are constantly unfolding to those who have a trusting, childlike desire to know and to do the will of God....

The pure in heart live as in the visible presence of God during the time He apportions them in this world. And they will also see Him face to face in the future, immortal state, as did Adam when he walked and talked with God in Eden. “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.”

God's Peace Keeps the New Heart

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7.

When we receive Christ as an abiding guest in the soul, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. The Saviour's life on earth, though lived in the midst of conflict, was a life of peace. While angry enemies were constantly pursuing Him, He said, "He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." No storm of human or satanic wrath could disturb the calm of that perfect communion with God. And He says to us: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest." Bear with Me the yoke of service for the glory of God and the uplifting of humanity, and you will find the yoke easy, and the burden light....

Happiness drawn from earthly sources is as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend upon any circumstances in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living water, and happiness drawn from Him can never fail.

Every man's experience testifies to the truth of the words of Scripture, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest.... There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," Sin has destroyed our peace. While self is unsubdued, we can find no rest. The masterful passions of the heart no human power can control. We are as helpless here as were the disciples to quiet the raging storm. But He who spoke peace to the billows of Galilee, has spoken the word of peace for every soul. However fierce the tempest, those who turn to Jesus ... will find deliverance. His grace ... quiets the strife of human passion, and in His love the heart is at rest.

Transformed by the Renewing of the Mind

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:2.

Will men and women consider how God regards the creatures He has made? He formed man's mind. We do not think one noble thought that does not come from Him. He knows all the mysterious workings of human mind; for did He not make it? God sees that sin has debased and degraded man, but He looks upon him with pity and compassion; for He sees that Satan has him in his power.

All true reformation begins with soul-cleansing. It is by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the mind through the power of the Holy Spirit, that a change is wrought in the life.

By beholding Christ we become changed. If the mind dwells upon temporal things constantly, these things become all-absorbing, affecting the character, so that God's glory is lost sight of and forgotten. The opportunities that are within reach for them to become conversant with heavenly things, are overlooked. Spiritual life dies....

Make God your entire dependence. When you do otherwise, then it is time for a halt to be called. Stop right where you are, and change the order of things.... In sincerity, in soul-hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord's hands soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit ... then you will see heavenly things clearly.

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

Mind Increases Strength by Continual Effort

A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. Proverbs 24:5.

Put your highest power into your effort. Call to your aid the most powerful motives. You are learning. Endeavor to go to the bottom of everything you set your hand to. Never aim lower than to become competent in the matters which occupy you. Do not allow yourself to fall into the habit of being superficial and neglectful in your duties and studies; for your habits will strengthen and you will become incapable of anything better. The mind naturally learns to be satisfied with that which requires little care and effort, and to be content with something cheap and inferior. There are, young men and young women, depths of knowledge which you have never fathomed, and you are satisfied and proud of your superficial attainments. If you knew much more than you do now, you would be convinced that you know very little.

God demands of you vigorous and earnest intellectual efforts, and with every determined effort, your powers will strengthen. Your work will then always be agreeable, because you will know that you are progressing. You can either become accustomed to slow, uncertain, irresolute movements, so much so that the work of your life will not be one-half what it could be; or, your eyes fixed upon God, and your soul strengthened by prayer, you can overcome a disgraceful slowness and a dislike for work, and train your mind to think rapidly and to put forth strong efforts at the proper time.

God has given the human mind great power, power to show that the Creator has endowed man with ability to do a great work against the enemy of all righteousness, power to show what victories may be gained in the conflict against evil. To those who fulfill God's purpose for them will be spoken the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Every Thought Obedient to Christ

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.2 Corinthians 10:5.

The Lord purifies the heart very much as we air a room. We do not close the doors and windows, and throw in some purifying substance; but we open the doors and throw wide the windows, and let heaven's purifying atmosphere flow in.... The windows of impulse, of feeling must be opened up toward heaven, and the dust of selfishness and earthliness must be expelled. The grace of God must sweep through the chambers of the mind, the imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation, and every element of the nature must be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God.

The thoughts must be bound about, restricted, withdrawn from branching out and contemplating things that will only weaken and defile the soul. The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean.... The noble powers of the mind have been given to us by the Lord, that we may employ them in contemplating heavenly things. God has made abundant provision that the soul may make continual progression in the divine life....

We give our time and thought to the trivial and commonplace things of the world, and neglect the great interests that pertain to eternal life. The noble powers of the mind are dwarfed and enfeebled by lack of exercise on themes that are worthy of their concentration. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." ...As we meditate upon the perfections of our divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. We are called to come out and be separate from the world that we may be the sons and daughters of the Most High.

The Mind Must Be Fed With Pure Food

Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Proverbs 30:5.

There are many who are easily amused with story books. The mind is filled with a cheap kind of food for meditation, so that it becomes powerless to search and comprehend the very things which concern eternal interests. The Lord enjoins upon children and youth to search for truth as for hidden treasure, and to be attracted and fascinated by that which unites the human with the divine.

The mind must be fed with pure food if the heart be pure.... The Bible is the standard for the young who would be loyal to the King of heaven. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

It is impossible for the youth to possess a healthy tone of mind, and correct religious principles, unless they enjoy the perusal of the Word of God. This book contains the most interesting history, points out the way of salvation through Christ, and is their guide to a higher, and better life.

The Bible gives the true seeker an advanced mental discipline, and he comes from contemplation of divine things with his faculties enriched; self is humbled, while God and His revealed truth are exalted.... The Bible contains just that quality of food that the Christian needs, in order that he may grow strong in spirit and intellect.... Through the study of the Bible, converse is held with patriarchs and prophets. The truth is clothed in elevated language, which exerts a fascinating power over the mind; the thought is lifted up from the things of earth, and brought to contemplate the glory of the future immortal life.

Let the thought, the aptitude, the keen exercise of brain power, be given to the study of the thoughts of God.

We are to Take Time to Think About God

Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10.

Christians should ... cultivate a love for meditation, and cherish a spirit of devotion. Many seem to begrudge moments spent in meditation, and the searching of the Scriptures, and prayer, as though the time thus occupied was lost. I wish you could all view these things in the light God would have you; for you would then make the kingdom of Heaven of the first importance. To keep your heart in Heaven, will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties. To discipline the mind to dwell upon heavenly things, will put life and earnestness into all our endeavors.

Let every one who desires to be a partaker of the divine nature appreciate the fact that he must escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. There must be a steadfast resistance of temptation to sin in thought or act. The soul must be kept from every stain, through faith in Him who is able to keep you from falling. We should meditate upon the Scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be more intelligent and fervent.

When the mind is thus filled ... the believer in Christ will be able to bring forth good things from the treasure of the heart.

Turn Minds From the Artificial to the Natural

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Psalm 8:3, 4.

God encourages us to contemplate His works in the natural world. He desires that we shall turn our minds from the study of the artificial to the natural. We shall understand this better as we lift up our eyes to the hills of God, and contemplate the works which His own hands have created. His hand has molded the hills, and balanced them in their position, that they shall not be moved except at His command. The wind, the sun, the rain, the snow, and the ice are all ministers to do His will.

By the Christian, God's love and benevolence can be seen in every gift from His hands. The beauties of nature are a theme for contemplation. In studying the natural loveliness surrounding us, the mind is carried up through nature to the Author of all that is lovely. All the works of God are speaking to our senses, magnifying His power, exalting His wisdom. Every created thing has in it charms which interest the child of God, and mold his taste to regard these precious evidences of God's love above the work of human skill.

In words of glowing fervor, the prophet magnifies God in His created works: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained: what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

The world, filled with sport and pleasure-loving, is always thirsting for some new interest. And how little time and thought are given to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. The heavenly bodies are worthy of contemplation. God has made them for the benefit of man, and as we study His works, angels of God will be by our side to enlighten our minds.

The Mind Fixed on Christ

He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known. Proverbs 10:9.

The very first step in the path of life is to keep the mind stayed on God, to have His fear continually before the eyes. A single departure from moral integrity blunts the conscience, and opens the door to the next temptation. “He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his way shall be known.” We are commanded to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves; but the daily experience of life shows that this law is disregarded. Uprightness in deal and moral integrity will secure the favor of God, and make a man a blessing to himself and to society; but amid the varied temptations that assail one whichever way he may turn, it is impossible to keep a clear conscience and the approval of Heaven without divine aid and a principle to love honesty for the sake of the right.

A character that is approved of God and man is to be preferred to wealth. The foundation should be laid broad and deep, resting on the rock Christ Jesus. There are too many who profess to work from the true foundation, whose loose dealing shows them to be building on sliding sand; but the great tempest will sweep away their foundation, and they will have no refuge.... Do these persons see the future? Or are their eyes too dim to see, through the miasma-laden fogs of worldliness, that honor and integrity are not rewarded in the coin of this world? Will God reward virtue with mere worldly success? He has their names graven on the palms of His hands, as heirs to enduring honors, riches that are imperishable.

To dwell upon the beauty, goodness, mercy, and love of Jesus is strengthening to the mental and moral powers, and while the mind is kept trained to do the works of Christ, to be obedient children, you will habitually inquire, Is this the way of the Lord?

Changes Us from Sinners to Saints

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:18.

God is clothed with power; He is able to take those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and by the operation of the Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead, transform the human character, bringing back to the soul the lost image of God. Those who believe in Jesus Christ are changed from being rebels against the law of God into obedient servants and subjects of His kingdom. They are born again, regenerated, sanctified through the truth.

The world is to see God in His followers. Life and immortality are brought to light through those who are one with God in Christ. It is our privilege to have the spirit of light and knowledge that is the wisdom of heaven. All who have this spirit, in whatever position they may be placed, the highest or the lowest place of service, will reveal in their work the power of this light and knowledge.

Constantly we behold Him who lived among men a life of perfect obedience. The more closely we behold Him, the more nearly we shall resemble Him in character, and the greater will be our efficiency in working for others. We shall be lifted far above the trials and perplexities of this life.... Self is to be hidden. Christ alone is to appear, full of grace and truth....

Heaven is to begin on this earth. When the Lord's people are filled with meekness and tenderness, they will realize that His banner over them is love, and His fruit will be sweet to their taste. They will make a heaven below in which to prepare for heaven above.

He who receives Christ by living faith has a living connection with God.... He carries with him the atmosphere of heaven, which is the grace of God, a treasure that the world cannot buy.

If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth.

Changes Our Rudeness to Refinement

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Romans 12:9.

Habits, often repeated, make character. Children who allow themselves to speak rudely to one another, and to be impolite at home, are forming habits that will cling to them in after life, and that will be most difficult to overcome. They do not show that they fear the Lord. They do not manifest refinement of character; their disposition becomes coarse, lacking in civility and that which constitutes refinement of manners; and all this casts a reflection upon the home training. In the behavior of children away from home, strangers can read, as in an open book, the history of the home life. They read there of duties left undone, of want of thoughtfulness, of lack of self-forgetfulness, of a disposition toward strife, fretfulness, impatience; while those who show that they have the fear of the Lord before them will, in character and in words, testify of a home where love is cherished, where there is peace, where patience is cultivated, where attention is given to the little proprieties of life, each mindful of his duty to make others happy....

Are you all preparing to become members of the heavenly family? Are you seeking in the home life to be fitted to become members of the Lord's family? If so, make the home life happy by mutual self-sacrifice. If we want Jesus in our home, let kind words only be spoken there. The angels of God will not abide in a home where there is strife and contention. Let love be cherished, and peace and Christian politeness, and angels will be your guests.

If children and youth seek to be kind and courteous at home thoughtfulness will become an abiding habit. Every-day politeness will cause them to be always polite. Home is the very place in which to practice self-denial and thoughtfulness to each member of the family; thus it is with the family in heaven, thus it will be when the scattered families of earth are reunited in the heavenly home.

Changes Our Slothfulness to Dispatch

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. Romans 12:11.

There are young men and young women who are very much opposed to order and discipline.... They pay no heed to rules for rising and retiring at regular hours, but burn the midnight oil, and then lie in bed in the morning.... Would it not be well to break up the habit of turning the precious hours into night, and turning the hours of night into day by the use of artificial light? ...

As far as possible, it is well to consider what is to be accomplished through the day. Make a memorandum of the different duties that await your attention, and set apart a certain time for the doing of each duty. Let everything be done with thoroughness, neatness, and dispatch....

Give yourself a number of minutes to do the work, and do not stop to read papers and books that take your eye, but say to yourself, "No, I have just so many minutes in which to do my work, and I must accomplish my task in the given time." ... Let those who are naturally slow of movement, seek to become active, quick, energetic, remembering the words of the apostle, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." ...

If you are under the control of slow, dilatory movements, if your habits are of a lazy order, you will make a long job out of a short one; and it is the duty of those who are slow, to reform, and to become more expeditious. If they will, they can overcome their fussy, lingering habits....

Earnest, persevering effort will place you on the vantage-ground of victory; for he who strives to overcome in and through the grace of Christ, will have divine enlightenment, and will understand how great truths can be brought into little things, and religion can be carried into the little as well as into the large concerns of life.

Changes Our Stubborn Wills to Sanctified Wills

As the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Ephesians 6:6.

Let no one say, "I cannot overcome my defects of character"; for if this is your decision, then you cannot have eternal life. The impossibility is all in your will. If you *will not*, that constitutes the *cannot*.

The real difficulty is the corruption of an unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the will of God. When there is a determined purpose born in your heart to overcome, you will have a disposition to overcome, and will cultivate those traits of character that are desirable, and will engage in the conflict with steady, persevering effort. You will exercise a ceaseless watchfulness over your defects of character, and will cultivate right practices in little things. The difficulty of overcoming will be lessened in proportion as the heart is sanctified by the grace of Christ.

What a work might have been done for us as individuals, if our proud and stubborn wills had been wholly submerged in the will of God, and our souls lifted up from earthliness to a higher, purer atmosphere!

Self-will and pride are evils that turned angels into demons and barred the gates of heaven against them.

You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God, and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you.... There will be in you a power, an earnestness, and a simplicity that will make you a polished instrument in the hands of God.

Changes Our Constant Complaining to Praise

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Psalm 107:8.

We are heaven-bound, and we should show the attractive part of our faith. We should not go as a crippled band of mourners, groaning and complaining all along the journey to our Father's house.

Those professed Christians who are constantly complaining, who seem to think happiness and a cheerful countenance a sin, have not the genuine attributes of religion. Those who look upon nature's beautiful scenery as they would upon a dead picture; who choose to look upon dead leaves rather than to gather the beautiful flowers; who take a mournful pleasure in all that is melancholy in the language spoken to them by the natural world; who see no beauty in valleys clothed in living green, and grand mountain heights clothed with verdure; who close their senses to the joyful voice that speaks to them in nature, ...—these are not in Christ.

Suppose we change this order of things.... Suppose you try to count all your blessings. You have thought so little upon them, and they have been so continual, that when reverses or afflictions come, you are grieved, and think God is unjust. You do not call to mind how little gratitude you have manifested for all the blessings of God. You have not deserved them; but because they have flowed in upon you day by day, year by year, you have looked upon them as a matter of course, thinking it was your right to receive every advantage, and give nothing in return.... The blessings of God are more than the hairs of our head, more than the sands of the seashore. Meditate upon His love and care for us, and may it inspire you with love that trials cannot interrupt nor afflictions quench.

If we could only see the many dangers from which we are daily preserved by the holy angels, instead of complaining of our trials and misfortunes, we would talk continually of the mercies of God.

Changes Our Defiance to Submission

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Hebrews 13:17.

There are some young men and women who have no method in doing their work. Though they are always busy, they can present but little results. They have erroneous ideas of work, and think that they are working hard, when if they had practised method in their work, and applied themselves intelligently to what they had to do, they would have accomplished much more in a shorter time. By dallying over the less important matters, they find themselves hurried, perplexed, and confused when they are called upon to do those duties that are more essential.... Under circumstances like these, where young men and women are making such mistakes in their life discipline, it would be sinful not to speak words of advice and counsel.

It is an extremely delicate thing to tell people of their faults. The reprover is likely to find that in those reprov'd, pride and stubbornness assert themselves, and the will is arrayed in defiance and opposition. But for all this, advice should be given, and faults should be laid bare. Let the young cultivate a teachable spirit, that they may be benefited by the efforts of those who seek to help them....

It may seem that we are to study our own hearts, and square our own actions by some standard of our own; but this is not the case. This would but work deform instead of reform. The work must begin in the heart, and then the spirit, the words, the expression of the countenance, and the actions of the life, will make manifest that a change has taken place. In knowing Christ through the grace that He has shed forth abundantly, we become changed.... In humility we shall correct every fault and defect of character; because Christ is abiding in the heart, we shall be fitted up for the heavenly family above.

Changes Our Empty Lamps into Full Lamps

The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Matthew 25:4.

Let every youth consider the parable of the ten virgins. All had lamps, that is, an outward semblance of religion; but only five of them had the inward piety. Five of them were wanting in the oil of grace. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, was not abiding in their hearts. Without the oil of grace, of what use was it to bear about a lamp of profession? However high may be the profession, however high may be the position held by a professor of religion, if the oil of grace is wanting, he has nothing with which to feed his lamp, and it cannot send forth clear, shining rays of light...

The reason why the Bridegroom delays is because He is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. O the precious longsuffering of our merciful Saviour! O that each of the dear youth would appreciate the value of the soul that has been purchased at infinite cost on Calvary! O that each one would place a proper estimate upon the capabilities that have been given him of God! Through Christ you may climb the ladder of progress, and bring every power under the control of Jesus.... In spirit, in thought, in word, and in action, you may make manifest that you are moved by the Spirit of Christ, and your life may wield a power of influence over others.

We are living in altogether too solemn a period of the world's history to be careless and negligent.... You must pray, believe, and obey. In your own strength you can do nothing; but in the grace of Jesus Christ, you can employ your powers in such a way as to bring the greatest good to your own soul, and the greatest blessing to the souls of others. Lay hold of Jesus, and you will diligently work the works of Christ, and will finally receive the eternal reward.

God's Grace Sufficient for Every Need

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9.

If you have given yourself to God, to do His work, you have no need to be anxious for tomorrow. He whose servant you are, knows the end from the beginning. The events of tomorrow, which are hidden from your view, are open to the eyes of Him who is omnipotent.

When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. We may well have anxiety, and anticipate danger and loss; for it is certain to befall us. But when we really believe that God loves us, and means to do us good, we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear; for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.

Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee"; but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day's need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day's supply.

One day alone is ours, and during this day we are to live for God. For this one day we are to place in the hand of Christ, in solemn service, all our purposes and plans, casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for us. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil."

His Gifts are to Stablish and Strengthen Us

But the Lord of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 1 Peter 5:10.

Blessed is the soul who can say, "I am guilty before God: but Jesus is my Advocate. I have transgressed His law. I cannot save myself; but I make the precious blood that was shed on Calvary all my plea. I am lost in Adam, but restored in Christ. God, who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son to die, will not leave me to perish while repentant and in contrition of soul. He will not look upon me, for I am all unworthy; but He will look upon the face of His Anointed, He will look upon my Substitute and Surety, and listen to the plea of my Advocate, who died for my sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in Him. By beholding Him I shall be changed into His image. I cannot change my own character, save by partaking of the grace of Him who is all goodness, righteousness, mercy, and truth. But by beholding Him, I shall catch His spirit, and be transformed into His likeness..." The heart that is filled with the grace of Christ will be made manifest by its peace and joy; and where Christ abides, the character will become purified, elevated, ennobled, and glorified.

The Creator of all worlds proposes to love those who believe in His only-begotten Son as their personal Saviour, even as He loves His Son. Even here and now His gracious favor is bestowed upon us to this marvelous extent. He has given to men the gift of the Light and Majesty of heaven, and with Him He has bestowed all the treasures of heaven. Much as He has promised us for the life to come, He also bestows princely gifts upon us in this life, and as subjects of His grace, He would have us enjoy everything that will ennoble, expand, and elevate our characters.

The Lord has in readiness the most precious exhibitions of His grace to strengthen and encourage.

Let Us Come Boldly to the Throne of Grace

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16.

Jesus knows the needs of His children, and He loves to listen to their prayers. Let the children shut out the world and everything that would attract the thoughts from God, and let them feel that they are alone with God, that His eye looks into the inmost heart, and reads the desire of the soul, and that they may talk with God. In humble faith you may claim His promises, and feel that although you have nothing in yourself whereby you may claim the favor of God, because of the merits and righteousness of Christ, you may come boldly to the throne of grace, and find help in time of need. There is nothing that can make the soul so strong to resist the temptations of Satan in the great conflict of life, as to seek God in humility, laying before Him your soul in all its helplessness, expecting that He will be your helper and your defender.

With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. The longing that we should have for spiritual blessings is described in the words, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We need a deeper soul-hunger for the rich gifts that heaven has to bestow.

We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving kindness is better than life.

He desires to bestow on the children of men the riches of an eternal inheritance. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

Rejoice in the Rich Treasures of Grace

And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you. Deuteronomy 26:11.

Thanksgiving and praise should be expressed to God for temporal blessings and for whatever comforts He bestows upon us. God would have every family that He is preparing to inhabit the eternal mansions above, give glory to Him for the rich treasures of His grace. Were children, in the home life, educated and trained to be grateful to the Giver of all good things, we would see an element of heavenly grace manifest in our families. Cheerfulness would be seen in the home life, and coming from such homes, the youth would bring a spirit of respect and reverence with them into the schoolroom, and into the church. There would be an attendance in the sanctuary where God meets with His people, a reverence for all the ordinances of His worship, and grateful praise and thanksgiving would be offered for all the gifts of His providence....

Every temporal blessing would be received with gratitude, and every spiritual blessing become doubly precious because the perception of each member of the household had become sanctified by the Word of truth. The Lord Jesus is very near to those who thus appreciate His gracious gifts, tracing all their good things back to the benevolent, loving, care-taking God, and recognizing Him as the great Fountain of all comfort and consolation, the inexhaustible Source of grace.

If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessings that we know we have,—the great mercy and love of God,—we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God.

We have Received of God's Fullness

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. John 1:16.

Christ sought to save the world, not by conformity to it, but by revealing to the world the transforming power of the grace of God to mold and fashion the human character after the likeness of the character of Christ.

Satan has represented God as selfish and oppressive, as claiming all, and giving nothing, as requiring the service of His creatures for His own glory, and making no sacrifice for their good. But the gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart.... It declares that while God's hatred of sin is as strong as death, His love for the sinner is stronger than death. Having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work. No truth essential to our salvation is withheld, no miracle of mercy is neglected, no divine agency is left unemployed. Favor is heaped upon favor, gift upon gift. The whole treasury of heaven is open to those He seeks to save. Having collected the riches of the universe, and laid open the resources of infinite power, He gives them all into the hands of Christ, and says, All these are for man. Use these gifts to convince him that there is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness will be found in loving Me.

The Father appreciates every soul whom His Son has purchased by the gift of His life. Every provision has been made for us to receive divine power, which will enable us to overcome temptations. Through obedience to all God's requirements the soul is preserved unto eternal life.

God has a heaven full of blessings that He wants to bestow on those who are earnestly seeking for that help which the Lord alone can give.

We are Changed from Glory to Glory

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

When enlightened by the Spirit of God, the believer beholds the perfection of Jesus, and beholding this perfection, he rejoices with joy unspeakable. In self he sees sin and helplessness; in the Redeemer sinlessness and infinite power. The sacrifice that Christ made in order that He might impart to us His righteousness—this is a theme upon which we may dwell with deeper and still deeper enthusiasm. Self is nothing; Jesus is everything....

The transforming power of grace can make me a partaker of the divine nature. On Christ the glory of God has shone, and by looking upon Christ, contemplating His self-sacrifice, remembering that in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, the believer is drawn closer and closer to the Source of power....

How essential that we have the enlightenment of the Spirit of God; for thus only can we see the glory of Christ, and by beholding become changed from character to character in and through faith in Christ.... He has grace and pardon for every soul. As by faith we look to Jesus, our faith pierces the shadow, and we adore God for His wondrous love in giving us Jesus the Comforter....

The sinner may become a child of God, an heir of heaven. He may rise from the dust, and stand forth arrayed in garments of light.... At every step of advance, he sees new beauties in Christ, and becomes more like Him in character.

The love that was manifested toward him in the death of Christ, awakens a response of thankful love, and in answer to sincere prayer, the believer is brought from grace to grace, from glory to glory, until by beholding Christ, he is changed into the same image.

Redemption Through the Riches of God's Grace

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Ephesians 1:7, 8.

He [Christ] came ... to elevate and ennoble our mental powers, so that our efforts in this life might not be misdirected and lost...

The Lord Jesus came to strengthen every earnest seeker for truth, He came to reveal the Father. He allowed nothing to divert His mind from the great work of restoring the moral image of God in man. And we must see that the great and important work for us is to receive the divine likeness, to prepare a character for the future life. We must appropriate the heavenly truths to our special use in practical life. And we may carry with us all the treasure of knowledge that gives us a fitness for the life that measures with the life of God.

The knowledge of God is as high as the heaven, as broad as the earth.... Only those who read the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to them are the true learners. They tremble at the Word of God; for to them it is a living reality. They study, they search for the hidden treasure. They open the understanding and heart to receive, and they pray for heavenly grace, that they may obtain a preparation for the future, immortal life. As the heavenly torch is placed in his hand, man sees his own frailty, his infirmity, his hopelessness in looking to himself for righteousness. He sees that in himself there is nothing to recommend him to God. He prays for the Holy Spirit, the representative of Christ, to be his constant guide, to lead him into all truth.... All knowledge gained in this life of probation which will fit us to be companions of the saints in light is true education. It brings blessings to ourselves and others in this life, and will secure to us the future, immortal life, with all its imperishable riches.

Christ has a treasure house full of precious gifts for every soul.

Blind Bartimaeus' Faith in God's Grace Rewarded

And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. Mark 10:51.

It is only when the sinner feels the need of a Saviour, that his heart goes after the One who can help him. When Jesus walked among men, it was the sick that wanted a physician. The poor, the afflicted and distressed, followed after Him, to receive the help and comfort which they could not find elsewhere. Blind Bartimeus is waiting by the wayside; he has waited long to meet Christ.

Throng of people who possess their sight are passing to and fro, but they have no desire to see Jesus. One look of faith would touch His heart of love, and bring them the blessings of His grace; but they know not the sickness and poverty of their souls, and they feel no need of Christ. Not so with the poor blind man. His only hope is in Jesus. As he waits and watches, he hears the tread of many feet, and he eagerly inquires, What means this noise of travel? The by-standers answer that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." With the eagerness of intense desire, he cries, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" They try to silence him, but he cries the more vehemently, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" This appeal is heard. His persevering faith is rewarded. Not only is physical sight restored, but the eyes of his understanding are opened. In Christ he sees his Redeemer, and the Sun of Righteousness shines into his soul. All who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimeus, and who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave.

The afflicted, suffering ones who sought Christ as their helper, were charmed with the divine perfection, the beauty of holiness, that shone forth in His character.

Those who receive Christ by faith will receive also power to become the sons of God.

From a Slave to Sin, to a Prince of God

And he [Christ] said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. Genesis 32:28.

Because of the deception practiced to secure his father's blessing, intended for Esau, Jacob had fled for his life, alarmed by his brother's deadly threats. After remaining for many years an exile, he had set out, at God's command, to return with his wives and children, his flocks and herds, to his native country. On reaching the borders of the land, he was filled with terror by the tidings of Esau's approach at the head of a band of warriors, doubtless bent upon revenge.... Having sent his family away, that they may not witness his distress, Jacob remains alone to intercede with God.

Jacob, in the great crisis of his life, turned aside to pray. He was filled with one overmastering purpose,—to seek for transformation of character. But while he was pleading with God, an enemy, as he supposed, placed his hand upon him, and all night he wrestled for his life. But the purpose of his soul was not changed by peril of life itself. When his strength was nearly spent, the Angel put forth His divine power, and at His touch, Jacob knew Him with whom he had been contending. Wounded and helpless, he fell upon the Saviour's breast, pleading for a blessing. He would not be turned aside, nor cease his intercession, and Christ granted the petition of this helpless, penitent soul, according to His promise, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me...." Jacob pleaded with determined spirit, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." This spirit of persistence was inspired by Him who wrestled with the patriarch. It was He who gave him the victory, and He changed his name from Jacob to Israel, saying, "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." That for which Jacob had vainly wrestled in his own strength, was won through self-surrender and steadfast faith.

May—We Follow the Perfect Pattern

He Depended Completely on Divine Power

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. John 5:19.

Jesus is the perfect pattern, and it is the duty and privilege of every child and youth to copy the pattern. Let children bear in mind that the child Jesus had taken upon Himself human nature, and was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was tempted of Satan as all children are tempted. He was able to resist the temptation of Satan through His dependence upon the divine power of His heavenly Father, as He was subject to His will, and obedient to all His commands. He kept His Father's statutes, precepts, and laws. He was continually seeking counsel of God, and was obedient to His will.

It is the duty and privilege of every child to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.... It will please the Lord Jesus to have the children ask Him for every spiritual grace, to bring all their perplexities and trials to the Saviour; for He knows how to help the children and youth, because He was a child Himself, and was once subject to all the trials, disappointments, and perplexities to which children and youth are subject. God's promise is given as much to children and youth as to those of more mature age. Whenever God has given a promise, let the children and youth turn it into a petition, and beg the Lord to do those things for them in their experience, that He did for Jesus, His only begotten Son, when in human necessity He looked to God, asking for the things which He needed. Every blessing the Father has provided for those of more mature experience, has been provided for children and youth through Jesus Christ.

He Submitted to Parental Authority

And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. Luke 2:51.

Jesus claimed His sonship to the Eternal.... His first visit to the temple had awakened new impulses. All earthly obligations were, for the time, lost sight of; but with the knowledge of His divine mission, and of His union with God, He did not resist the authority of His parents. At their request He returned with them as a faithful, obedient son, and aided them in their life of toil. He buried in His own heart the secret of His future mission, waiting submissively until the period of His public ministry should commence before announcing to the world that He was the Messiah. He submitted to parental restraint, for the period of eighteen years after He had acknowledged that He was the Son of God, and lived the simple, common life of a Galilean, working at the carpenter's trade.... For thirty years He submitted to parental restraint....

It is common for children, even of Christian parents, when not over twelve years old, to feel that they must be allowed to follow their own desires. And parents are ready to be led by their children, rather than to lead them.... For this reason many youth come up with habits of selfishness and idleness. They are vain, proud, and headstrong.

When we look upon His patient self-denial, His shrinking from all notoriety, devoting Himself to His daily labor in a humble sphere, what a beautiful light is shed about His life! How clearly is pointed out the path in which children and youth should walk! ... Jesus was no less the Son of God in His lowly home, in His submission to His parents, than when God spoke from His eternal throne, saying, "This is my beloved Son."

The life of Christ assures a blessing forever upon a life of cheerful submission to parental restraint and a life of physical and mental industry.

He Was Obedient and Respectful

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. Hebrews 5:8.

If you are seeking to reflect the life and character of Christ, you will be true and obedient to your parents. You will show your love for them by your willing obedience.

No one can be truly good and great who has not learned to yield his will, first to his parents, and then to God, and to obey with alacrity. Those who learn to obey are the only ones who will be fitted to command.

By learning the lessons of obedience, children are not only honoring their parents and lightening their burdens, but they are pleasing One higher in authority. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is a positive command. Children who treat their parents with disrespect, and disregard their wishes, not only dishonor them, but break the law of God. The earlier the will is made to yield to the will of the parents, and the more complete the submission, the less difficult it will be to yield to the requirements of God. And none can hope for the love and blessing of God who do not learn obedience to His commandments, and stand up firmly against temptation.

His [Christ's] life was characterized with firmness, yet He was ever respectful and obedient.

He was a perfect pattern for all youth. Ever He manifested deference and respect for age. The religion of Jesus will never lead any child to be rude and uncourteous.

The infinite Eye can search the heart, and read every defect in the character. He does not estimate youth by their outward appearance, but from the goodness they possess at heart, which can only be gained by watchfulness and prayer.... He marks their deportment to their parents and the family circle. If they are respectful, kind, affectionate, and truly polite, ... their characters are recorded in the books of Heaven as valuable.

He Was Industrious

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. John 9:4.

The life of Christ demonstrates to all youth that a life of industry and obedience is favorable to the formation of good moral character, firm principles, strength of purpose, sound knowledge, and high spiritual attainments. Most of the youth of the present day cherish a love for exciting amusements, which is unfavorable for high attainments in mental culture, and for physical strength. The mind is not kept in a calm, healthful state for thought, but is, much of the time, under an excitement; in short, is intoxicated with the amusements it craves, which renders it incapable of close application, reflection, and study.

The young who do not cherish a respect for their parents, and a love to make themselves useful, cannot enjoy real pleasure.... The love of vain amusements relaxes the tone of mind, and weakens the morals so that many youth have but little self-control and firm principle.

In His industrious life there were no idle moments to invite temptation. No aimless hours opened the way for corrupting associations. So far as possible, He closed the door to the tempter. Neither gain nor pleasure, applause nor censure, could induce Him to consent to a wrong act....

He was not willing to be defective, even in the handling of tools. He was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in character. By His own example He taught that it is our duty to be industrious, that our work should be performed with exactness and thoroughness, and that such labor is honorable. The exercise that teaches the hands to be useful and trains the young to bear their share of life's burdens gives physical strength, and develops every faculty.... God appointed work as a blessing, and only the diligent worker finds the true glory and joy of life.

His Simplicity Gave Him Favor

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52.

It was the simplicity of the life of Christ, and His freedom from pride and vanity, that gave Him favor with God and man. He did not seek to attract attention for distinction.

The life of Christ was passed in simplicity and purity.... His wisdom was great, but it was child-like, and increased with His years. His childhood possessed peculiar gentleness, and marked loveliness. His character was full of beauty, and unsullied perfection.

In the life of Christ we see the only safe pattern for all children and youth. When children are disposed to rebel against parental authority, they are condemned by the life of their Redeemer, who was Himself once a child, and obedient to His parents. In what marked contrast is the character of children now. The majority of children live for their own pleasure, for the purpose of display. Some try to make brilliant speeches, that they may attract notice. Some seem to think that their worth will be estimated by their appearance. They are very precise in their dress, and devote much time and means for display, that they may attract attention, while they do not find time for, and have an interest in, secret prayer. They neglect the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, the apostle tells us, is of great price in the sight of God....

Wealth and dress are so common that, while they may excite envy, they cannot command true respect and admiration. A cultivated mind, adorned with the grace of meekness and humility, a pure and upright heart, will be reflected in the countenance, and command love and respect.

If the youth would become strong in mind, pure in morals, firm in spiritual power, let them follow the example of Jesus in His simplicity, in His submission to parental restraint.

In Baptism

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him, and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3:16, 17.

Jesus was our example in all things that pertain to life and godliness. He was baptized in Jordan, just as those who come to Him must be baptized. The heavenly angels were looking with intense interest upon the scene of the Saviour's baptism, and could the eyes of those who were looking on, have been opened, they would have seen the heavenly host surrounding the Son of God as He bowed on the banks of the Jordan. The Lord had promised to give John a sign whereby he might know who was the Messiah, and now as Jesus went up out of the water, the promised sign was given; for he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, hovered over the head of Christ, and a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ... Jesus, the world's Redeemer, has opened the way so that the most sinful, the most needy, the most oppressed and despised, may find access to the Father,—may have a home in the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love Him.

Those who have risen with Christ to walk in newness of life are the elect of God. They are holy unto the Lord, and are acknowledged by Him as His beloved. As such, they are under solemn covenant to distinguish themselves by showing humility of mind. They are to clothe themselves in garments of righteousness. They are separate from the world, from its spirit, its practises, and they are to reveal that they are learning of Him.... If they realize that they have died with Christ, if they keep their baptismal vow, the world will have no power to draw them aside to deny Christ. If they live the life of Christ in this world, they are partakers of the divine nature.

In the Study of the Scriptures

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Luke 24:27.

After Joseph and Mary had searched for Him [Christ] for three days, they found Him in the court of the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. He asked His questions with a grace that charmed these learned men.... His mother could not but mark His words, His spirit, His willing obedience to all her requirements.

It is not correct to say, as many writers have said, that Christ was like all children. He was not like all children. Many children are misguided and mismanaged. But Joseph, and especially Mary, kept before them the remembrance of their child's divine Fatherhood. Jesus was instructed in accordance with the sacred character of His mission. His inclination to right was a constant gratification to His parents.

His intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures shows how diligently His early years were given to the study of God's Word.

Christ opened the Scriptures to His disciples, beginning at Moses and the prophets, and instructed them in all things concerning Himself, and also explained to them the prophecies.

He pointed to the Scriptures as of unquestionable authority, and we should do the same.

Every child may gain knowledge as Jesus did. As we try to become acquainted with our heavenly Father through His Word, angels will draw near, our minds will be strengthened, our characters will be elevated, and refined.

Like Christ, we should be able to meet the enemy in time of temptation with, "It is written."

In the Study of Nature

Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee. Job 12:8.

The childhood and youth of Christ were spent in humble circumstances, under conditions that were favorable to the development of a sound constitution. His life was passed mostly in the open air. He drank of the pure streams of water, and ate the fruit of the gardens. He passed up and down the steep mountain paths, and through the streets of Nazareth, as He went to and from His place of toil to His home. He enjoyed the varied notes of the birds as they caroled forth their praise to their Creator. He took delight in the beauty of the flowers that decked the fields. He noted with joy the glory of the heavens, the splendor of sun, moon, and stars, and looked upon the rising and setting sun with admiration. The book of nature was open before Him, and He enjoyed its tender lessons. The everlasting hills, the olive groves, were favorite places of resort where He went to commune with His Father. He was filled with divine wisdom, and through the study of nature, and by meditation upon the communion with God, His spiritual powers were strengthened.

The Redeemer of the world passed up and down the hills and mountains, from the great plain to the mountain valley. He enjoyed nature's beautiful scenery. He was delighted with the fields glowing with the beautiful flowers, and in listening to the birds of the air, and uniting His voice with them in their happy songs of praise.

In the life of Christ, His childhood and youth, there is a lesson for the youth of today. Christ is our example, and in youth we should contemplate God in nature,—study His character in the work of His hands. The mind is strengthened by becoming acquainted with God, by reading His attributes in the things which He has made. As we behold the beauty and grandeur in the works of nature, our affections go out after God; and ... our souls are invigorated by coming in contact with the Infinite through His marvelous works.

In Communion With God

And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. Matthew 14:23.

The strength of Christ was in prayer... Christ retired to the groves or mountains with the world and everything else shut out. He was alone with His Father. With intense earnestness, He poured out His supplications, and put forth all the strength of His soul in grasping the hand of the Infinite. When new and great trials were before Him, He would steal away to the solitude of the mountains, and pass the entire night in prayer to His heavenly Father.

As Christ is our example in all things, if we imitate His example in earnest, importunate prayer to God that we may have strength in His name who never yielded to the temptations of Satan to resist the devices of the wily foe, we shall not be overcome by him.

Amid the perils of these last days, the only safety of the youth lies in ever-increasing watchfulness and prayer. The youth who finds his joy in reading the Word of God, and in the hour of prayer, will be constantly refreshed by drafts from the fountain of life. He will attain a height of moral excellence and a breadth of thought of which others cannot conceive. Communion with God encourages good thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, and lofty purposes of action. Those who thus connect themselves with God are acknowledged by Him as His sons and daughters. They are constantly reaching higher and still higher, obtaining clearer views of God and of eternity, until the Lord makes them channels of light and wisdom to the world.... The strength acquired in prayer to God will prepare us for our daily duties.

There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings.

In Keeping His Father's Commandments

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. John 15:10.

Christ was a representative before men and before angels, of the character of the God of heaven. He demonstrated the fact that when humanity depends wholly upon God, men may keep God's commandments and live, and His law be as the apple of the eye.

The example of Christ is authoritative for every son and daughter of Adam. He represented the law of God in His life, giving to men an example of what obedience to every precept will accomplish for human nature. He is our example, and every one who is endowed with reasoning faculties is required to follow in His footsteps; for His life is a perfect pattern to all humanity. Christ is the finished standard of the character to which every one may attain....

How did the world's Redeemer walk?—Not in a way to please Himself simply, but to glorify God by working the works of God in uplifting fallen man who had been made in the image of God. By precept and example, He taught men the way of righteousness, representing the character of God, and giving to the world a perfect standard of moral excellency in humanity. The two grand precepts of the law are to regulate the conduct of all humanity. This was the lesson that Jesus taught by both precept and example. He said to the people, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and ... thy neighbour as thyself." The Lord God of heaven requires of human intelligences supreme love and worship.

Let the human agent compare his life with the life of Christ.... Let him imitate the example of Him who lived out the law of Jehovah, who said, "I have kept my Father's commandments." Those who follow Christ will be continually looking into the perfect law of liberty, and through the grace given them by Christ, will fashion the character according to the divine requirements.

In Being the Light of the World

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8:12.

It was morning; the sun had just risen above the Mount of Olives, and its rays fell with dazzling brightness on the marble palaces, and lighted up the gold of the temple walls, when Jesus, pointing to it, said, "I am the light of the world."

By one who listened to these words, they were long afterward re-echoed in that sublime passage, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

Those who are sanctified through the truth, are as bright, shining lights, giving light to all that are in the house. Good works will be revealed in every true believer. The Lord can accept of nothing short of perfection of character, wholeness to God. Any half-hearted service will testify before the heavenly intelligences that you have failed to copy the Pattern.

Christ's followers are to be more than a light in the midst of men. They are *the* light of the world. Jesus says to all who have named His name, You have given yourselves to Me, and I have given you to the world as My representatives. As the Father had sent Him into the world, so He declares, "have I also sent them into the world." ... While our Saviour is the great source of illumination, forget not, O Christian, that He is revealed through humanity. God's blessings are bestowed through human instrumentality.... Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven's light and power to souls that are ready to perish.... If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence.

When the Light of the world passes by, privileges appear in all hardships, order in confusion, the success and wisdom of God in that which has seemed to be failure.

The gifts of light and life come to us together.

In Demonstrating God's Parental Attributes

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psalm 103:13.

In all the gracious deeds that Jesus did, He sought to impress upon men the parental, benevolent attributes of God. In all His lessons He was seeking to teach men the wonderful truth that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Jesus would have us understand the love of the Father, and He seeks to draw us to Him by presenting His parental grace. He would have the whole field of our vision filled with the perfection of God's character. In His prayer for His disciples He says, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.”

Jesus came into the world to illustrate the character of God in His own life, and He swept back the misrepresentations that Satan had originated, and revealed the glory of God. It was only by living among men that He could reveal the mercy, compassion, and love of His heavenly Father; for it was only by actions of benevolence that He could set forth the grace of God. The unbelief of men was deep seated, and yet they could not resist the testimony of His God-like example, and His deeds of love and truth.

The bounties of God's providence speak to every soul, confirming Christ's testimony to the supreme goodness of His Father. The Lord would have His people realize that the blessings bestowed upon any object of creation are proportionate to the place that object occupies in the scale of creation. If even the wants of dumb animals are supplied, can we appreciate the blessings which God will bestow upon the beings formed in His image?

God is love, and He cares for us. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

In Physical Development

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40.

The physical constitution of Jesus, as well as His spiritual development, is brought before us in these words, “The child grew,” and “increased in stature.” In childhood and youth attention should be given to physical development. Parents should so train their children in good habits of eating, drinking, dressing, and exercise, that a good foundation will be laid for sound health in after life. The physical organism should have special care, that the powers of the body may not be dwarfed, but developed to their full extent. This places the children and youth in a favorable position, so that, with proper religious training, they may, like Christ, wax strong in spirit....

Many claim that it is necessary for the preservation of physical health to indulge in selfish amusement. It is true that change is required for the best development of the body, for mind and body are refreshed and invigorated by change; but this object is not gained by indulgence in foolish amusements, to the neglect of daily duties which the youth should be required to do. The active mind and hands of youth must have employment, and if they are not directed to tasks that are useful, that will develop them and bless others, they will find employment in that which will work injury to them in both body and mind.

As Jesus worked in childhood and youth, mind and body were developed. He did not use His physical powers recklessly, but in such a way as to keep them in health, that He might do the best work in every line.

His life of natural simplicity was favorable to the development of a good physical constitution, and a firm, unsullied character.

Physically, as well as spiritually, He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

In Gaining Victory Over Appetite

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:3, 4.

The great trial of Christ in the wilderness on the point of appetite was to leave man an example of self-denial. This long fast was to convict men of the sinfulness of things in which professed Christians indulge. The victory which Christ gained in the wilderness was to show man the sinfulness of the very things in which he takes such pleasure. The salvation of man was in the balance, and to be decided by the trial of Christ in the wilderness. If Christ was a victor on the point of appetite, then there was a chance for man to overcome....

Christians, who understand the mystery of godliness, who have a high and sacred sense of the atonement, who realize in the sufferings of Christ in the wilderness a victory gained for them ... would be greatly strengthened by earnestly and frequently comparing their lives with the true standard, the life of Christ.... The amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ, the world's Redeemer, the only safe pattern for man to copy if he would overcome as Christ overcame.... Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam's experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ's example in overcoming appetite, and the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point, and coming off victor in every contest.

The habits of eating and drinking are the most difficult to overcome because Satan binds you securely to his chariot car.

All who give themselves to the service of Christ will follow the example of Christ, and will be perfect overcomers.

In Positive Self-Control

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Isaiah 53:7.

One class have come up without self-control; they have not bridled the temper or the tongue; and some of these claim to be Christ's followers, but they are not. Jesus has set them no such example.... Some are nervous, and if they begin to lose self-control in word or spirit under provocation, they are as much intoxicated with wrath as the inebriate is with liquor. They are unreasonable, and not easily persuaded or convinced. They are not sane; Satan for the time has full control. Every one of these exhibitions of wrath weakens the nervous system and the moral powers, and makes it difficult to restrain anger on another provocation.

With this class there is only one remedy,—positive self-control under all circumstances. The effort to get into a favorable place, where self will not be annoyed, may succeed for a time; but Satan knows where to find these poor souls, and will assail them in their weak points again and again. They will be continually troubled so long as they think so much of self.... But there is hope for them. Let this life, so stormy with conflicts and worries, be brought into connection with Christ, and then self will no longer clamor for the supremacy.... They should humble themselves, saying frankly, "I have done wrong. Will you forgive me? For God has said we must not let the sun go down upon our wrath." This is the only safe path toward overcoming. Many ... nurse their wrath, and are filled with revengeful, hateful feelings.... Resist these wrong feelings, and you will experience a great change in your association with your fellowmen.

When self ceases to wrestle for the supremacy, and the heart is worked by the Holy Spirit, the soul lies perfectly passive; and then the image of God is mirrored upon the heart.

His Principles are to Be Our Principles

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. John 13:15.

In this age we are pained to see that children and youth look upon themselves as too far advanced to submit themselves to the control of their parents.... They seem to imagine that to yield to parental authority would be an evidence of weakness, a sacrifice of their rightful independence. But instead of being capable of governing themselves, they are vacillating and weak in purpose. Their moral powers are feeble, and they have but little spiritual power. The reason why they are thus weak and easily led away by temptation, is that they do not imitate the life of Christ....

Instead of following in the footsteps of the divine Redeemer, they are filled with pride and self-esteem. They study inclination, and follow the bent of their unconsecrated minds.

In a moment He [Christ] distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong. It was this keen discrimination between right and wrong that often provoked Christ's brothers to anger. Yet His appeals and entreaties, and the sorrow expressed in His countenance, revealed such a tender, earnest love for them that they were ashamed of having tempted Him to deviate from His strict sense of justice and loyalty.

God will have a people zealous of good works, standing firm amid the pollutions of this degenerate age. There will be a people who hold so fast to the divine strength that they will be proof against every temptation. Evil communications in flaming handbills may seek to speak to their senses and corrupt their minds; yet they will be so united to God and angels that they will be as those who see not and hear not.... The youth may have principles so firm that the most powerful temptations of Satan will not draw them away from their allegiance.

When He Was Reviled, He Reviled Not

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.1 Peter 2:23.

How often we feel that we have been dealt with unjustly, that things have been said concerning us that were untrue, and that we have been set in a false light before others. When we are thus tried, we shall need to keep strict guard over our spirit and our words. We shall need to have the love of Christ, that we may not cherish an unforgiving spirit. Let us not think that unless those who have injured us confess their wrongs, we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. We should not accumulate our grievances, holding them to our hearts until the one we think guilty has humbled his heart by repentance and confession.... However sorely they may have wounded us, we are not to cherish our grievances and sympathize with ourselves over our injuries, but as we hope to be pardoned for our offenses against God, so must we pardon those who have done evil to us.... When we are reviled, how strong is the temptation to revile in return, but in doing this we show ourselves as bad as the reviler. When tempted to revile, send up a silent prayer that God will give you His grace, and keep the tongue in silence....

Jesus has given us an example that we should follow in His steps, and manifest compassion and love and good-will toward all. Let us cultivate a kind spirit, a spirit of forbearance, and tender, pitying love toward those, who, when under temptation, have done us grievous wrongs. If possible, let us heal these wounds, and close the door of temptation by removing every barrier the wrongdoer has erected between himself and us.... The Lord delights to bestow His blessings upon those who will honor Him, who will acknowledge His mercy, and show that they appreciate His love to them by manifesting the same gracious characteristic to those around them.

He Was Misunderstood and Often Stood Alone

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me. Isaiah 63:3.

What a support Christ would have found in His earthly relatives if they had believed in Him as one from heaven, and had co-operated with Him in doing the work of God! Their unbelief cast a shadow over the earthly life of Jesus. It was part of the bitterness of that cup of woe which He drained for us.... With their short measuring line they could not fathom the mission which He came to fulfill, and therefore could not sympathize with Him in His trials. Their coarse, unappreciative words showed that they had no true perception of His character, and did not discern that the divine blended with the human. They often saw Him full of grief; but instead of comforting Him, their spirit and words only wounded His heart....

These things made His path a thorny one to travel. So pained was Christ by the misapprehension in His own home that it was a relief to Him to go where it did not exist. Often He could find relief only in being alone, and communing with His heavenly Father.

Those who are called to suffer for Christ's sake, who have to endure misapprehension and distrust, even in their own home, may find comfort in the thought that Jesus has endured the same. He is moved with compassion for them. He bids them find companionship in Him, and relief where He found it, in communion with the Father. Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His "little ones," dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. He has toward them an exceeding tenderness, as far surpassing what our father or mother has felt toward us in our helplessness as the divine is above the human.

He Did Not Interfere With Those in Power

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. John 18:36.

Today in the religious world there are multitudes who, as they believe, are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and temporal dominion. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdoms of this world, the ruler in its courts and camps, its legislative halls, its palaces and market places. They expect Him to rule through legal enactments, enforced by human authority. Since Christ is not now here in person, they themselves will undertake to act in His stead.... The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ.... But He said, "My kingdom is not of this world." He would not accept the earthly throne.

The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses,—extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the Saviour attempted no civil reforms. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.

Not by the decisions of courts or councils or legislative assemblies, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

In Love for Others

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. Ephesians 5:1, 2.

You are to follow God as dear children, to be obedient to all His requirements, walking in love as Christ also hath loved us.... Love was the element in which Christ moved and walked and worked. He came to embrace the world in the arms of His love....

We are to follow the example set by Christ, and make Him our pattern, until we shall have the same love for others as He has manifested for us. He seeks to impress us with this profound lesson of love.... If your hearts have been given to selfishness, let Christ imbue you with His love. He desires that we shall love Him fully, and encourages, yes, even commands, that we shall love others as He has given us an example. He has made love the badge of our discipleship.... This is the measurement to which you are to reach,—“Love one another; as I have loved you.” What height, what depth and breadth of love! This love is not simply to embrace a few favorites, it is to reach to the lowliest and humblest of God’s creatures. Jesus says, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” ...

The love and sympathy which Jesus would have us give to others does not savor of sentimentalism, which is a snare to the soul; it is a love that is of heavenly extraction, which Jesus exemplifies by both precept and example. But instead of manifesting this love, how often we are alienated and estranged one from another.... The result is estrangement from God, a dwarfed experience, a blighting of Christian growth....

The love of Jesus is an active principle, uniting heart with heart in bonds of Christian fellowship. Every one who enters heaven will on earth have been perfected in love; for in heaven the Redeemer and the redeemed will be objects of our interest.

In Compassion

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. Matthew 14:14.

Let me point you to the life of Christ, to His compassion, His humility and love, His inexpressible tenderness. You are to copy His example. God has given you life and all the rich blessings that make it enjoyable, and in return He has claims upon you for service, for gratitude, for love, for obedience to His law. These claims are of the first importance, and cannot be lightly disregarded; but He requires nothing of you that will not make you happier, even in this life.

The Majesty of heaven identifies His interests with that of suffering humanity. Our associates and companions are in need of heartfelt kindness and tender sympathy.... It is impossible to grow up into Christ our living head, unless we practice the lesson He has given us of sympathy, compassion, and love. It is impossible to reflect the image of Christ unless this love which is of heavenly birth, is in the soul. No one will pass the portals of the city of God who does not reflect this attribute.

One unsanctified act on the part of our Saviour, would have marred the pattern, and He could not have been a perfect example for us; but although He was tempted in all points like as we are, He was yet without one taint of sin. He proclaims His character by the mouth of the prophet saying, "I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight." All who profess the name of Christ should delight in these things, by conversation and conduct making manifest to the world that they are copying the Pattern.... Whoever believes in Christ must do the works of Christ. The Lord has been presented before them as one who exercises loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, and these are the fruits that are borne by the genuine Christian.

In Cheerfulness

And now I exhort you to be of good cheer. Acts 27:22.

Jesus lived in a peasant's home, and faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in bearing the burdens of the household.... Jesus carried into His labor cheerfulness and tact. It requires much patience and spirituality to bring Bible religion into the home life and into the workshop, to bear the strain of worldly business, and yet keep the eye single to the glory of God. This is where Christ was a helper. He was never so full of worldly care as to have no time or thought for heavenly things. Often He expressed the gladness of His heart by singing psalms and heavenly songs. Often the dwellers in Nazareth heard His voice raised in praise and thanksgiving to God. He held communion with heaven in song; and as His companions complained of weariness from labor, they were cheered by the sweet melody from His lips. His praise seemed to banish the evil angels, and, like incense, fill the place with fragrance.

Do not frown and fret when any task is required of you, but cheerfully carry the little burdens.... They are nothing but plain, homely, every-day duties, and may appear to you very small and insignificant, but some one must do them. If you go about them with quick step, and a heart glad because you do something to lighten the cares of your parents, you will be a blessing in the home. You do not know how much good you can do by always wearing a cheerful, sunny face, and watching for opportunities to help.... Day by day you are building for eternity. Fashion your characters after the divine model. Weave into them all the kindness, thoughtful obedience, pains-taking, and love that you can.... Cultivate quick sympathy; always have a cheerful, happy face, and be ready to lend a helping hand to those who need your aid.... He [God] will make an accurate entry of every deed done to His glory.... And in the great day of final accounts you will receive a glorious reward.

In Soul Winning

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Matthew 4:19.

Jesus expects much of the youthful soldiers of His army, and let it be your determination that you will not disappoint your Captain and Leader. You are to wear His armor, to be marshaled under His banner, and become co-laborers with Him in conquering His enemies and extending His kingdom.... You cannot betray sacred trust without imperiling your soul. You are to be found loyal and true, obedient to every word of command, presenting to others the highest motive to action, and showing them the attractions of the service of Christ. You are to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Those who have experienced the love of Christ cannot be idlers in the Master's vineyard. They will see opportunities for helping others in their steps to Christ. Partaking of Christ's love, they will labor for the souls of others. Let every soul copy the Pattern, and become missionaries in the highest sense, winning souls to Jesus.

In view of what Christ has done for us, and what He suffered for sinners, we should, out of pure, disinterested love for souls, imitate His example by sacrificing our own pleasure and convenience for their good. The joy set before Christ, which sustained Him in all His sufferings, was the salvation of poor sinners. This should be our joy, and the spur of our ambition in the cause of our Master. In so doing we please God, and manifest our love and devotion to Him as His servants. He first loved us, and withheld not from us His beloved Son, but gave Him from His bosom to die that we might live. Love, true love, for our fellow-men, evinces love to God.

Those who are in vital contact with Christ will manifest it in their actions.... They will win souls to Christ, and bring sheaves to the heavenly garner.

In Doing Good and Blessing Others

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. Acts 10:38.

Christ wrought miracle after miracle when He was on this earth. In this work He showed what God can do for afflicted bodies and souls.... He was constantly ministering to others, improving every opportunity offered Him. Even in His childhood He spoke words of comfort and tenderness to young and old.... He was an example of what all children may strive to be.... In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed.

He possessed patience which nothing could ruffle, and truthfulness which would not be turned aside. His willing hands and feet were ever ready to serve others, and lighten the burdens of His parents.

Be careful to follow the example of Jesus. As the sun-flower is constantly turning its open blossom to the sun, so let your heart, your thoughts, ever turn to Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness. Do not make self a center, and your pleasures and your wishes first. Seek the good of others; study to be a blessing to them, and to glorify your Creator.

All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery. The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy. If Christ is abiding in us, our hearts will be full of divine sympathy. The sealed fountains of earnest, Christlike love will be unsealed.

There are many from whom hope has departed. Bring back the sunshine to them. Many have lost their courage.... Pray for these souls. Bring them to Jesus. Tell them that there is a balm in Gilead and a Physician there.

In Recognizing God as the Giver of All Gifts

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Psalm 68:19.

Under the Jewish economy, on the birth of children an offering was made to God, by His own appointment. Now we see parents taking special pains to present gifts to their children upon their birthdays; they make this an occasion of honoring the child, as though honor were due to the human being.... For life, health, food, and clothing, no less than for the hope of eternal life, we are indebted to the Giver of all mercies; and it is due to God to recognize His gifts, and to present our offerings of gratitude to our greatest benefactor. These birthday gifts are recognized in heaven.

If Christian parents had accustomed their children to present offerings to God in acknowledgment of His great gift of salvation to men, how different would be the character of the young. Their minds would have been called away from themselves to the blessed Saviour. They would have been taught to feel that He loved them, and that He is the source of all blessing; that He is their hope of happiness and eternal life.

If this kind of education had been given to our children, we should today see far less selfishness, far less envy and jealousy; we should have more manly young men and womanly young women. We should see the youth coming up with moral strength, with pure principles, with well-balanced minds and lovely characters, because the Model would be ever before them; they would be impressed with the importance of copying the excellence of Jesus, the Pattern.... God wants the youth and those of mature age to look to Him, to believe in Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and to have Him abiding in the heart; then a new life will quicken every faculty of the being. The divine Comforter will be with them, to strengthen them in their weakness, and guide them in their perplexity.... It will make plain to them the path of life.

In Forgiveness

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34.

Christ is our example. He placed Himself at the head of the human family to accomplish a work the importance of which men do not comprehend because they do not realize the privileges and possibilities before them as members of the human family of God.... His mercy was not weakness, but a terrible power to punish sin.... yet a power to draw to it the love of humanity. Through Christ Justice is enabled to forgive without sacrificing one jot of its exalted holiness.

Christ taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and added, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses." ...

Will you not, if any one has done you a wrong, and is too proud and stubborn to say to you, "I repent," go to the offender and say, "I love you for Christ's sake, and I forgive you the injury you have done me"? Jesus will witness and approved of this deed of love; and as you do to others, it shall be done again to you.

We are to have a spirit of pity, of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults. If they fail to repent and make confession, their sins will stand registered in the books above to confront them in the day of judgment; but if they say, "I repent," then ... we are freely to forgive from the heart their trespasses against us.

True happiness does not consist in the possession of wealth or position, but in the possession of a pure, clean heart, cleansed by obedience to the truth.... To every one is given the opportunity to carry out the principles of heaven. The forgiving of injuries, not the avenging of them, is an exhibition of that wisdom which is true goodness. Christlike love for the men through whom the Lord has wrought is a manifestation of real transformation of character.

We are to be Perfect as Christ is Perfect

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Hebrews 5:9.

Our Saviour took up the true relationship of a human being as the Son of God. We are sons and daughters of God. In order to know how to behave ourselves circumspectly, we must follow where Christ leads the way. For thirty years He lived the life of a perfect man, meeting the highest standard of perfection.

Our work is to strive to attain in our sphere of action the perfection that Christ in His life on the earth attained in every phase of character.

To go forward without stumbling, we must have the assurance that a hand all-powerful will hold us up, and an infinite pity be exercised toward us if we fall. God alone can at all times hear our cry for help.

It is a solemn thought that the removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to fulfill one good resolution, the formation of one wrong habit, may result not only in our own ruin, but in the ruin of those who have put confidence in us. Our only safety is to follow where the steps of the Master lead the way, to trust for protection implicitly to Him who says, "Follow me." Our constant prayer should be, "Hold up my goings in thy path, O Lord, that my footsteps slip not."

Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. In order to purify and refine our characters, we need the grace given us of Christ, that will enable us to see and correct our deficiencies, and improve that which is excellent in our characters.

The Son of God was faultless. We must aim at this perfection, and overcome as He overcame, if we would have a seat at His right hand.

We are to be Holy as Christ is Holy

Be ye holy; for I am holy.1 Peter 1:16.

With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in His sphere.

God expects us to build characters in accordance with the Pattern set before us. We are to lay brick upon brick, adding grace to grace, finding our weak points and correcting them in accordance with the directions given. When a crack is seen in the walls of a mansion, we know that something about the building is wrong. In our character building, cracks are often seen. Unless these defects are remedied, the house will fall when the tempest of trial beats upon it.

God gives us strength, reasoning power, time, in order that we may build characters on which He can place His stamp of approval. He desires each child of His to build a noble character, by the doing of pure, noble deeds, that in the end He may present a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by man and God.

In our character building we must build on Christ. He is the sure foundation—a foundation which can never be moved. The tempest of temptation and trial cannot move the building which is riveted to the Eternal Rock. He who would grow into a beautiful building for the Lord must cultivate every power of the being. It is only by the right use of the talents that the character can develop harmoniously. Thus we bring to the foundation that which is represented in the Word as gold, silver, precious stones—material that will stand the test of God's purifying fires.

Holiness is ... an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love.

We are to Overcome as Christ Overcame

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.,John 16:33.

Satan made stronger attacks upon Christ than he will ever make upon us. There was much at stake with him, whether Christ or himself should be conqueror. If Christ resisted his most powerful temptations, and Satan did not succeed in leading Him to sin, he knew that he must lose his power, and finally be punished with everlasting destruction. Therefore Satan worked with mighty power to lead Christ to do a wrong action, for then he would gain advantage over Him.... You can never be tempted in so determined and cruel manner as was our Saviour. Satan was upon His path every moment.

Will man take hold of divine power, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan, as Christ has given him example in His conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation? God cannot save man against his will from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must *do his part*; he must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Christ gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labor of overcoming, and then he will be partaker with Christ in His glory.

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the Word of God. By trusting in God's promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage.

We Follow Christ in the Ordinance of Humility

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. John 13:14, 15.

When the disciples entered the supper room, their hearts were full of resentful feelings. Judas pressed next to Christ on the left side; John was on the right. If there was a highest place, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be next to Christ....

Another cause of dissension had arisen. At a feast it was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests.... The pitcher, the basin, and the towel were there, in readiness for the feet washing; but no servant was present, and it was the disciples' part to perform it.... Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do. Then He, the divine Teacher, rose from the table. Laying aside the outer garment that would have impeded His movements, He took a towel, and girded Himself.... "After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet." ... So Christ expressed His love for His disciples.

The celebration of these ordinances is the fulfilling of the command, "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet...." What a place is this for hushing controversies, for forgiving those who have done us any injury. This is the time, if one has anything against his brother, to make it right, to settle every difficulty. Let there be mutual forgiveness. Let no strange flame be brought to the altar. Let no malice, no hatred, be cherished by those who meet round the communion table.

Whenever this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into a holy relationship, to help and bless each other.

We Follow Christ in the Communion Service

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.1 Corinthians 11:25.

Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals.... As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages.... Till He shall come the second time in power and glory, this ordinance is to be celebrated.

It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence.... All who come with their faith fixed upon Him will be greatly blessed. All who neglect these seasons of divine privilege will suffer loss. Of them it may appropriately be said, "Ye are not all clean."

...

But the Communion service was not to be a season of sorrowing. This was not its purpose.... They are not to recall the differences between them and their brethren. The preparatory service has embraced all this.... Now they come to meet with Christ. They are not to stand in the shadow of the cross, but in its saving light. They are to open the soul to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. With hearts cleansed by Christ's most precious blood, in full consciousness of His presence, although unseen, they are to hear His words, "Peace I leave with you." ...

The Communion service points to Christ's second coming. It was designed to keep this hope vivid in the minds of the disciples.... In their tribulation they found comfort in the hope of their Lord's return. Unspeakably precious to them was the thought, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

June—We Choose the Best

Choose Today to Serve Christ Always

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15.

We have been bought with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish. What a price is this, unparalleled, infinite! But though Christ has bought us, and invites us to come to Him, still the world holds out its attractions to us, and strives for the mastery. Shall love for God, or love for the world, triumph in the conflict? Satan and his evil angels are watching at every avenue leading to the human heart, seeking to force souls to accept evil suggestions. The enemy presents bribes to win us to the world, as he presented bribes to Christ in the wilderness of temptation. Unless we depend upon a power out of and above ourselves, the enemy will succeed in accomplishing our ruin. But in looking to Jesus, by studying His life and character, by earnestly desiring to be like Him, our minds will be balanced in the right direction, that we may overcome selfishness, and choose a course of righteousness....

I appeal to the youth: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." There is a necessity for a decided choice; for Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." ...

If your heart is filled with love to Christ, it will be demonstrated that He is stronger than the passions which have ruled you, whose indulgence have undermined noble impulses, and left the soul to the mercy of Satan's temptations.... When the heart of the sinner is touched, he yields his will to God's will.... He sees in Jesus matchless charms, and his heart is captivated.

Choose Christ as our Captain

And he said ... as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? Joshua 5:14.

When Joshua went forth in the morning before the taking of Jericho, there appeared before him a warrior fully equipped for battle. And Joshua asked, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" and He answered, "As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." If the eyes of Joshua had been opened ... and he could have endured the sight, he would have seen the angels of the Lord encamped about the children of Israel; for the trained army of heaven had come to fight for the people of God, and the Captain of the Lord's host was there to command.... It was not Israel, but the Captain of the Lord's host that took Jericho. But Israel had their part to act to show their faith in the Captain of their salvation.

Battles are to be fought every day. A great warfare is going on over every soul, between the prince of darkness and the Prince of life. There is a great battle to be fought, ... but you are not to do the main fighting here. As God's agent you are to yield yourselves to Him, that He may plan and direct and fight the battle for you, with your co-operation. The Prince of life is at the head of His work. He is to be with you in your daily battle with self, that you may be true to principle; that passion, when warring for the mastery, may be subdued by the grace of Christ; that you come off more than conqueror through Him that hath loved us. Jesus has been over the ground. He knows the power of every temptation. He knows just how to meet every emergency, and how to guide you through every path of danger.

He who has given His precious life because He loved you, and wanted you to be happy, will be a Captain who will always be mindful of your interest.

Counsel of a True Friend Rejoices the Heart

Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel. Proverbs 27:9.

Things will go wrong with every one; sadness and discouragement press every soul; then a personal presence, a friend who will comfort and impart strength, will turn back the darts of the enemy that are aimed to destroy. Christian friends are not half as plentiful as they should be. In hours of temptation, in a crisis, what a value is a true friend! Satan at such times sends along his agents to cause the trembling limbs to stumble; but the true friends who will counsel, who will impart magnetic hopefulness, the calming faith that uplifts the soul,—oh, such help is worth more than precious pearls.

The life of Samuel from early childhood had been a life of piety and devotion. He had been placed under the care of Eli in his youth, and the loveliness of his character drew forth the warm affection of the aged priest. He was kind, generous, diligent, obedient, and respectful.... It was a singular thing that between Eli, the chief magistrate of the nation, and the simple child so warm a friendship should exist. Samuel was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his child more tenderly than did Eli this youth....

How touching to see youth and old age relying one upon the other, the youth looking up to the aged for counsel and wisdom, the aged looking to the youth for help and sympathy. This is as it should be. God would have the young possess such qualification of character that they shall find delight in the friendship of the old, that they may be united in the endearing bonds of affection to those who are approaching the borders of the grave.

A strong, helpful grasp of the hand of a true friend is worth more than gold and silver.

Seek the Company of the Wise

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. Proverbs 13:20.

From the earliest years it is necessary to weave into the character principles of stern integrity, that the youth may reach the highest standard of manhood and womanhood.... The youth should seriously consider what shall be their purpose and life work, and lay the foundation in such a way that their habits shall be free from all taint of corruption. If they would stand in a position where they shall influence others, they must be self-reliant....

We may learn a lesson from the lily, and although surrounded with influences that would tend to corrupt the morals, and bring ruin upon the soul, we may refuse to be corrupted, and place ourselves where evil association shall not corrupt our hearts. Individually the youth should seek for association with those who are toiling upward with unfaltering steps.

Examine your own hearts, judge your own course. Consider what associates you are choosing. Do you seek the company of the wise, or are you willing to choose worldly associates, companions who fear not God, and obey not the gospel?

The only safe-guard for children and youth, is the love and fear of God. Let them choose for their companions those who give evidence that they will encourage good purposes, orderly habits, and uprightness of character. Let them choose for companions those who practise the Bible truth, and walk according to the light that shines upon their pathway.

If you would have broad views, noble thoughts and aspirations, choose associations that will strengthen right principles. Let every thought and the purpose of every action bend to the securing of the future life, with eternal happiness.

We Choose Our Associates Carefully

Put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them. Numbers 6:27.

God's Word places great stress upon the influence of association, even upon men and women. How much greater is its power on the developing mind and character of children and youth. The company they keep, the principles they adopt, the habits they form, will decide the question of their usefulness here, and of their future, eternal interest....

Through contact with the irreligious, the pleasure-loving, and the corrupt, many, many youth lose the simplicity and purity, the faith in God, and the spirit of self-sacrifice that Christian fathers and mothers have cherished and guarded by careful instruction and earnest prayer....

As a rule, men and women who have broad ideas, unselfish purposes, noble aspirations, are those in whom these characteristics were developed by their associations in early years. In all His dealings with Israel, God urged upon them the importance of guarding the associations of their children. All the arrangements of civil, religious, and social life were made with a view to preserving the children from harmful companionship, and making them, from their earliest years, familiar with the precepts and principles of the law of God. The object-lesson given at the birth of the nation was of a nature deeply to impress all hearts. Before the last terrible judgment came upon the Egyptians in the death of the first-born, God commanded His people to gather their children into their own homes. The doorpost of every house was marked with blood, and within the protection assured by this token all were to abide. So today parents who love and fear God are to keep their children under "the bond of the covenant,"—within the protection of those sacred influences made possible through Christ's redeeming blood.

We Do Not Consent to Enticement of Sinners

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.... For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. Proverbs 1:10, 16.

It is not safe for the professed follower of Christ to associate with the careless and reckless; for it is an easy matter to come to view things as they do, and to lose all sense of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Guard yourself on this one point in particular,—do not be influenced and led astray by those you have reason to know, by their words and works, are not in connection with God.

Hear the voice of God: “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” Those who are controlled by the Spirit of God are to keep their perceptive faculties awake; for the time has come when their integrity and loyalty to God and to one another will be tested. Do not commit the least injustice in order to gain an advantage for yourselves. Do unto others, in small matters as well as in great, as you would that others should do unto you. God says, “Ye are my witnesses.” You are to act in My place. Could the curtain be rolled back, you would see the heavenly universe looking with intense interest upon the one who is tempted. If you do not yield to the enemy, there is joy in heaven. When the first suggestion of wrong is heard, dart a prayer to heaven, and then firmly resist the temptation to tamper with the principles condemned in God’s Word. The first time the temptation comes, meet it in such a decided manner that it will never be repeated. Turn from the one who has ventured to present wrong practises to you. Resolutely turn from the tempter, saying, I must separate from your influence; for I know you are not walking in the footsteps of our Saviour.

Even though you may not feel able to speak a word to those who are working on wrong principles, leave them. Your withdrawal and silence may do more than words.... Have courage to do right.

We Choose a Life Companion Who Loves God

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos 3:3.

The Lord has not changed.... He is true, merciful, compassionate, faithful in the performance of His Word, both in promises and threatenings. One of the greatest dangers that besets the people of God today, is that of association with the ungodly; especially in uniting themselves in marriage with unbelievers. With many, the love for the human eclipses the love for the divine. They take the first step in backsliding by venturing to disregard the Lord's express command; and complete apostasy is too often the result. It has ever proved a dangerous thing for men to carry out their own will in opposition to the requirements of God. Yet it is a hard lesson for men to learn that God means what He says. As a rule, those who choose for their friends and companions, persons who reject Christ and trample upon God's law, eventually become of the same mind and spirit.

If we would rise to the highest moral excellence, and attain to the perfection of religious character, what discrimination should be used in the formation of friendships, and the choice of a companion for life....

Many who started out in life with as fair and promising a morning, in their limited sphere, as Solomon had in his exalted station, through one false and irrevocable step in the marriage relation, lose their souls, and draw others down to ruin with them.... Frivolous companions, who have no depth of principle, turn away the hearts of those who were once noble and true, to vanity, corrupting pleasures, and downright vice.

We should ever feel a deep interest in the salvation of the impenitent, and should manifest toward them a spirit of kindness and courtesy; but we can safely choose for our friends only those who are the friends of God.

Not a Favored Few, But Many Friends

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. Proverbs 17:17.

Sympathy is good, wisely given, but it must be judiciously imparted, with a knowledge that the subject is deserving sympathy. What shall be said of receiving advice and counsel? Proverbs 25:9-12. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: lest he that heareth it put thee to shame.... A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear." When we can associate together to help one another heavenward, when the conversation is upon divine and heavenly things, then it amounts to something to talk; but when the conversation centers upon self and upon earthly and unimportant matters, silence is golden. The obedient ear will receive reproof with humility, patience, and teachableness. Then only do our communications with each other prove beneficial, and fulfil all that God would have them. When both sides of the divine instruction are fulfilled, the wise reprove does his duty, and the obedient ear hears to a purpose and is benefited.

Every association we form, however limited, exerts some influence upon us. The extent to which we yield to that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy, the constancy of the intercourse, and our love and veneration for the one with whom we associate.

Your good will, your unselfish acts, will not be to a favored few, but to all with whom you associate. Thus you will form friends and attachments that are dear and lasting; your own deeds will be reflected back on yourself.

Through the social relations, Christianity comes in contact with the world. Every one who has received the divine illumination is to brighten the pathway of those who know not the Light of Life.

Jesus is a Friend That is Closer Than a Brother

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24.

Disappointments you will have, but ever bear in mind that Jesus, the living, risen Saviour, is your Redeemer, your Restorer. He loves you, and it is better to share His love than to sit with princes and be separated from Him....

Come daily to Jesus, who loves you. Open your heart to Him freely. In Him there is no disappointment. You will never find a better counsellor, a safer guide, a more sure defense.

Through all your trials ... you have had a never-failing Friend, who has said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

But how often is the Lord neglected for the society of others, and for things of no value! ... We dare not let His name languish on our lips, and His love and memory die out of our hearts. "Well," says the cold, formal professor, "this is making Christ too much like a human being;" but the Word of God warrants us to have these very ideas. It is the want of these practical, definite views of Christ, that hinders so many from having a genuine experience in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the reason that many are fearing and doubting and mourning. Their ideas of Christ and the plan of salvation are vague, dreary, and confused.... If ever there was a time when men needed the presence of Christ at their right hand, it is now, so that when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

Communion with Christ—how unspeakably precious! Such communion it is our privilege to enjoy, if we will seek it.

The everlasting assurance shall be yours that you have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Happy Home Atmosphere Promotes Health

Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord. Psalm 144:15.

A home where love dwells and where it finds expression in looks, in words, in acts, is a place where angels delight to dwell....

Let the sunshine of love, cheer, and happy content enter your own hearts, and let its sweet influence pervade the home.... The atmosphere thus created will be to the children what air and sunshine are to the vegetable world, promoting health and vigor of mind and body.

Educate the soul to cheerfulness, to thankfulness, and to the expression of gratitude to God for the great love wherewith He hath loved us.... Christian cheerfulness is the very beauty of holiness.

While grief and anxiety cannot remedy a single evil, they can do great harm; but cheerfulness and hope, while they brighten the pathway of others, "are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

The mother should cultivate a cheerful, contented, happy disposition. Every effort in this direction will be abundantly repaid in both the physical well-being and the moral character of her children. A cheerful spirit will promote the happiness of her family, and in a very great degree improve her own health.

The healthfulness of youth requires exercise, cheerfulness, and a happy, pleasant atmosphere surrounding them, for the development of physical health and symmetrical character.

As children of the light, God would have us cultivate a cheerful, happy spirit, that we may show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Labor Results in Health and Happiness

The Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. Deuteronomy 16:15.

A faithful fulfillment of home duties, filling the position you can occupy to the best advantage, be it ever so simple and humble, is truly elevating. This divine influence is needed. In this there is peace and sacred joy. It possesses healing power. It will secretly and insensibly soothe the wounds of the soul, and even the sufferings of the body. Peace of mind, which comes from pure and holy motives and actions, will give free and vigorous spring to all the organs of the body. Inward peace and a conscience void of offense toward God, will quicken and invigorate the intellect, like dew distilled upon the tender plants. The will is then rightly directed and controlled, and is more decided and yet free from perverseness. The meditations are pleasing because they are sanctified. The serenity of mind which you may possess, will bless all with whom you associate.... The more you taste this heavenly peace and quietude of mind, the more it will increase. It is an animated, living pleasure which does not throw all the moral energies into a stupor, but awakens them to increased activity. Perfect peace is an attribute of Heaven which angels possess.

Never will children and youth feel the peace of contentment until by the faithful performance of home duties they relieve the tired hands and weary heart and brain of the mother.... Those who neglect to bear part of the responsibilities of the home are the ones who are troubled with loneliness and discontent; for they have not learned the truth that those who are happy are happy because they share the daily routine of work.

Well-directed labor is just what they require to make them strong, vigorous, cheerful, happy, and courageous to meet the various trials with which this life is beset.

Health and Happiness in the Out-of-Doors

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.Psalm 104:24.

From out-of-door life, men, women and children will gain the desire to be pure and guileless. By the influence of the quickening, reviving, life-giving properties of nature's great medicinal resources, the functions of the body are strengthened, the intellect awakened, the imagination quickened, the spirits enlivened. The mind is prepared to appreciate the beauties of God's Word.

The pure air has in it health and life. As it is breathed in, it has an invigorating effect on the whole system.

In itself the beauty of nature leads the soul away from sin and worldly attractions, and toward purity, peace, and God.

For this reason the cultivation of the soil is good work for children and youth. It brings them into direct contact with nature and nature's God.... To the nervous child or youth, ... it will be especially valuable. There is health and happiness for him in the study of nature; and the impressions made will not fade out of his mind, for they will be associated with objects that are continually before his eyes.

In the natural world, God has placed in the hands of the children of men the key to unlock the treasure-house of His word. The unseen is illustrated by the seen; divine wisdom, eternal truth, infinite grace, are understood by the things that God has made.... God has made this world fair because He delights in our happiness.

In order for children and youth to have health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and well-developed muscles and brains, they should be much in the open air, and have well-regulated employment and amusement.

True happiness is found, not in the indulgence of pride and luxury, but in communion with God through His created work.

By Preserving the Living Machinery

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.3 John 1:2.

The right use of one's self is the most valuable lesson that can be learned. We are not to do brain work, and stop there, or make physical exertion, and stop there; we are to make the best use of the various parts that compose the human machinery,—brain, bone, muscle, head, and heart.

The right use of one's self includes the whole circle of obligations to one's self, to the world, and to God. Then use the physical powers proportionately with the mental powers. Every action derives its quality from the motive which prompts it, and if the motives are not high, and pure, and unselfish, the mind and character will never become well balanced....

You are the Lord's; for He created you. You are His by redemption; for He gave His life for you.... Preserve every portion of the living machinery, that you may use it for God. Preserve it for Him. Your health depends upon the right use of your physical organism. Do not misuse any portion of your God-given powers, physical, mental, or moral. All your habits are to be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God.

If young men and women would grow up to the full stature of Christ Jesus, they must treat themselves intelligently.... Unhealthful habits of every order—late hours at night, late hours in bed in the morning, rapid eating—are to be overcome. Masticate your food thoroughly. Let there be no hurried eating. Have your room well ventilated day and night, and perform useful physical labor.... By properly using our powers to their fullest extent in the most useful employment, by keeping every organ in health, by so preserving every organ that mind, sinew, and muscle shall work harmoniously, we may do the most precious service for God.

Careful Habits Ensure Good Health

I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord.,Jeremiah 30:17.

The mind does not wear out nor break down so often on account of diligent employment and hard study, as on account of eating improper food at improper times, and of careless inattention to the laws of health.... Irregular hours for eating and sleeping sap the brain forces. The apostle Paul declares that he who would be successful in reaching a high standard of godliness must be temperate in all things. Eating, drinking, and dressing all have a direct bearing upon our spiritual advancement.

Health is a blessing which few appreciate.... Many eat at all hours, regardless of the laws of health. Then gloom covers the mind. How can men be honored with divine enlightenment when they are so reckless in their habits, so inattentive to the light which God has given in regard to these things.... Life is a holy trust, which God alone can enable us to keep, and to use to His glory. But He who formed the wonderful structure of the body will take special care to keep it in order if men do not work at cross-purposes with Him.

Health, life, and happiness are the result of obedience to physical laws governing our bodies. If our will and way are in accordance with God's will and way; if we do the pleasure of our Creator, He will keep the human organism in good condition, and restore the moral, mental, and physical powers, in order that He may work through us to His glory.... If we co-operate with Him in this work, health and happiness, peace and usefulness, are the sure result.

He did not die for us in order that we might become slaves to evil habits, but that we might become the sons and daughters of God, serving Him with every power of the being.

My dear young friends, advance step by step, until all your habits shall be in harmony with the laws of life and health.

We Are to Be Clean Inwardly and Outwardly

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. Ezekiel 36:25.

In order to be acceptable in God's sight, the leaders of the people were to give strict heed to the sanitary condition of the armies of Israel, even when they went forth to battle. Every soul, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest soldier in the army, was sacredly charged to preserve cleanliness in his person and surroundings; for the Israelites were chosen by God as His peculiar people. They were sacredly bound to be holy in body and spirit. They were not to be careless or neglectful of their personal duties. In every respect they were to preserve cleanliness. They were to allow nothing untidy or unwholesome in their surroundings, nothing which would taint the purity of the atmosphere.

The Ten Commandments, spoken by Jehovah from Sinai, cannot live in the hearts of persons of disorderly, filthy habits. If ancient Israel could not so much as listen to the proclamation of that holy law, unless they had obeyed the injunction of Jehovah, and had cleansed their clothing, how can that sacred law be written upon the hearts of persons who are not cleanly in person, in clothing, or in their houses? It is impossible.

Heaven is a clean and holy place. God is pure and holy. All who come into His presence should take heed to His directions, and have the body and the clothing in a pure, clean condition, thus showing respect to themselves and to Him. The heart must also be sanctified. Those who do this will not dishonor His sacred name by worshipping Him while their hearts are polluted and their apparel is untidy. God sees these things. He marks the heart-preparation, the thoughts, the cleanliness ... of those who worship Him.

Angels are impressed with the things which they behold in the outward surroundings of God's people.

Daniel Blessed for Choosing the Best

And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Daniel 1:15.

The youth should stand in a position where their hearts may be wholly the Lord's; where they are honoring God with their strength. God will then honor them by giving them knowledge and wisdom. Thus did Daniel in the courts of Babylon, standing true to principle amid the corruptions of the heathen. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank."

Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon.

By the example of Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, we see that it is impossible to reach the standard which that Lord would have His children reach, and practise an easy, accommodating kind of religion that leaves principle out, and is controlled by circumstances. Youth who would serve the God of heaven, cannot engage in worldly merriment, eat of enervating luxuries, or drink strong drink because it is set before them by the honored or wealthy men of the world, whom they fear to offend by refusing their favors. They may think that they have been especially honored, and that courtesy demands the acceptance of the favors proffered them; but loyalty to God must take the precedence, and fear to offend the Lord of heaven must control the Christian. The king of Babylon thought that he was bestowing great favors upon Daniel and his fellows; but they had respect unto God's commandments more than unto the favor of the king.... God honored Daniel, and He will honor every youth who takes the course that Daniel took in honoring God.

We Choose to Please God, Not Ourselves

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. John 8:29.

Had He [Christ] chosen to do so, He could have passed His days in a world of His own creating, in ease and plenty, and claimed for Himself all the pleasures and enjoyment the world could give Him. But He did not consider His own convenience. He lived not to please Himself, but to do good and lavish His blessings upon others.

There is no help for man, woman, or child, who will not hear and obey the voice of duty; for the voice of duty is the voice of God. The eyes, the ears, and the heart, will become unimpressible if men and women refuse to give heed to the divine counsel, and choose the way that is best pleasing to themselves.

The man or woman that leaves the place that God has given him or her, in order to please inclination, and acts on his own devised plan meets with disappointment, because he has chosen his way instead of God's way....

Our heavenly Father is our Ruler, and we must submit to His discipline. We are members of His family. He has a right to our service.... We must not study to have our own way, but God's way and God's will.... Human beings suffer much because they step out of the path that God has chosen for them to follow. They walk in the sparks of the fire they themselves have kindled, and the sure result is affliction, unrest, and sorrow, which they might have avoided if they had submitted their will to God.... Whatever path God chooses for us, whatever way He ordains for our feet, that is the only path of safety.... With the eye of faith, with childlike submission as obedient children, we must look to God, to follow His guidance, and difficulties will clear away. The promise is, "I will instruct thee and teach thee."

We Do All in the Name of Jesus

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:17.

The Lord requires that every human agent shall do his best; and those that do their best will have the greatest personal satisfaction, and will bring the greatest satisfaction to those who have an interest in them. The youth need to realize that they need a deep experience in the things of God. A mere surface work will be of no benefit to them. You need to bring the light of God's Word into your heart, that you may search it with a lighted candle....

When you associate together, you may be a help and a blessing one to another if you surround yourselves with an influence that is divine; but there are those who have grave defects which are gaining a deeper hold upon them, and which, if not overcome, will drive the Spirit of God out of the heart.... Bible religion is not one influence among many others, but its influence is supreme, pervading and controlling every other influence. Bible religion is to exercise control over life and conduct. It is not to be like a dash of color brushed here and there upon the canvas, but its influence is to pervade the whole life, as though the canvas were dipped into the color until every thread of the fabric was dyed a deep, fast, unfading hue. The Lord will give you understanding in all practical Bible truths as you bring them into your life practice. Principles of truth are to be carried out in your practical experience in every-day matters.

Even in the smaller duties of common life, we are to make continual growth in grace, supplied with high and holy motives, powerful because they proceed from One who gave His life to furnish us with the incentive to be wholly successful in the formation of Christian character.

Wherever the religion of Christ works, it will brighten and sweeten every detail of life with more than an earthly joy and a higher than earthly peace.

With Recreation That Results in Joy

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. Psalm 5:11.

The enemy of righteousness has every kind of pleasure prepared for youth in all conditions of life; and they are not presented alone in crowded cities, but in every spot inhabited by human beings. Satan loves to secure the youth in his ranks as soldiers. The arch fiend well knows with what material he has to deal; and he has displayed his infernal wisdom in devising customs and pleasures for the youth which will separate their affections from Jesus Christ. The various amusements of society have been the ruin of thousands and tens of thousands who, had it not been for these attractions, would have been obedient children, respectful to their parents, upright, pure, and noble in their pursuits and in their character.

Should Christ come among the assembly who were absorbed in their plays and frivolous amusements, would the solemn melody of His voice be heard in benediction, saying, "Peace be to this house"? How would the Saviour of the world enjoy these scenes of gaiety and folly?

Pride and ambition are never satisfied, but those who are truly wise will find substantial and elevating pleasure in the sources of enjoyment that God placed within the reach of all.

It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God. Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical. We can conduct them in such a manner as will benefit and elevate those with whom we associate, and better qualify us and them to more successfully attend to the duties devolving upon us as Christians.... The religion of Christ is cheering and elevating in its influence.

With Good Books That Ennoble the Mind

Blessed is he that readeth.Revelation 1:3.

We made it a practice to read instructive and interesting books, with the Bible, in the family circle, and our children were always happy as we thus entertained them. Thus we prevented a restless desire to be out in the street with young companions, and at the same time cultivated in them a taste for solid reading.... The volumes of "Spirit of Prophecy," [The Conflict of the Ages series replaced this four-volume set.] should be in every family, and should be read aloud in the family circle.... The Testimonies contain instruction which meets the case of all, both parents and children. Should these be read aloud to the entire family, the children as well as the parents would be benefited by their counsels, warnings, and reproofs.... Let the time be devoted to the reading of the Scriptures and other interesting books that will impart knowledge and inculcate right principles. Let the best reader be selected to read aloud, while other members of the family are engaged in useful occupations. Thus these evenings at home may be made both pleasant and profitable.

Children need proper reading, which will afford amusement and recreation, and not demoralize the mind or weary the body.

Most children and young people will have reading matter; and if it is not selected for them, they will select it for themselves. They can find a ruinous quality of reading anywhere, and they soon learn to love it; but if pure and good reading is furnished them, they will cultivate a taste for that.

By practising right-doing, a disgust will be created in the heart for that which is low, cheap, and disorderly.

Pure healthful reading will be to the mind what healthful food is to the body. You will thus become stronger to resist temptation, to form right habits, and to act upon right principles.

With Good Music That Will Be a Blessing

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Psalm 100:2.

Let there be singing in the home, of songs that are sweet and pure, and there will be fewer words of censure, and more of cheerfulness and hope and joy.... As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer.

I feel alarmed as I witness everywhere the frivolity of young men and young women who profess to believe the truth.... They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind, so that Christ is not desired.... Solemn responsibilities rest upon the young, which they lightly regard. The introduction of music into their homes, instead of inciting to holiness and spirituality, has been the means of diverting their minds from the truth. Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should have been devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse.

What if you have been educated and trained in the art of music, and yet have never been taught to sing the new song? What will all this training amount to, if you have not been properly trained to be members of the Lord's family, sons and daughters of God?

No one who has an indwelling Saviour will dishonor Him before others by producing strains from a musical instrument which call the mind from God and Heaven to light and trifling things.

Music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which is pure, noble, and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and gratitude to God.

As the Lord's army of workers here below sing their songs of praise, the choir above join with them in thanksgiving, ascribing praise to God and to His Son.

With Holiness in All Conversation

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Peter 1:15.

Where the heart is purified and refined, and made fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the tongue will be sanctified to the glory of God.... You can surround your souls with an atmosphere that will be like breezes from the heavenly Eden. Open your heart to the Lord Jesus. Guard your tongue. Let not your tongue run at random in jesting and joking. These are signs that your heart needs to be cleansed from its defilement....

Our words index the state of our heart; and whether men talk much or little, their words express the character of their thoughts. A man's character may be quite accurately estimated by the nature of his conversation. Sound, truthful words have the right ring in them.

Educate yourself to carry a pleasant countenance, and bring all the sweetness and melody possible into your voice.

The voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The tongue is a world of blessing, or a world of iniquity.

Some are seen to come forth from their daily communion with God clothed with the meekness of Christ. Their words are not like a desolating hail, crushing everything before it; they come forth sweetly from their lips. They scatter seeds of love and kindness all along their path, and that all unconsciously, because Christ lives in their heart. Their influence is felt more than it is seen.

Kind, tender, compassionate words will flow from sanctified hearts and lips.

With a Happy Sabbath Day of Worship and Rest

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, ... ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. Leviticus 23:3.

Whatever of ours God claims from us, He returns again, enriched, transfigured, with His own glory....

The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. It was God's plan for the members of the family to be associated in work and study, in worship and recreation, the father as priest of his household, and both father and mother as teachers and companions of their children. But the results of sin, having changed the conditions of life, to a great degree prevent this association. Often the father hardly sees the faces of his children throughout the week. He is almost wholly deprived of opportunity for companionship or instruction. But God's love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another.

Since the Sabbath is the memorial of creative power, it is the day above all others when we should acquaint ourselves with God through His works.... Happy the father and mother who can teach their children God's written Word with illustrations from the open pages of the book of nature; who can gather under the green trees, in the fresh, pure air, to study the Word and to sing the praise of the Father above.

By such associations parents may bind their children to their hearts, and thus to God, by ties that can never be broken.

The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy.

To Accept the Light God Sends

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Psalm 43:3.

The Lord Jesus came to our world full of mercy, life, and light, ready to save those who should come unto Him. But He can save no one against his will. God does not force the conscience; He does not torture the body that He may compel men to compliance with His law. All this work is after the order of Satan....

The Lord has made it apparent that He proffers to the sinner the privilege of cooperating with God. He gives light, and furnishes evidence of the truth. He makes plain what are His requirements, and it is left with the sinner as to whether he will accept the truth, and receive grace and power by which he may comply with every condition, and find rest in giving willing service to Jesus Christ, who has paid the price of his redemption. If the sinner hesitates, and fails to appreciate the light that has reached his intellect and stirred the emotions of his soul, and refuses to render obedience to God, the light grows dim, has less and less force, and finally vanishes from his view. Those who fail to appreciate the first rays of light, will not heed more decided evidences of the truth. If the tender appeals of God fail to meet with a response in the heart of the sinner, the first impressions made upon his mind lose their significance, and he is finally left in darkness. The invitation is full of love. The light is as bright when he finally refuses it, as when it first dawned upon his soul; but through rejection of light, his soul becomes full of darkness, and does not realize what is the peril of disregarding the light. Christ says to such a soul, "Yet a little while is the light with you."

Today make your calling and election sure. Peter gives a copy of the best life insurance policy in the world. He says: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you ... according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

Divine Wisdom

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. Proverbs 8:11.

If Adam and Eve had never touched the forbidden tree, the Lord would have imparted to them knowledge,—knowledge upon which rested no curse of sin, knowledge that would have brought them everlasting joy. The only knowledge they gained by their disobedience was a knowledge of sin and its results....

Age after age, the curiosity of men has led them to seek for the tree of knowledge; and often they think they are plucking fruit most essential, when, like Solomon's research, they find it altogether vanity and nothingness in comparison with that science of true holiness which will open to them the gates of the city of God. The human ambition has been seeking for that kind of knowledge that will bring to them glory and self-exaltation and supremacy. Thus Adam and Eve were worked upon by Satan until God's restraint was snapped asunder, and their education under the teacher of lies began in order that they might have the knowledge which God had refused them.

True wisdom is a treasure as lasting as eternity. Many of the world's so-called wise men are wise only in their own estimation. Content with the acquisition of worldly wisdom, they never enter the garden of God, to become acquainted with the treasures of knowledge contained in His holy Word. Supposing themselves to be wise, they are ignorant concerning the wisdom which all must have who gain eternal life.... The unlearned man, if he knows God and Jesus Christ, has a more enduring wisdom than has the most learned man who despises the instruction of God.

Divine wisdom is to be a lamp to your feet.... Everything that can be shaken will be shaken; but rooted and grounded in the truth, you will abide with those things that cannot be shaken.

True Beauty

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. Psalm 90:17.

There is a natural tendency with all to be sentimental rather than practical. In view of this fact, it is important that parents, in the education of their children, should direct and train their minds to love truth, duty, and self-denial, and to possess noble independence, to choose to be right, if the majority choose to be wrong....

If they preserve to themselves sound constitutions and amiable tempers, they will possess true beauty that they can wear with a divine grace. And they will have no need to be adorned with artificials, for these are always expressive of an absence of the inward adorning of true moral worth. A beautiful character is of value in the sight of God. Such beauty will attract, but not mislead. Such charms are fast colors; they never fade.

The pure religion of Jesus requires of its followers the simplicity of natural beauty and the polish of natural refinement and elevated purity, rather than the artificial and false.

There is an ornament that will never perish, that will promote the happiness of all around us in this life, and will shine with undimmed luster in the immortal future. It is the adorning of a meek and lowly spirit.... Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array in comparison with the loveliness of Christ. Natural loveliness consists in symmetry, or the harmonious proportion of parts, each with the other; but spiritual loveliness consists in the harmony of likeness of our souls to Jesus. This will make its possessor more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles its possessor and reflects beams of glory upon others, attracting them also to the Source of light and blessing.

Honesty

Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.2 Corinthians 8:21.

In all business transactions, we are to let the light shine decidedly. There is to be no sharp practice. Everything is to be done with the strictest integrity. Better consent to lose something financially than to gain a few shillings by sharp practice. We shall lose nothing in the end by fair dealing. We are to live the law of God in our world, and perfect a character after the divine similitude. All business, with those in the faith and those not in the faith, is to be transacted on square, righteous principles. Everything is to be seen in the light of God's law, everything done without fraud, without duplicity, without one tinge of guile.

For a Babylonish robe and a paltry treasure of gold and silver, Achan consented to sell himself to evil, to bring upon his soul the curse of God, to forfeit his title to a rich possession in Canaan, and lose all prospect of the future, immortal inheritance in the earth made new. A fearful price indeed he paid for his ill-gotten gains!

Deal honestly and righteously in this present evil world. Some will be honest when they see that honesty will not endanger their worldly interest; but all who act from this principle will have their names blotted out of the book of life.

Strict honesty must be cultivated. We can go through the world but once; we cannot come back to rectify any mistakes; therefore every move made should be with godly fear and careful consideration....

When God makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be His chosen ones, His treasures. Angels are preparing crowns for such; and light from the throne of God will be reflected in its splendor from these star-gemmed diadems.

Discretion

Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee. Proverbs 2:11.

By your choice words and a consistent course of action, by your propriety, your earnest piety, make a telling confession of your faith, determined that Christ shall occupy the throne in the soul temple; and lay your talents without reserve at His feet to be employed in His service.... Make it the law of your life from which no temptation or side interest shall cause you to turn, to honor God.

In this fast age, reeking with corruption, you are not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare. I appeal to you as followers of Christ, making an exalted profession, to cherish the precious, priceless gem of modesty. This will guard virtue.

Holiness of heart will never lead to impure actions.... The truth of heavenly origin never degrades the receiver ...; on the contrary, it sanctifies the believer, refines his taste, elevates and ennoble him, and brings him into a close connection with Jesus. It leads him to regard the apostle Paul's injunction to abstain from even the appearance of evil, lest his "good should be evil spoken of."

This is a subject to which we must give heed. We must guard against the sins of this degenerate age. We must stand aloof from everything that savors of undue familiarity. God condemns it. It is forbidden ground, upon which it is unsafe to set the feet. Every word and action should tend to elevate, refine, and ennoble the character.

My good name is capital of far more value to me than gold or silver. Let me preserve it untarnished. If men assail that name, it shall not be because I have given them occasion to do so, but for the same reason that they spoke of evil of Christ,—because they hated the purity and holiness of His character; for it was a constant rebuke to them.

Joseph Chose Life's Best, Samson Did Not

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Galatians 6:8.

Few temptations are more dangerous or more fatal to young men than the temptation to sensuality and none if yielded to will prove so decidedly ruinous to soul and body for time and eternity. The welfare of his entire future is suspended upon the decision of a moment. Joseph calmly casts his eyes to heaven for help, slips off his loose outer garment, leaving it in the hand of his tempter and while his eye is lighted with determined resolve in the place of unholy passion, he exclaims, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" The victory is gained; he flees from the enchanter; he is saved.

Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or the wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God... Samson, under ... temptations, which he had brought upon himself, gave loose rein to passion. The path which he entered upon he found to end in shame, disaster, and death. What a contrast to the history of Joseph!

Amidst the snares to which all are exposed, they need strong and trustworthy defenses on which to rely... The shield of grace can preserve all unconquered by the temptations of the enemy, though surrounded with the most corrupting influences. By firm principle, and unwavering trust in God, their virtue and nobleness of character can shine, and, although surrounded with evil, no taint need be left upon their virtue and integrity.

The Better Inheritance

An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Peter 1:4.

Our petitions to God should not proceed from hearts that are filled with selfish aspirations. God exhorts us to choose those gifts that will redound to His glory. He would have us choose the heavenly instead of the earthly. He throws open before us the possibilities and advantages of a heavenly commerce. He gives encouragement to our loftiest aims, security to our choicest treasure. When the worldly possession is swept away, the believer will rejoice in his heavenly treasure, the riches that cannot be lost in any earthly disaster.

How sad it is that men turn from the immortal inheritance, and live for the gratification of pride, for selfishness and display, and through submission to the rule of Satan, lose the blessing which they might have both in this life and in the life to come. They might enter into the palaces of heaven, and associate on terms of freedom and equality with Christ and heavenly angels, and with the princes of God, and yet, incredible as it may seem, they turn from heavenly attractions....

Satan is contending for the souls of men.... He would not have them catch a glimpse of the future honor, the eternal glories, laid up for those who shall be inhabitants of heaven, or have a taste of the experience that gives a foretaste of the happiness of heaven....

Those who accept Christ as their Saviour have the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.... The lowliest disciple of Christ may become an inhabitant of heaven, an heir of God to an inheritance incorruptible, that fadeth not away. O that every one might make choice of the heavenly gift, become an heir of God to that inheritance whose title is secure from any destroyer, world without end! O, choose not the world!

July—We Face the Future With Courage

To Confess Christ

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.1 John 4:15.

The confession of which John here speaks, is not the result of a nominal faith, but is the result of an abiding faith in the living Saviour,—the result of believing that the blessings of salvation are brought within our reach through the sufferings and death of Christ, who was raised from the dead, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. We should feel assured that Jesus is our Saviour, and that life would not be enjoyable, nor afford us peace or hope, if He had not loved us and given Himself for us.

Our claim to Christ's righteousness is without a flaw, if we meet the conditions upon which it is promised. God has bestowed upon us all heaven in one rich gift, and whatever the gift includes is ours, if we accept Christ as our personal Saviour.... Speak of Jesus, educate the tongue to speak of His mercy, to tell of His power, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Christian youth, you are a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. Be brave in God. Put on the whole armor of God, and let unbelievers about you see that your life is not spoiled because you stand loyal and true to all the commandments of God. You can be, and God requires you to be, a decided witness for Him.

We need to dwell on the words of courage that Christ spoke to His disciples toward the close of His earthly ministry.... Though a cruel death was just before Him, Christ's words to His followers were full of hope. He desired to bring all the comfort possible to their hearts. Let us be strong in Him.

To Study the Scriptures

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Romans 15:4.

This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape,—a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven.... This Word ... is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world, bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way.

There never was a time when it was so important that followers of Christ should study the Bible as now. Deceptive influences are upon all sides, and it is essential that you counsel with Jesus, your best friend.... David declares, “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” How many are betrayed into sin, because they have not, through prayerful study of the Word of God, realized the sinfulness of sin, and found out how they may steadfastly resist it. When temptation comes upon them, they seem to be off guard, and ignorant of the devices of the enemy. We are living in perilous times, and as we draw near the close of earth’s history, there will be no safety for those who do not become familiar with the Word of God.... Everything that can be shaken, will be shaken.... The children of God have reached the most critical part of their pilgrimage; for the nets and pitfalls of the enemy are on every side. And yet with the guidance of the Lord, with that which is plainly revealed in His Word, we may walk securely and not stumble.... A voice from heaven is addressing us in its pages.

Obedience to God’s Word is our only safeguard against the evils that are sweeping the world to destruction.

To Trust Him

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Proverbs 29:25.

The Lord desires you to be of good courage. Brace up.... Satan is working on every hand to destroy faith, and to make people unhappy.

If you are not experienced in discerning the devices of Satan, your only safety is in prayer. Lay open all the secrets of the heart to the search of the infinite eye, and plead with God to make you pure and strong, and to arm you completely for the great conflicts of life. Faith grows by conflicts with doubts; virtue gathers strength by the resistance of temptation.

All blessings are bestowed upon those who have a vital connection with Jesus Christ. Jesus calls them to Himself not simply to refresh us with His grace and presence for a few hours, and then to send us forth from His light to walk apart from Him in sadness and gloom. No, no. He tells us that we must abide with Him and He with us. Wherever His work is to be done, He is present, tender, loving, and compassionate. He has prepared for you and me an abiding dwelling place in Himself. He is our refuge. Our experience should broaden and deepen. Jesus has opened up all the divine fullness of His inexpressible love.... Talk courage, talk faith, talk hope. My brother and sister in the Lord, be of good courage. O, how little we know what is before us! We will give ourselves entirely to Jesus, to be wholly His, and then say, "Not my will, but thy will, O God, be done." ... You have the tender love and compassion of your Saviour. Look to Him always. Trust in Him continually, and doubt not His love. He knows all our weakness and that which we need. He will give us grace sufficient for our day. Only look to Jesus continually, and be of good courage.

In genuine faith there is a buoyancy, a steadfast principle, which neither time nor toil can weaken.

To Walk in His Way

The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity. Proverbs 10:29.

If from the beginning we had walked in the counsel of God, thousands more would have been converted to the present truth. But many have made crooked paths for their feet. My brethren, make straight paths, lest the lame be turned out of the way. Let no one follow a crooked path that some one else has made, for thus you would not only go astray yourself, but would make this crooked path plainer for some one else to follow. Determine that as for yourself, you will walk in the path of obedience. Know for a certainty that you are standing under the broad shield of Omnipotence. Realize that the characteristics of Jehovah must be revealed in your life, and that in you a work must be accomplished that will mold your character after the divine similitude. Yield yourself to the guidance of Him who is the Head over all.

We are doing our work for the judgment. Let us be learners of Jesus. We need His guidance every moment. At every step we should inquire, "Is this the way of the Lord?" not, "Is this the way of the man who is over me?" We are to be concerned only as to whether we are walking in the way of the Lord.

God will honor and uphold every true-hearted, earnest soul who is seeking to walk before Him in the perfection of Christ's grace. He will never leave nor forsake one humble, trembling soul. Shall we believe that He will work in our hearts? that if we allow Him to do so, He will make us pure and holy, by His rich grace qualifying us to be laborers together with Him? Can we with keen, sanctified perception appreciate the strength of His promises, and appropriate them, not because we are worthy, but because by living faith we claim the righteousness of Christ?

There is nothing so great and powerful as God's love for those who are His children.

To Enjoy Perfect Love

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.1 John 4:18.

This is an important statement; for there are many who desire to love and serve God, and yet when afflictions comes upon them, they do not discern the love of God in it, but the hand of the enemy. They mourn and murmur and complain; but this is not the fruit of love to God in the soul. If we have perfect love, we shall know that God is not seeking to injure us, but that in the midst of trials, and griefs, and pains, He is seeking to make us perfect, and to test the quality of our faith. When we cease to worry about the future, and begin to believe that God loves us, and means to do us good, we shall trust Him as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, and our will will be swallowed up in the will of God.

Through an abiding Christ you will become Christlike in character. The Lord desires you to stand by His side, as a kind, patient, humble son of God. The Lord designs that the laborers in His service shall represent His love....

Our relations with one another should be pleasant. When we do right, the testimony of our own spirit and the testimony of the Spirit of God bear witness that the human mind is under the control of the divine mind.... His Word furnishes evidence from which we may draw the conclusion that we are indeed His sons and daughters.... True love for God carries with it true, reverential trust. And he who loves God will love his brother also.

“Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three,”—faith, which takes hold of Omnipotence and refuses to be baffled; hope, which turns the future triumphs of the good and the true into present encouragement and joy; and love, which consecrates all to God and for God.

To Live in Harmony With His Law

Be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. Joshua 1:7.

God calls for men,—for those who in His sight will *betruue*. Reforms must be brought about in the churches. There is now great need of reinstating in the hearts of men and women an old-time reverence for the ten commandments. Through obedience to these commandments, humanity is to be sanctified, that the results of skepticism shall not be strengthened, but that the foundation of our faith shall be made manifest, and all the precepts of God's holy law enforced. The realization of individual responsibility is to be awakened. Men are to remember that in order to be regarded *asmen* by the Lord, their course of action must be just, pure, and true.

Men and women may shun the reproach they are called upon to bear for Christ's sake, they may do the works of the children of transgressors, but as surely as they do this, they will receive the reward of the evildoer. They may climb to places of distinction, they may stand high in the literary world, and with proud superiority they may resist the truth of heavenly origin; but in the end they will lose all.

Our happiness and salvation depend upon eating the bread of life; that is, obeying the words and doing the works of Christ, advancing righteousness and restraining unrighteousness. Nothing can give such self-reliance, such courage, such an increase of talents and ability, as a true estimate of the requirements of God's law.... Love for Jesus Christ leads us to obey God's commandments, which are a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, securing for us the illuminating, purifying, blissful presence of both the Father and the Son. He who is obedient can commune with God even as did Enoch.

To Keep the Sabbath

And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. Exodus 20:20.

It requires moral courage to take a position to keep the commandments of the Lord. An opposer of the truth once said that it was only weak-minded people ... who would turn away from the churches to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath. But a minister who had embraced the truth replied, "If you think it takes weak-minded persons, just try it." It takes moral courage, firmness, decision, perseverance and very much prayer to step out on the unpopular side....

Standing under the broad shield of Omnipotence, we do not feel that we are in the minority. God is a majority.... We are to consider that Christ has set us to be a light amid the moral darkness of the world. We are not to misinterpret the character of God, we are not to be fretful, to speak out what we think, to blame and criticize and censure others; but we are to let the Holy Spirit fashion the character after the similitude of Christ.

Now let us see what Jesus will do for us if we let Him. In His prayer for His disciples He said, "And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Is it possible to have joy in obeying Christ? It is the only real joy that any soul can have.

Will the Saviour ever turn away to leave you to struggle alone? No, never.... Poverty is coming upon this world, and there will be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. There will be wars and rumors of wars, and the faces of men will gather paleness. You may have to suffer distress; you may go hungry sometimes; but God will not forsake you in your suffering. He will test your faith.... We are here to manifest Christ to the world, to represent Him and His power to mankind.

God Gives Spirit of Power and Love

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7.

We are now in a time when we are to stand steadfast for the truth. We are to cherish love for souls, but never, never are we to surrender the least vital point of truth, for it is by maintaining truth, pure, unadulterated truth, that we can at this time bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ our Prince. The Word is the bread of life, and in the Word Christ's disciples are represented as eating and drinking the flesh and the blood of Christ,—making His Word a part of their lives. No lie is of the truth. Truth will stand the test in the time of false theories, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end....

Let us exercise faith in God, and keep close to the side of Christ in following His Word. The Lord will teach His people if they will be taught. We can stand where we can hear the instruction of Christ. We have a living God and a living Christ. Whole legions of devils are watching their opportunities to get hold of human minds, but if we keep close to the Word, we shall not be overcome. "Wherefore," said Paul to Timothy, "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

We need to have a living faith in Jesus Christ. We need to exercise faith, that when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will lift up a standard for us against him. A heart true to God is often in prayer. Do not let one wave of discouragement come over you. We must give our thoughts to the contemplation of the character and the works of God, teaching Christ's words. Be of good courage. Let your courage and your constant reliance upon Jesus Christ inspire in others belief and increased faith and hope.

Sense of God's Presence Banishes Fear

Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. Joshua 1:9.

Only the sense of God's presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden. Let him fix in his memory the promise, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Let him read that wonderful story of Elisha in the mountain city, and, between him and the hosts of armed foemen, a mighty encircling band of heavenly angels. Let him read how to Peter, in prison and condemned to death, God's angel appeared; how, past the armed guards, the massive doors and great iron gateway with their bolts and bars, the angel led God's servant forth in safety. Let him read of that scene on the sea, when to the tempest-tossed soldiers and seamen, worn with labor and watching and long fasting, Paul the prisoner, on his way to trial and execution, spoke those grand words of courage and hope: "Be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you.... For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." In the faith of this promise Paul assured his companions, "There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you." So it came to pass. Because there was in that ship one man through whom God could work, the whole ship-load of heathen soldiers and sailors was preserved....

Let the self-distrustful, whose lack of self-reliance leads them to shrink from care and responsibility, be taught reliance upon God. Thus many a one who otherwise would be but a cipher in the world, perhaps only a helpless burden, will be able to say with the apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

God's Goodness and Mercy Inspire Courage

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Psalm 23:6.

Christ has given us no assurance that to attain to perfection of character is an easy matter. It is a conflict, a battle and a march, day by day. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven. In order to share with Christ in His glory we must share in His suffering.... He has overcome for us. Shall we, then, be timid and cowardly because of the trials that we meet as we advance? ...

When we have a deeper appreciation of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, we shall praise Him, instead of complaining. We shall talk of the loving watchcare of the Lord, of the tender compassion of the Good Shepherd. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like a clear, flowing stream, will come from God's truly believing ones. They will say, "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." ...

Why not awake the voice of spiritual song in the days of our pilgrimage? ... We need to study God's Word, to meditate and pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the notes of thanksgiving sung by the heavenly choir around the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assembly of the saints. Little disappointments and difficulties will be lost sight of.

The Lord is our helper...No one ever trusted God in vain. He never disappoints those who put their dependence on Him. If we would only do the work that the Lord would have us do, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, our hearts would become sacred harps, every chord of which would send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sin of the world.

Praise to God Brings Courage

And when he [Jehoshaphat] had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever.2 Chronicles 20:21.

“And...he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army.”... They praised God for the victory, and four days thereafter the army returned to Jerusalem, laden with the spoils of their enemies, singing praise for the victory won.

Do you not think that if more of this were done now, our hope and courage and faith would be revived? Would not the hands of the soldiers who are standing in defense of the truth be strengthened? If there were much more praising the Lord, and far less doleful recitation of discouragement, many more victories would be gained.

God is the eternal, uncreated Fountain of all good. All who trust in Him will find Him to be this. To those who serve Him, looking to Him as their heavenly Father, He gives the assurance that He will fulfil His promises. His joy will be in their hearts, and their joy will be full.

It is our privilege to open our hearts, and let the sunshine of Christ's presence in. My brother, my sister, face the light. Come into actual, personal contact with Christ, that you may exert an influence that is uplifting and reviving. Let your faith be strong and pure and steadfast. Let gratitude to God fill your hearts. When you rise in the morning, kneel at your bedside, and ask God to give you strength to fulfil the duties of the day, and to meet its temptations. Ask Him to help you to bring into your work Christ's sweetness of character. Ask Him to help you to speak words that will inspire those around you with hope and courage, and draw you nearer to the Saviour.

Walking in the Light Brings Courage

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. Ephesians 5:8.

“Walk in the light.” To walk in the light means to resolve, to exercise thought, to exert will-power, in an earnest endeavor to represent Christ in sweetness of character. It means to put away all gloom. You are not to rest satisfied simply in saying, “I am a child of God.” Are you beholding Jesus, and, by beholding, becoming changed into His likeness? To walk in the light means advancement and progress in spiritual attainments. Paul declared, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but ... forgetting those things which are behind,” constantly beholding the Pattern, I reach “forth unto those things which are before.” To walk in the light means to “walk uprightly,” to walk “in the way of the Lord,” to “walk by faith,” to “walk in the Spirit,” to “walk in the truth,” to “walk in love,” to “walk in the newness of life.” It is “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

What a terrible thing it is to darken the pathway of others by bringing shadow and gloom upon ourselves! Let each one take heed to himself. Charge not upon others your defections of character.... Talk light; walk in the light. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”... Gather to your souls the courage that can come only from the Light of the world.

When the light of heaven shines upon the human agent, his countenance will express the joy of the Lord within. It is the absence of Christ from the soul that makes people sad and of a doubtful mind. It is the want of Christ that makes the countenance sad, and the life is a pilgrimage of sighs. Rejoicing is the very keynote of the Word of God for all who receive Him. Why? Because they have the Light of life. Light brings gladness and joy, and that joy is expressed in the life and the character.

Gather Courage from the Coldness of Others

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Matthew 24:12, 13.

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” The very atmosphere is polluted with sin. Soon God’s people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal. Instead of being strengthened and confirmed by opposition, threats, and abuse, they will cowardly take the side of the opposers. The promise is: “Them that honour me I will honour.”...

Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in peril by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void His law. When God’s wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? Now is the time for God’s people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in the defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason....

The Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the conflict in which they must engage....

Now is the time when we should closely connect with God, that we may be hid when the fierceness of His wrath is poured upon the sons of men.

All who will gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their defections, and loyalty from their treason, will triumph with the third angel’s message.

Be Strong, for God is With Us

Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.Haggai 2:4.

Our Lord is cognizant of the conflict of His people in these last days with the satanic agencies combined with evil men who neglect and refuse their great salvation. With the greatest simplicity and candor, our Saviour, the mighty General of the armies of heaven, does not conceal the stern conflict which they will experience. He points out the dangers, He shows us the plan of the battle, and the hard and hazardous work to be done, and then lifts His voice before entering the conflict to *count the cost* while at the same time He encourages all to take up the weapons of their warfare and expect the heavenly host to compose the armies to war in defense of truth and righteousness. Men's weakness shall find supernatural strength and help in every stern conflict to do the deeds of Omnipotence, and perseverance in faith and perfect trust in God will ensure success.

While the past confederacy of evil is arrayed against them He bids them to be brave and strong and fight valiantly for they have a heaven to win, and they have more than an angel in their ranks, the mighty General of armies leads on the armies of heaven. As on the occasion of the taking of Jericho, not one of the armies of Israel could boast of exercising their finite strength to overthrow the walls of the city, but the Captain of the Lord's host planned the battle in the greatest simplicity, that the Lord alone should receive the glory and man should not be exalted. God has promised us all power; for the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Faith is the living power that presses through every barrier, overrides all obstacles, and plants its banner in the heart of the enemy's camp.

Courage and Power are Needed Today

And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.Exodus 9:16.

Christian life is more than many take it to be. It does not consist wholly in gentleness, patience, meekness, and kindliness. These graces are essential; but there is need also of courage, force, energy, and perseverance. The path that Christ marks out is a narrow, self-denying path. To enter that path and press on through difficulties and discouragements, requires men who are more than weaklings.

Men of stamina are wanted, men who will not wait to have their way smoothed, and every obstacle removed, men who will inspire with fresh zeal and flagging efforts to dispirited workers, men whose hearts are warm with Christian love, and whose hands are strong to do their Master's work.

Some who engage in missionary service are weak, nerveless, spiritless, easily discouraged. They lack push. They have not those positive traits of character that give power to do something,—the spirit and energy that kindle enthusiasm. Those who would win success must be courageous and hopeful. They should cultivate not only the passive but the active virtues. While they are to give the soft answer that turns away wrath, they must possess the courage of a hero to resist evil. With the charity that endures all things, they need the force of character that will make their influence a positive power.

Some have no firmness of character....This weakness, indecision, and inefficiency should be overcome....Men of power are those who have been opposed, baffled, and thwarted. By calling their energies into action, the obstacles they meet prove to them positive blessings. They gain self-reliance. Conflict and perplexity call for the exercise of trust in God, and for that firmness which develops power.

God Calls Youth Because They Are Strong

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.1 John 2:14.

These words of approval and instruction are addressed to every young man who has put on the whole armor of righteousness. Young and strong, they may do giant strokes for God, if they will make God their only trust. The older ones who are addressed as “fathers,” have a decided work to do in holding up the standard: but they feel the pressure of the burdens of life, and it is fitting that the younger ones should be encouraged to qualify themselves for duty by obtaining an experience in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, so that as the standard falls from the fathers, the strong young men may grasp it, and bear it aloft....

There are many young men in this age who will search the Scriptures as for hidden treasures, and having found jewels of truth, will open up the treasures of the word to the minds of others.... “Ye are strong” comprehends more than mere physical strength. It means that the mind has been trained to think, and has been kept clear and strong by the practice of strictly temperate habits. It means that the young men have engaged with earnestness, and have overcome the enemy, connecting the religion of Jesus Christ with every-day life, and bringing Christ into their every-day duties and enjoyments. It means that they have become partakers of the divine nature.

Youth who have given themselves to the service of God, are in a position to fight manfully the battles of the Lord. Let the youth take Christ as their pattern, and they will do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God. They will then be strong.

Character will be tested....Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self and develop a noble heroism.

Courage of Obedience Demonstrated

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. Genesis 22:12.

Abraham, ... in obedience to the divine command, ... pursues his journey with Isaac by his side. He sees before him the mountain which God had told him He would signalize as the one upon which he was to sacrifice. He removes the wood from the shoulder of his servant and lays it upon Isaac, the one to be offered. He girds up his soul with firmness and agonizing sternness, ready for the work which God requires him to do. With a breaking heart and unnerved hand, he takes the fire, while Isaac inquires: Father, here is the fire and the wood; but where is the offering? But, oh, Abraham cannot tell him now! Father and son build the altar, and the terrible moment comes for Abraham to make known to Isaac that which had agonized his soul all that long journey, that Isaac himself is the victim. Isaac is not a lad; he is a full-grown young man. He could have refused to submit to his father's design had he chosen to do so. He does not accuse his father of insanity, nor does he even seek to change his purpose. He submits. He believes in the love of his father and that he would not make this terrible sacrifice of his only son if God had not bidden him to do so.

Isaac is bound by the trembling, loving hands of his pitying father because God has said it. The son submits to the sacrifice because he believes in the integrity of his father. But when everything is ready, when the faith of the father and the submission of the son are fully tested, the angel of God stays the uplifted hand of Abraham that is about to slay his son and tells him that it is enough.

In order to obey God willingly under all circumstances, great courage is needful.

We can know Christ only by loving and obeying Him. The Lord calls for valiant men, who will not fail or be discouraged.

Elijah Refused to Be Discouraged

And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. 1 Kings 18:44.

Important lessons are presented to us in the experience of Elijah. When upon Mt. Carmel he offered the prayer for rain, his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. Six times he prayed earnestly, and yet there was no sign that his petition was granted, but with a strong faith he urged his plea to the throne of grace. Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would not have been answered.... We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove His word, He will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with His interests, and then He can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God. God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon Him; for should He do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors He bestowed upon us.

The servant watched while Elijah prayed.... As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came.

However courageous and successful a man may be in the performance of a special work, unless he looks constantly to God when circumstances arise to test his faith he will lose his courage. Even after God has given him marked tokens of His power, after he has been strengthened to do God's work, he will fail unless he trusts implicitly in Omnipotence.

We Need More Calebs and Joshuas

And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. Numbers 13:30.

The third angel is flying in the midst of heaven, heralding the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This represents the work which is to be done in these last days. The message loses none of its power in its onward flight. John sees the work increasing in power till the whole earth is filled with the glory of God. The message, “Fear God and keep his commandments; for the hour of his judgment is come,” is to go with a loud voice. With intensified zeal and energy human beings are to carry forward the work of the Lord. In the home, in the school, and in the church men, women, and youth are to be prepared to give the message to the world.... Now, just now, we need Calebs and Joshuas. We need strong, devoted, self-sacrificing young men and young women, who will press to the front.

Today we need men of thorough fidelity, men who follow the Lord fully, men who are not disposed to be silent when they ought to speak, who are as true as steel to principle, who do not seek to make a pretentious show, but who walk humbly with God, patient, kind, obliging, courteous men, who understand that the science of prayer is to exercise faith and show works that will tell to the glory of God and the good of His people.... To follow Jesus requires wholehearted conversion at the start, and a repetition of this conversion every day.

It was Caleb’s faith in God that gave him courage, that kept him from the fear of man, and enabled him to stand boldly and unflinchingly in the defense of the right. Through reliance on the same power, the mighty General of the armies of heaven, every true soldier of the cross may receive strength and courage to overcome the obstacles that seem insurmountable.

Two Brave Young Men Rout Philistines

And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.1 Samuel 14:6.

In Jonathan, the son of Saul, the Lord saw a man of pure integrity,—one to whom He could draw nigh, and upon whose heart He could move....

These two men gave evidence that they were moving under the influence and command of a more than human general. To outward appearance, their venture was rash, and contrary to all military rules. But the action of Jonathan was not done in human rashness. He depended not on what he and his armor-bearer themselves could do; he was the instrument that God used in behalf of His people Israel. They made their plans, and rested their cause in the hands of God. If the armies of the Philistines challenged them, they would advance. If they said, Come, they would go forward.... Jonathan and his armor-bearer had asked a sign of the Lord; and the challenge had come, the sign was given. These two men placed their hope in God, and went forward. It was no easy passage for the brave adventurers. They had hard climbing to reach the top....

It would have been an easy matter for the Philistines to kill these two brave, daring men; but it did not enter into their minds that these two solitary men had come up with any hostile intent. The wondering men above looked on, too surprised to take in their possible object. They regarded these men as deserters, and permitted them to come without harm.... “And they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.” ... This daring work sent a panic through the camp. There lay the dead bodies of twenty men, and to the sight of the enemy there seemed hundreds of men prepared for war. The armies of heaven were revealed to the opposing host of the Philistines.

We Need More Men Like Moses

And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. Exodus 32:1.

In the absence of Moses, the judicial authority had been delegated to Aaron, and a vast crowd gathered about his tent, with the demand, "Make us gods, which shall go before us...." Such a crisis demanded a man of firmness, decision, and unflinching courage; one who held the honor of God above popular favor, personal safety, or life itself.... Aaron feebly remonstrated with the people, but his wavering and timidity at the critical moment only rendered them the more determined. The tumult increased.... Aaron feared for his own safety; and instead of nobly standing up for the honor of God, he yielded to the demands of the multitude. His first act was to direct that the golden earrings be collected from all the people and brought to him, hoping that pride would lead them to refuse such a sacrifice. But they willingly yielded up their ornaments; and from these he made a molten calf, in imitation of the gods of Egypt.

We repeat the sin of Aaron, pacifying, when the eyesight should be clear to discern evil and state it plainly, even if it places us in an unpleasant position, because our motives may be misapprehended. We must not suffer wrong upon a brother or any soul with whom we are connected. This neglect to stand up firmly for truth was the sin of Aaron. Had he spoken the truth plainly, that golden calf would never have been made.

There are still pliant Aarons, who ... will yield to the desires of the unconsecrated, and thus encourage them in sin.

Those who are honored with a divine commission, are not to be weak, ... or to shun disagreeable duties, but to perform God's work with unswerving fidelity.

Too Much Is at Stake to Waver Now

Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. James 1:6.

Some men have no firmness of character. They are like a ball of putty and can be pressed into any conceivable shape.... This weakness, indecision, and inefficiency must be overcome. There is an indomitableness about true Christian character which cannot be molded or subdued by adverse circumstances. Men must have moral backbone, an integrity which cannot be flattered, bribed, or terrified.

We have a powerful enemy.... When men give themselves over to be the slaves of Satan, he does not manifest the enmity toward them which he does to those who bear the name of Christ, and give themselves to the service of God. He hates them with a deadly hatred. He knows that he can grieve Jesus by bringing them under the power of his deceptions, by injuring them, by weakening their faith.... Satan will permit those to have a degree of rest who are bound as slaves to his chariot, for they are his willing captives; but his enmity is aroused when the message of mercy reaches his bond slaves, and they seek to wrench themselves away from his power, that they may follow the true Shepherd.... The conflict between the soul and Satan begins when the captive begins to tug at the chain, and longs to be free....

Those who really desire to be taught of God, and to walk in His way, have the sure promise that if they feel their lack of wisdom and ask of God, He will give liberally, and upbraid not. The apostle says, "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." ... Believe; believe that God will do just what He has promised. Keep your prayers ascending, and watch, work, and wait. Fight the good fight of faith.

As long as we sail with the current of the world we need neither canvas nor oar. It is when we turn squarely about to stem the current that our labors begin.

To Stand Firm in Spite of Ridicule and Scorn

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. Psalm 1:1.

The ungodly are those who do not love and obey the commandments of God, but go contrary to them. This is the class of counselors you are warned to shun,—the class which Satan uses to lead youth astray. Their counsel, their suggestions, are of a character to make light of sin, to ridicule righteousness.... They are represented as standing in the way of sinners, always leading them out of the straight path of duty and obedience to God's commandments into paths of disobedience. If it were not for those persons who do wrong and tempt others to do wrong, many sinners might have chosen the path of duty, the life of purity and godliness.

The fear of ridicule leads many a youth to yield to temptation and to walk in the way of the ungodly.

Jesus would not place Himself in peril to please the devil. But how many today can stand a dare?

Allow no taunts, no threats, no sneering remarks, to induce you to violate your conscience in the least particular, and thus open a door whereby Satan can come in and control the mind....

You must be an interested student of the Bible.... His Word is a sure guide; if it is carefully studied, there is no danger of falling under the power of temptations that surround the youth, and crowd in upon them.

Some may ridicule you for being so strict; they may call you self-righteous; but be careful to start right, and then keep quietly on. The history of Daniel, if all was written, would open chapters before you that would show you the temptations he had to meet, of ridicule, envy, and hatred; but ... he rose superior to ridicule; and so will every one who is an overcomer.

To Take a Decided Stand for Temperance

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.1 Corinthians 9:25.

In the family circle and in the church we should place Christian temperance on an elevated platform. It should be a living, working element, reforming habits, dispositions, and characters. Intemperance lies at the foundation of all the evil in our world.

The children need to be given lessons that will nurture in them courage to resist evil.... Parents should exercise great care in regard to the food placed before their children. Drunkards are only too often made by lessons of intemperance learned in the home. Let the children be given food that will build up mind and body, but keep away from them the highly seasoned dishes that would arouse a desire for still stronger stimulants.

The use of tobacco and strong drink has a great deal to do with the increase of disease and crime. Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison, and its use is working untold harm....

No argument is needed to show the evils of the use of intoxicating drink. The bleared, besotted wrecks of humanity,—souls for whom Christ died, and over whom angels weep,—are everywhere. They are a blot on our boasted civilization....

Those who in ancient times ran for a prize realized the importance of temperate habits, and how much more should we, who are running a race for a heavenly crown. We should put forth every effort to overcome evil.

At all times and on all occasions it requires moral courage to adhere to the principles of strict temperance.

Remember that you are daily weaving for yourself a web of habits.... The better you observe the laws of health, the more clearly can you discern temptations, and resist them, and the more clearly can you discern the value of eternal things.

To Stand for Principle Despite Opposition

And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Nehemiah 6:3.

God has men in reserve, prepared to meet the demand, that His work may be preserved from all contaminating influences. God will be honored and glorified. When the divine Spirit impresses the mind of the man appointed by God as fit for the work, he responds, saying, "Here am I; send me." ... Nehemiah showed himself to be a man whom God could use to put down false principles and to restore heaven-born principles; and God honored him. The Lord will use in His work men who are as true as steel to principle, who will not be swayed by the sophistries of those who have lost their spiritual eyesight.

Nehemiah was chosen by God because he was willing to cooperate with the Lord as a restorer. Falsehood and intrigue were used to pervert his integrity, but he would not be bribed. He refused to be corrupted by the devices of unprincipled men, who had been hired to do an evil work. He would not allow them to intimidate him into following a cowardly course. When he saw wrong principles being acted upon, he did not stand by as an onlooker, and by his silence give consent. He did not leave the people to conclude that he was standing on the wrong side. He took a firm, unyielding stand for the right. He would not lend one jot of influence to the perversion of the principles that God has established.

We shall meet with opposition of every description, as did the builders of the walls of Jerusalem; but if we watch and pray, and work as they did, God will fight our battles for us, and give us precious victories.... We should move forward with unwavering confidence, believing that God will give to His truth great and precious victories.... Relying upon Jesus, we shall carry a convincing power with us that we have the truth.

To Call Sin by its Right Name

And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. Joshua 7:19.

The history of Achan teaches the solemn lesson that for one man's sin the displeasure of God will rest upon a people or a nation till the transgression is searched out and punished. Sin is corrupting in its nature. One man infected with its deadly leprosy may communicate the taint to thousands.... Many dare not condemn iniquity, lest they shall thereby sacrifice position or popularity. And by some it is considered uncharitable to rebuke sin. The servant of God ... is under the most solemn obligation to present the Word of God, without fear or favor. He must call sin by its right name....

The love of God will never lead to the belittling of sin; it will never cover or excuse an unconfessed wrong. Achan learned too late that God's law, like its Author, is unchanging. It has to do with all our acts and thoughts and feelings. It follows us, and reaches every secret spring of action. By indulgence in sin, men are led to lightly regard the law of God. Many conceal their transgressions from their fellow men, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. But His law is the great standard of right, and with it every act of life must be compared in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Purity of heart will lead to purity of life. All excuses for sin are vain. Who can plead for the sinner when God testifies against him?

The greatest want of the world is the want of men,—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

To Lift the Standard High

Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Isaiah 62:10.

Perplexities will increase; but let us, as believers in God, encourage one another. Let us not lower the standard, but keep it lifted high, looking to Him who is the Author and the Finisher of our faith.

We all need greater Christian courage, that we may uplift the standard on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. We are to make no compromise with the leaders of rebellion.... We must have a firm determination to do the Lord's will at all times and in all places.

Let the truth for this time be cordially received and become the basis of character, and it will produce steadfastness of purpose, which the allurements of pleasure, the fickleness of custom, the contempt of the world-loving and the heart's own clamors of self-indulgence are powerless to influence.... We have marked illustrations of the sustaining power of firm, religious principle. Even the fear of death could not make the fainting David drink of the water of Bethlehem, to obtain which, valiant men had risked their lives. The gaping lions' den could not keep Daniel from his daily prayers, nor could the fiery furnace induce Shadrach and his companions to fall down before the idol which Nebuchadnezzar set up. Young men who have firm principles will eschew pleasure, defy pain, and brave even the lions' den and the heated fiery furnace rather than be found untrue to God.

Let it be written upon the conscience as with a pen of iron upon the rock, that real success, whether for this life or for the life to come, can be secured only by faithful adherence to the eternal principles of right.

To Face Death With the Courage of Daniel

I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter. Daniel 2:23.

Our God is, and He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Daniel sought the Lord when the decree went forth to slay all the wise men of the kingdom of Babylon because they could not relate or interpret a dream which had gone from the king's mind. Nebuchadnezzar demanded not only the interpretation of the dream, but the relation of the dream itself.... They declared that the request of the king was something unreasonable, and the test beyond that which had ever been required of any man. The king became furious, and acted like all men who have great power and uncontrollable passions. He decided that every one of them should be put to death, and as Daniel and his fellows were numbered with the wise men, they also were to share this fate....

Daniel came before the king, and pleaded for time to bring this matter before the supreme court of the universe, from whose decision there could be no appeal. When his request was granted, Daniel laid the whole matter before his companions, who were united with him in worshipping the true God. The matter was fully considered, and on their bended knees they pleaded that God would give them the power and wisdom that would alone avail them in their great necessity....

“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.” ... I would impress upon the youth that Daniel's God is their God, and whatever difficulty may arise, let them do as did Daniel, “desire mercies of the God of heaven.”

God will not fail His church in the hour of her greatest peril. He has promised deliverance.

The Courageous Among God's Jewels

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. Malachi 3:17.

Great is the work of the Lord. Men are choosing sides. Even those supposed to be heathen will choose the side of Christ, while those who become offended, as did the disciples, will go away and walk no more with Him....

What effect will the attempt of men to make void the law of God have upon the righteous? Will they be intimidated because of the universal scorn that is put upon the holy law of God? Will the true believers in the, "Thus saith the Lord," become wavering and ashamed because the whole world seems to despise His righteous law? Will they be carried away by the prevalence of evil?—No; to those who have consecrated themselves to God to serve Him, the law of God becomes more precious when the contrast is shown between the obedient and the transgressor. In proportion as the attributes of Satan are developed in the despisers and transgressors of the law of God, to the faithful adherent the holy precept will become more dear and valuable. He will declare, "They have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." It is the ones who have been faithful stewards of the grace of God whose love of God's commandments grows with the contempt which all around them would put upon them.

Wicked men and the church harmonize in this hatred of the law of God, and then the crisis comes.... But while they are murmuring and complaining, and falsely accusing, and doing Satan's work most zealously, another class is brought to our notice: "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."

God is With His Children

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west. I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Isaiah 43:5, 6.

We must do our work with cheerfulness and hopefulness. We are in no case to become discouraged. Let us keep our eyes off the disagreeable parts of our experience, and let our words be full of good cheer. We can surround ourselves with a sunny atmosphere, or with an atmosphere charged with gloom. Let us educate ourselves to talk courage. Let us learn lessons from the example of Christ. Not even His terrible humiliation at the hands of the Jews and the Roman soldiers,—His mock trial and the cruel treatment that He received,—caused Him to become discouraged.

Hold the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end. The light of God's truth is not to be dimmed. It is to shine amidst the darkness of error that enshrouds our world. The Word of God is to be opened to those in the high places of the earth, as well as to those in the more lowly. The church of Christ is God's agency for the proclamation of truth; she is empowered by Him to do a special work; and if she is loyal to God, obedient to His commandments, there will dwell within her the excellence of divine power. If she will honor the Lord God of Israel, there is no power that can stand against her. If she will be true to her allegiance, the forces of the enemy will be no more able to overpower her than is the chaff to resist the whirlwind.

There is before the church the dawn of a bright, glorious day, if she will put on the robe of Christ's righteousness, withdrawing from all allegiance to the world.... From Christ is flowing the living stream of salvation.... When in faith we take hold of His strength, He will change, wonderfully change, the most hopeless, discouraging outlook. He will do this for the glory of His name.

Renewal of Strength

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. Isaiah 40:31.

In order to fight successfully, a soldier must have courage and strength. Of ourselves, we are weak and feeble. But we have the promise, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”

Obstacles to the advancement of the work of God will appear; but fear not. To the omnipotence of the King of kings, our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. Nothing can stand in His way. His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to His people. He can remove all obstructions to the advancement of His work. He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered. His goodness and love are infinite, and His covenant is unalterable.

The plans of the enemies of His work may seem to be firm and well established, but He can overthrow the strongest of these plans, and in His own time and way He will do this, when He sees that our faith has been sufficiently tested and that we are drawing near to Him and making Him our counselor.

In the darkest days, when appearances seem so forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He is working out His will, doing all things well in behalf of His people. The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day. His understanding will be placed at their service, that they may not err in the carrying out of His purposes.

There is to be no despondency in God’s service. Our faith is to endure the pressure brought to bear upon it. God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need. He will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him.

August—We Glory in the Cross of Christ

We See Christ on the Cross

And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. Mark 15:25.

The spotless Son of God hung upon the cross, His flesh lacerated with stripes; those hands so often reached out in blessing, nailed to the wooden bars; those feet so tireless on ministries of love, spiked to the tree; that royal head pierced by the crown of thorns; those quivering lips shaped to the cry of woe. And all that He endured—the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands, His feet, the agony that racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father’s face—speaks to each child of humanity, declaring, It is for thee that the Son of God consents to bear this burden of guilt; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise. He ... offers Himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, and this from love to thee. He, the Sin-Bearer, endures the wrath of divine justice, and for thy sake becomes sin itself.

In silence the beholders watched for the end of the fearful scene. The sun shone forth; but the cross was still enveloped in darkness. Priests and rulers looked toward Jerusalem; and lo, the dense cloud had settled over the city, and the plains of Judea. The Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, was withdrawing His beams from the once favored city of Jerusalem. The fierce lightnings of God’s wrath were directed against the fated city.

Suddenly the gloom lifted from the cross, and in clear, trumpetlike tones, that seemed to resound throughout creation, Jesus cried, “It is finished.” “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” A light encircled the cross, and the face of the Saviour shone with a glory like the sun. He then bowed His head upon His breast, and died.

All Men are Drawn to the Uplifted Saviour

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32.

Never before was there such a general knowledge of Jesus as when He hung upon the cross. He was lifted up from the earth, to draw all to Him. Into the hearts of many who beheld that crucifixion scene, and who heard Christ's words, was the light of truth to shine. With John they would proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There were those who never rested until, searching the Scriptures and comparing passage with passage, they saw the meaning of Christ's mission. They saw that free forgiveness was provided by Him whose tender mercy embraced the whole world. They read the prophecies regarding Christ, and the promises so free and full, pointing to a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem.

The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary, and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge.

I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption,—the Son of God uplifted on the cross of Calvary. This is to be the theme of every discourse.

Jesus is inviting and drawing by His Holy Spirit the hearts of young and old to Himself.... When Christ crucified is preached, the power of the gospel is demonstrated by the influence it exerts over the believer. In place of remaining dead in trespasses and sins, he is awakened.

Lift up the Man of Calvary higher and still higher; there is power in the exaltation of the cross of Christ.

All Who Look to the Cross will Live

And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. Numbers 21:9.

The Lord Jesus had protected the children of Israel from the venomous serpents in the wilderness, but this part of their history they did not know. Angels from heaven had accompanied them, and in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night Christ had been their protection through all their journeying. But they became selfish and discontented, and in order that they might not forget His great care over them, the Lord gave them a bitter lesson. He permitted them to be bitten by the fiery serpents, yet in His great mercy He did not leave them to perish. Moses was bidden to lift the brazen serpent on the pole, and make the proclamation that whosoever should look upon it should live. And all who looked, did live. They recovered health at once.... What a strange symbol of Christ was that likeness of the serpents which stung them. This symbol was lifted on a pole, and they were to look to it, and be healed. So Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. He came as the sin-bearer....

The same healing, life-giving message is now sounding. It points to the uplifted Saviour upon the shameful tree. Those who have been bitten by that old serpent, the devil, are bidden to look and live.... Look alone to Jesus as your righteousness and your sacrifice. As you are justified by faith, the deadly sting of the serpent will be healed.

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour's love; and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fulness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.

Cross of Christ to Be Erected in Our Homes

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things..John 8:28.

Christ should be uplifted by those whom He has redeemed by dying on the cross a death of shame. He who has felt the power of the grace of Christ has a story to tell. He seeks to put in operation methods of work which will diffuse the gospel of Christ. Humanity, drawing its efficiency from the great source of wisdom, is made the instrumentality, the working agency, through which the gospel exercises its transforming power on mind and heart....

All our powers are to be used for Christ. This is the debt we each owe to God. In forming a relationship with Christ the renewed man is but coming back to his appointed relationship with God.... His duties lie round him, nigh and afar off. His first duty is to his children and his nearest relatives. Nothing can excuse him from neglecting the inner circle for the larger circle outside....

Some households have a little church in the home. Mutual love binds heart to heart, and the unity that exists among the members of the family preaches the most effectual sermon that could be preached on practical godliness. As parents faithfully do their duty in the family, restraining, correcting, advising, counseling, guiding,—the father as a priest of the household, the mother as a home missionary,—they are filling the sphere God would have them fill. By faithfully doing their duty in the home, they are multiplying agencies for doing good outside the home. They are becoming better fitted to labor in the church. By training their little flock discreetly, binding their children to themselves and to God, fathers and mothers become laborers together with God. The cross is erected in their home. The members of the family become members of the royal family above, children of the heavenly King.

We are Redeemed by Christ's Precious Blood

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.1 Peter 1:18, 19.

Every soul is precious, because it has been purchased by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me."

You cannot save yourself from the tempter's power, but he trembles and flees when the merits of that precious blood are urged.

The Lord loves you; He is dearer to you than any earthly tie, than any earthly object. Consider how precious near you may keep to One who is your strength and efficiency. Live not in the shadow of the cross, but on the sunny side of the cross, where the Sun of righteousness may shine into your heart.

We are to have free access to the atoning blood of Christ. This we must regard as the most precious privilege, the greatest blessing, ever granted to sinful man. And how little is made of this great gift! How deep, how wide and continuous is this stream. To every soul thirsting after holiness there is repose, there is rest, there is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, and then the holy, happy, peaceful walk and precious communion with Christ. Then, O then, can we intelligently say with John, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Talk it, pray it. Let it be the theme of sacred song,—to be washed, to be cleansed; the believing soul claims that love, and by its virtues stands before the throne of God pardoned, justified, sanctified.... Its cleansing virtue gives strength and vigor to faith, power to prayer, and happiness in cheerful obedience.

We are Cleansed by Christ's Blood

The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.1 John 1:7.

Some speak of the Jewish age as a Christless period, without mercy or grace. To such are applicable the words of Christ to the Sadducees, "Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God." The period of the Jewish economy was one of wonderful manifestations of divine power. So glorious was the revealing of His presence that it could not be borne by mortal man. Moses, who was so highly favored of God, exclaimed, "I do exceedingly fear and quake." But God strengthened him to endure this excellent glory, and to bring from the mount a reflection of it upon his face so that the people could not look steadfastly upon it....

The very system of sacrifices was devised by Christ, and given to Adam as typifying a Saviour to come, who would bear the sins of the world, and die for its redemption. Through Moses, Christ gave definite directions to the children of Israel in regard to the sacrificial offerings.... Only clean and precious animals, those which would best symbolize Christ, were accepted as offerings to God....

The Israelites were forbidden to eat the fat or the blood.... This law not only related to beasts for sacrifice, but to all cattle which were used for food. This law was to impress upon them the important fact that if there had been no sin there would have been no shedding of blood....

The blood of the Son of God was symbolized by the blood of the slain victim, and God would have clear and definite ideas preserved between the sacred and the common. Blood was sacred, inasmuch as through the shedding of the blood of the Son of God alone could there be atonement for sin. Blood was also used to cleanse the sanctuary from the sins of the people, thus typifying the blood of Christ which alone can cleanse from sin.

Atonement Through Christ's Blood

We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Romans 5:11.

Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.... We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God. This is represented as the pardoning blood, inseparably connected with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer, illustrated by the ever-flowing stream that proceeds from the throne of God, the water of the river of life.

The wonderful symbol of the living bird dipped in the blood of the bird slain and then set free to its joyous life [Leviticus 14:4-8], is to us the symbol of the atonement. There were death and life blended, presenting to the searcher for truth and hidden treasure, the union of the pardoning blood with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer. The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world....

We are to have free access to the atoning blood of Christ. This we must regard as the most precious privilege, the greatest blessing, ever granted to sinful man.... How deep, how wide and continuous is this stream! To every soul thirsting after holiness there is repose, there is rest, there is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, and then the holy, happy, peaceful walk and precious communion with Christ.

We are Justified by Christ's Blood

God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Romans 5:8, 9.

Christ has made reconciliation for sin, and has borne all its ignominy, reproach, and punishment; and yet while bearing sin, He has brought in everlasting righteousness, so that the believer is spotless before God...

But there are many who claim to be children of God who are resting their hopes upon other dependencies, rather than on the blood of Christ alone. When urged to rest their faith wholly upon Christ as a complete Saviour, many reveal the fact that they have faith in something that they think they can do. They say, "I have a great deal to do before I can be fit to come to Christ." Another says, "When I have done to the uttermost all that I can do, then the Lord Jesus will come to my help." They imagine that they have a great deal to do themselves to save their own souls, and that Jesus will come in and piece out that part which is lacking, and give the finishing stroke to their salvation. These poor souls will not be strong in God until they accept Christ as a complete Saviour. They can add nothing to their salvation.

The Israelites were required to sprinkle the door-posts with the blood of a slain lamb, in order that when the angel of death passed through the land, they might escape destruction. But if instead of doing this simple act of faith and obedience, they had barricaded the door, and taken every precaution to keep the destroying angel out, their pains would have been in vain.... When the blood was seen upon the door-post, it was enough. The salvation of the house was assured. So it is in the work of salvation; it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin.

Through the merits of His blood, you may overcome every spiritual foe, and remedy every defect of character.

Sons of God Through Christ's Blood

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Hebrews 10:19, 20.

Christ was nailed to the cross between the third and sixth hour, that is between nine and twelve o' clock. In the afternoon He died. This was the hour of the evening sacrifice. Then the veil of the temple, that which hid God's glory from the view of the congregation of Israel, was rent in twain from top to bottom.

Through Christ the hidden glory of the holy of holies was to stand revealed. He had suffered death for every man, and by this offering, the sons of men were to become the sons of God. With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, believers in Christ were to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory. The mercy seat, upon which the glory of God rested in the holiest of all, is opened to all who accept Christ as the propitiation for sin, and through its medium, they are brought into fellowship with God. The veil is rent, the partition walls broken down, the handwriting of ordinances cancelled. By virtue of His blood the enmity is abolished.

The simple story of the cross of Christ, His suffering and dying for the world, His resurrection and ascension, His mediation in the sinner's behalf before the Father, subdues and breaks the hard and sinful heart, and brings the sinner to repentance. The Holy Spirit sets the matter before him in a new light, and the sinner realizes that sin must be a tremendous evil to cost such a sacrifice to atone for it.... How grievous must sin be that no less a remedy than the death of the Son of God could save man from the consequences of his guilt. Why was this done in behalf of man?—It was because God loved him, and was not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, believe in Jesus as a personal Saviour, and have life eternal.

We Are Reconciled to God by Christ's Death

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Romans 5:10.

The cross is invested with a power that language cannot express. Christ's sacrifice in behalf of the human race puts to shame our meager efforts and methods to meet and uplift humanity, to help sinful men and women to find Jesus.

The work of the sons and daughters of God must be of a different character than has yet been manifested by a large number. If they love Jesus, they will have enlarged ideas of the love that has been expressed for fallen man, which required the provision of so expensive an offering to save the human race. Our Saviour asks the cooperation of every son and daughter of Adam who has become a son or daughter of God.... Our Saviour declares that He brought from heaven as a donation eternal life. He was to be lifted up upon the cross of Calvary to draw all men unto Him. How then shall we treat the purchased inheritance of Christ? Tenderness, appreciation, kindness, sympathy, and love should be shown to them. Then we may work to help and bless one another. In this work we have more than human brotherhood. We have the exalted companionship of heavenly angels. They cooperate with us in the work of enlightening high and low.

Having engaged in the work, the amazing work of our redemption, Christ determined in council with His Father to spare nothing, however costly, to withhold nothing however highly it might be estimated, that would rescue the poor sinner. He would give all heaven to this work of salvation, of restoring the moral image of God in man.... To be a child of God is to be one with Christ in God, and to put forth our hands in earnest, self-sacrificing love to strengthen and bless the souls that are perishing in their sins.

Christ Has Delivered Us from Eternal Death

Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.2 Corinthians 1:10.

Our Saviour came to this world to endure in human nature all the temptations wherewith man is beset. In His life He measured the power of the wily foe to deceive, to allure, and to destroy. As the Redeemer of the race, He warns humanity against seeking after those things that will lead away from the narrow path. He has cast up a glorious highway for those who are traveling toward the heavenly mansions that He has gone to prepare for all who will prepare themselves to become members of the royal family....

With His life Christ has purchased every human being. He died a cruel death to save human beings from eternal death. He gave His sinless life to obtain for the sinner a life that measures with the life of God. Through His death, He provided a way whereby man may break with Satan, return to his allegiance to God, and through faith in the Redeemer obtain pardon....

He who has all power in heaven and earth will restore every repenting, believing soul. To as many as receive Him He gives power to become the sons of God. He has a deep interest in every soul, for He paid the price of His own life that no one should be eternally lost.

Christ's servants can and should be able to meet and overcome every temptation. They should say, "I am not my own; I have been bought with a price. By the infinite sacrifice Christ has made for me, He has put it out of my power to give Him more than He demands. All is His. He has purchased me, body, soul, and spirit. He calls for all my time, all my capabilities."

Those who receive Him and believe in Him become the spiritual children of God. They are adopted into the royal family, and as they seek to do the will of God, they become conformed into His image.

We Are to Glory Only in the Cross

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Galatians 6:14.

The cross of Christ,—how many believe it to be what it is? How many bring it into their studies, and know its true significance? There could not be a Christian in our world without the cross of Christ.... Turn from the examples of the world, cease to extol the professedly great men; turn the mind from the glory of everything save the cross of Christ. Said Paul, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Let all, from the highest to the lowest, understand what it means to glory in the cross of Christ. That cross is to be bravely and manfully borne. Christ declares, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” And to all who will lift it, and bear it after Christ, the cross is a pledge of the crown of glory that can never fade away....

This is the highest science that we can learn,—the science of salvation. The cross of Calvary, rightly regarded, is true philosophy, pure and undefiled religion. It is eternal life to all who believe. By painstaking effort, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, it should be impressed upon the minds ... that the cross of Christ is just as efficacious now as in Paul’s day, and should be as perfectly understood by them as it was by the great apostle....

Know that the only thing in which you can safely glory is that which will open to you the gates of the city of God. Learn from the Word of God how to form characters fitted for the country you are seeking. Know that Christ is to be set forth among you, and that all that was lost in Adam the cross of Christ fully restores to every believing soul.

We Are Not to Glory in Men

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men.1 Corinthians 3:20, 21.

We are living in an age of licentiousness, and men and youth are bold in sin. Unless our youth are sacredly guarded, unless they are fortified with firm principles, unless greater care is manifested in choosing their associates and the literature which feeds the mind, they will be exposed to a society whose morals are as corrupt as were the morals of the inhabitants of Sodom.... Our youth will meet temptations on every hand, and they must be so educated that they will depend upon higher power, higher teaching, than can be given by mortals. There are despisers of our Lord everywhere, who habitually throw contempt upon Christianity.... Those who have not moral power cannot stand in defense of the truth; they have not courage to say: "Unless such conversation ceases, I cannot remain in your presence. Jesus, the world's Redeemer is my Saviour; in Him is centered my hope of eternal life." But this is the very way in which to silence them. If you argue with them, they will have arguments with which to meet you, and nothing you may say will touch them; but if you live for Christ, if you are firm in your allegiance to the God of heaven, you may do for them that which argument will fail to do....

There is no sadder spectacle than that of those who have been purchased by the blood of Christ, who have been intrusted with talents wherewith they may glorify God, turning to jest the messages graciously sent to them in the gospel, denying the divinity of Christ, and trusting to their own finite reasoning, and to arguments that have no foundation. When tested with affliction, when brought face to face with death, all these fallacies they have cherished will be melted away like frost before the sun.... The Christian hope is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast.

We Are Not to Glory in Worldly Wisdom

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom. Jeremiah 9:23.

Men are not to rejoice in their wisdom, their strength, or their riches, but in the fact that they have a knowledge of Christ. This knowledge is the most excellent, the most precious, that we can possess. It is the pledge of everlasting life. For “this is life eternal, that we might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot grasp it, power cannot command it; but to all who will accept it God’s glorious grace is freely given. But men may feel their need, and, renouncing all self-dependence, accept salvation as a gift. Those who enter heaven will not scale its walls by their own righteousness, nor will its gates be opened to them for costly offerings of gold or silver; but they will gain an entrance to the many mansions of the Father’s house through the merits of the cross of Christ....

The self-righteous feel no need of Christ. And when those who profess His name extol their own wisdom and goodness, they give evidence that they are not acquainted with Him. As soon as Christ is revealed to the soul, the sinner feels that his only hope is in the Lamb of God as the propitiation for sin. As Christ begins to open His love before him watch the effect, and see what it is. Many claim this experience who are strangers to the love of Christ. But if it leads one to look with humility upon himself, ... if he gives evidence that the heavenly reward is of more value to him than his worldly possessions, we may know that beams of life from Christ are shining upon his soul.

Out of Christ, human wisdom in all its forms is foolishness; for those who trust in their own wisdom, have lost eternity out of their reckoning.... To all who believe in Jesus as able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, the gospel is the power and wisdom of God.

We Are Not to Glory in Riches

Let not the rich man glory in his riches. Jeremiah 9:23.

The rich man is not to glory in his riches. If we fix our affections on worldly things, we fail to exalt Christ. Satan would keep our minds absorbed with the things of this life, that we may lose sight of the higher life; but we cannot afford to yield to his devices. Christ is the source of all temporal, as well as all spiritual blessings. If he has given us riches, it is not that we may claim them as our own. "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...." Paul counted all things but loss that he might win Christ. But when the Saviour calls for our possessions and our service, there are many who see they cannot obey God and carry their earthly treasures with them, and they decide to stay by their treasures....

How can those who expect to stand around Christ's throne, and to be clothed with His righteousness, distrust God, and fear that He will leave them to come to want? Where is their faith? Our heavenly Father feeds the ravens, and will He not much more feed us? ... If we had a right view of Christ, we would permit nothing to interpose between ourselves and Him.... Those who study to see how near they can live to the world and yet gain heaven, will come just near enough to be shut out from heaven. We must accept the suffering part of religion if we would sit down with the Suffering One upon His throne.

While it is lawful for us to acquire means, the money that we possess should be regarded as ours only in trust, not to be squandered, but spent in the Lord's service. It should be our determined purpose to obey the orders of our Captain, and thus lay up for ourselves heavenly riches. Then, when everything in this world perishes, we shall have a treasure in the heavens, which faileth not.

We Are Not to Glory in Ourselves

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord. Jeremiah 9:24.

All boasting of merit in ourselves is out of place.

The command is not, Let him that glorieth glory in himself, but in God.... There is, then, no ground for men to take glory to themselves. For every blessing which they enjoy, for every good quality which they possess, they are indebted to the grace of Christ. None should exalt themselves as possessing wisdom or righteousness....

Those who have the deepest experience in the things of God, are the farthest removed from pride or self-exaltation. They have the humblest thought of self, and the most exalted conceptions of the glory and excellence of Christ.... When we have our eyes fixed upon heaven, and have clear views of the character of Christ, we shall exalt the Lord God in our hearts.

As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself serious defects; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees the necessity for radical changes in his life. Still he studies with a desire to become like his great Exemplar. He catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master. By beholding ... he becomes changed into the same image.

It is not by looking away from Him that we imitate the life of Jesus, but by talking of Him, by dwelling upon His perfections, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying, through faith and love, and by earnest, persevering effort, to approach the perfect Pattern. By having a knowledge of Christ,—His words, His habits, and His lessons of instruction,—we borrow the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, and become imbued with the spirit we have so much admired. Jesus becomes to us “the chiefest among ten thousand,” the One “altogether lovely.”

Glory Not in Talent and Influence

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever.1 Peter 4:11.

Christ is our pattern, and those who follow Christ will not walk in darkness; for they will not seek their own pleasure. To glorify God will be the continual aim of their life.... But how many who have been entrusted with talents of means and influence have lost sight of the pattern, and followed the standard of the world.... Men and women who have been blessed with an abundance of money, with houses and with lands, generally train their children to a life of idleness and selfish indulgence. Thus they are made useless for this life, and unfit for the future, immortal life.... The youth of today are educated to believe that it is the money that makes the man.

Our power is not in our talents of education or means, neither is it in our popularity; it is in self-sacrifice, our willing obedience to Jesus Christ. Those who truly surrender all to Him, will carry a weight of influence, and will carry others along with them, because they walk in the light. Brain power will be inefficient, purse power of little account with God; but heart power, thorough godliness, humble fidelity, will bear a weight of influence that will be irresistible.

Shall we not consecrate ourselves to God without reserve? Christ, the King of glory, gave Himself a ransom for us. Can we withhold anything from Him? Shall we think our poor, unworthy selves too precious, our time or property too valuable, to give to Jesus?—No, no; the deepest homage of our hearts, the most skillful service of our hands, our talents of ability and of means,—all are but too poor an offering to bring to Him who was slain and has “redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

We Glory in the Resurrection of Christ

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. John 11:25, 26.

After the crucifixion of Christ, the priests and rulers did not feel the sense of victory which they had expected. They did not rejoice at their success in silencing the voice of the Great Teacher. They were afraid. Already His death was calling attention to His life and character. The priests were convicted that their attempts at revenge had failed; and they dreaded a dead Christ more, far more, than they had ever feared a living Christ....

The light of heaven encircled the tomb, and the whole heaven was lighted by the glory of the angel. The angel approached the grave, and rolling away the stone as if it had been a pebble, he sat upon it. Then his voice was heard, Son of God, come forth; Thy Father calls Thee; and Jesus came forth from the grave with the step of a mighty conqueror. There was a burst of triumph, for the heavenly family were waiting to receive Him; and the mighty angel, followed by the army of heaven, bowed in adoration before Him as He, the Monarch of heaven, proclaimed over the rent tomb of Joseph, "I am the resurrection, and the life."

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life.... The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. "I am come," He says, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." ...

Christ became one with humanity, that humanity might become one in Spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life. He says to the penitent, "I am the resurrection, and the life."

We Thank God for His Unspeakable Gift

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.2 Corinthians 9:15.

What a terrible record the human race will have to meet in the last day, since the vast majority of men have refused the priceless offering,—rejected the richest gift that God could bestow upon the world. It is through the inestimable gift of Christ that all our blessings come. Life, health, friends, reason, happiness, are ours through the merit of Christ. O that the young and the old might realize that all comes to them through the virtue of Christ's life and death, and acknowledge the ownership of God.

The apostle writes, "Ye are not your own." Even when we were under the control of a cruel master, even when the prince of darkness ruled our spirits, the Lord Jesus Christ paid the ransom price of His own blood for us.... Render to Him willing heart service, and no longer rob God of that which is His own. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." ...

Through His holy Word, through His providences, and through messages sent to you by His servants, Jesus is daily saying to you, "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." Jesus has given His precious life for you, that you may become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then give yourself to Him as a pledge of grateful love. Were it not for the love freely given us of Christ, we should now be in hopeless despair, in spiritual midnight. Thank God every day that He gave us Jesus.

The thought that Christ died to obtain for us the gift of everlasting life, is enough to call forth from our hearts the most sincere and fervent gratitude, and from our lips the most enthusiastic praise.

Christ Is Our Only Access to the Father

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25.

How is God reconciled to man?—By the work and merit of Jesus Christ, who ... put aside everything that would interpose between man and God's pardoning love. The law that man has transgressed is not changed to meet the sinner in his fallen condition, but is made manifest as the transcript of Jehovah's character,—the exponent of His holy will,—and is exalted and magnified in the life and character of Jesus Christ. Yet a way of salvation is provided; for the spotless Lamb of God is revealed as the One who taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus stands in the sinner's place, and takes the guilt of the transgressor upon Himself. Looking upon the sinner's Substitute and Surety, the Lord Jehovah can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. To him who accepts Christ as his righteousness, as his only hope, pardon is pronounced; for God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The justice, truth, and holiness of Christ, which are approved by the law of God, form a channel through which mercy may be communicated to the repenting, believing sinner.

Those who do not believe in Christ are not reconciled to God; but those who have faith in Him are hid with Christ in God. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

He became the sin-bearer and died on the cross to secure salvation for every sinner who repents and returns to his loyalty to God. Only through Christ can we obtain access to the Father.

Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Christ takes upon Him the sins of the transgressor, and imputes to him His righteousness, and by His transforming grace makes him capable of associating with angels and communing with God.

The Cross and the Law

Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.Hosea 14:9.

The cross speaks to the hosts of heaven, to worlds unfallen, and to the fallen world, the value which God has placed upon men, and of His great love wherewith He has loved us. It testifies to the world, to angels, and to men, the immutability of the divine law.

The death of Christ was to be the convincing, everlasting argument that the law of God is as unchangeable as His throne.... The fact that His own Son, the Surety for man, was not spared, is an argument that will stand to all eternity before saint and sinner, before the universe of God, to testify that He will not excuse the transgressor of His law. Every offense against God's law, however minute, is set down in the reckoning, and when the sword of justice is taken in hand, it will do the work for impenitent transgressors that was done to the divine Sufferer.

Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the sinner may feel that he is pardoned, and may know that the law no more condemns him, because he is in harmony with all its precepts. It is his privilege to count himself innocent when he reads and thinks of the retribution that will fall upon the unbelieving and sinful. By faith he lays hold of the righteousness of Christ.... Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to His death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law.

The Cross Helps Us Understand Nature

For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands. Psalm 92:4.

Today man cannot of himself read aright the teaching of nature. Unless guided by divine wisdom, he exalts nature and the laws of nature above nature's God. This is why mere human ideas in regard to science so often contradict the teaching of God's word. But for those who receive the light of the life of Christ, nature is again illuminated. In the light shining from the cross, we can rightly interpret nature's teaching.

In the plan of redemption there are mysteries that the human mind cannot fathom,—things which human wisdom cannot explain,—but nature can teach us much concerning the mystery of godliness. Then let the minds of the young, as far as possible, learn from nature's book. Every shrub, every tree bearing fruit, all vegetation, is given for our benefit. The mysteries of the kingdom of God are to be read in the growth of the seed.... God designed that nature should be to man a lesson-book to guide him from the path of disobedience back to God. There is need of a close study of nature under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is giving object-lessons, He is making holy truths familiar to the human mind, through the most simple things of nature.

Every ray of sunshine, every morsel of food, or drop of water, is a gift of redeeming love, and pleads with the sinner to be reconciled to God.

The sun and the moon were made by Him; there is not a star that beautifies the heavens which He did not make. There is not an article of food upon our tables that He has not provided for our sustenance. The stamp and superscription of God is upon it all. Everything is included in and abundantly supplied to man, through the one unspeakable Gift, the only begotten Son of God.

For Us Christ Endured the Cross

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:8.

For the joy that was set before Him, Christ endured the cross, despising the shame, and is forever set down at the right hand of God. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for the world, and through this sacrifice comes the greatest blessing that God could bestow,—the gift of the Holy Spirit. This blessing is for all who will receive Christ.

The fallen world is the battle-field for the greatest conflict the heavenly universe and earthly powers have ever witnessed. It was appointed as the theater on which would be fought out the grand struggle between good and evil, between heaven and hell. Every human being acts a part in this conflict. No one can stand on neutral ground. Men must either accept or reject the world's Redeemer. All are witnesses, either for or against Christ. Christ calls upon those who stand under His banner to engage in the conflict with Him as faithful soldiers, that they may inherit the crown of life. They have been adopted as sons and daughters of God. Christ has left them His assured promise that great will be the reward in the kingdom of heaven of those who partake of His humiliation and suffering for the truth's sake.

The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish, every earthly and hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction, for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection; yea, more. It was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror. Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.

Mercy and Justice Met at the Cross

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.Psalm 85:10.

Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf.... There it saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, It is enough.

By the offering made in our behalf we are placed on vantage-ground. The sinner, drawn by the power of Christ from the confederacy of sin, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it. Then there is a new creature in Christ Jesus. The sinner is cleansed and purified. A new heart is given to him. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. The work of redemption involved consequences of which it is difficult for man to have any conception. There was to be imparted to the human being striving for conformity to the divine image an outlay of heaven's treasures, an excellency of power, which would place him higher than the angels who had not fallen. The battle has been fought, the victory won. The controversy between sin and righteousness exalted the Lord of heaven, and established before the saved human family, before the unfallen worlds, before all the host of evil workers, from the greatest to the least, God's holiness, mercy, goodness, and wisdom.

Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other.

The greatness of this gift was to furnish men with a theme of thanksgiving and praise that would last through time and through eternity.

The Cross Unmasks Satan's Government

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he [Christ] made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Colossians 2:15.

At the cross of Calvary, love and selfishness stood face to face. Here was their crowning manifestation. Christ had lived only to comfort and bless, and in putting Him to death, Satan manifested the malignity of his hatred against God. He made it evident that the real purpose of his rebellion was to dethrone God, and to destroy Him through whom the love of God was shown.

By the life and the death of Christ, the thoughts of men also are brought to view. From the manger to the cross, the life of Jesus was a call to self-surrender, and to fellowship in suffering. It unveiled the purposes of men. Jesus came with the truth of heaven, and all who were listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit were drawn to Him. The worshipers of self belonged to Satan's kingdom. In their attitude toward Christ, all would show on which side they stood. And thus everyone passes judgment on himself.

In the day of final judgment, every lost soul will understand the nature of his own rejection of truth. The cross will be presented, and its real bearing will be seen by every mind that has been blinded by transgression. Before the vision of Calvary with its mysterious Victim, sinners will stand condemned. Every lying excuse will be swept away. Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been.... When the thoughts of all hearts shall be revealed, both the loyal and the rebellious will unite in declaring, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? ... for thy judgments are made manifest."

Though earth was struck off from the continent of Heaven and alienated from its communion, Jesus has connected it again with the sphere of glory.

We Must Take Up Our Cross Daily

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke 9:23.

It is the power of the cross alone that can separate man from the strong confederacy of sin. Christ gave Himself for the saving of the sinner. Those whose sins are forgiven, who love Jesus, will be united with Him. They will bear the yoke of Christ. This yoke is not to hamper them, not to make their religious life one of unsatisfying toil. No; the yoke of Christ is to be the very means by which the Christian life is to become one of pleasure and joy. The Christian is to be joyful in contemplation of that which the Lord has done in giving His only begotten Son to die for the world, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Those who stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, should be faithful soldiers in Christ’s army. They should never be disloyal, never be untrue. Many of the young will volunteer to stand with Jesus, the Prince of life. But if they would continue to stand with Him, they must constantly look unto Jesus, their Captain, for His orders. They cannot be soldiers of Christ and yet engage with the confederacy of Satan, and help along his side, for then they would be enemies of Christ. They would betray sacred trusts.

The cross ... is to be lifted and borne without a murmur or complaint. In the act of raising it, you will find that it raises you. You will find it alive with mercy, compassion, and pitying love.

Through bearing the cross your experience may be such that you can say, “‘I know that my Redeemer liveth,’ and because He lives, I shall live also.” What an assurance is this!

We Take Up the Cross and Deny Self

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20.

Christ was crucified for fallen man. But to many who call themselves Christians this event is nothing. In practise they deny the cross of Christ... They admit that Christ died on the cross, but because there is a crucifixion for them to experience, they will not receive the lessons that lead to self-denial and self-sacrifice. They are Christians in name only. The central point of their faith is not a crucified and risen Saviour, who brings to all that receive Him the privilege of being sons and daughters of God.

Give up the pleasures of sin in exchange for heaven and eternal life. What are the few days of selfish gratification that contain not one genuine drop of happiness, to the eternity of bliss that awaits the faithful soul? Keep not Christ's love from your soul. Look to the cross of Calvary if you want a tangible proof of His love. Heaven is looking upon you with intense interest, to see what you will do. The angels are amazed when you turn with indifference from the blessings that are proffered you. If you refuse to respond to the drawing love of Christ, you will finally grow rebellious and defiant.

Paul realized that his sufficiency was not in himself, but in the presence of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influence filled his heart, bringing every thought into subjection to Christ... In the apostle's teachings, Christ was the central figure. "I live," he declared, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Self was hidden; Christ was revealed and exalted.

Those who deny self to do others good, and who devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain.

We Take Up Our Cross and Follow Christ

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27.

How precious is the knowledge that we have a faithful Friend, One who will impart to us a noble, elevated character, which will fit us for the companionship of the heavenly angels in the courts above! His guardianship is over all His children. They have a peace that the world can neither give nor take away. The loss of earthly treasures does not make them hopeless or homeless....

Christ beholds the world, full of activity in seeking for earthly treasures. He sees many eagerly trying first one thing and then another in their efforts to obtain the coveted earthly treasure which they think will satisfy their selfish greed, while in their eager pursuit they pass by the only path that leads to the true riches.

As One having authority Christ speaks to such ones, inviting them to follow Him. He offers to lead them to the riches that are as enduring as eternity. He points them to the narrow path of self-denial and sacrifice. Those who press on in this path, surmounting every obstacle, will reach the land of glory. In lifting the cross they find that the cross lifts them, and they will at last gain the imperishable treasure.

Many think to find security in earthly riches. But Christ seeks to remove from their eye the mote that obscures the vision, and thus enable them to behold the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They are mistaking phantoms for realities, and have lost sight of the glories of the eternal world. Christ calls upon them to extend their view beyond the present, and add eternity to their vision.

We are to lift the cross, and follow the steps of Christ. Those who lift the cross will find that as they do this, the cross lifts them, giving them fortitude and courage, and pointing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.

If We Shun the Cross, We Lose Eternal Life

He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:38.

There can be only two classes.... And all who place themselves on the side of the disloyal are standing under Satan's black banner, and are charged with rejecting and despitefully using Christ. They are charged with deliberately crucifying the Lord of life and glory.

He who shuns the cross shuns the reward promised to the faithful.

Look to Calvary until your heart melts at the amazing love of the Son of God. He left nothing undone that fallen man might be elevated and purified. And shall we not confess Him? Will the religion of Christ degrade its receiver?—No; it will be no degradation to follow in the footsteps of the Man of Calvary. Day by day let us sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him, that in our conversation, our conduct, our dress, and in all our affairs, we may reveal the fact that Jesus is ruling and reigning over us. God calls upon us to walk in a path that has been cast up for the ransomed of the Lord; we are not to walk in the world. We are to surrender all to God, and confess Christ before men....

“He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Day by day we are to deny self, to lift the cross and follow in the footsteps of the Master....

I am glad that the day of probation is not closed. Let us in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth fall on the Rock and be broken. By meekness, by love, by a holy conversation, by a compassionate spirit, confess Christ to others. O that we might come into a position where He might reveal His glory as it was revealed in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the people.

The cross of Calvary is to us the pledge of everlasting life.

The Cross that Simon Bore

And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. Matthew 27:32.

The Saviour's burden was too heavy for Him in His weak and suffering condition. Since the Passover supper with His disciples, He had taken neither food nor drink. He had agonized in the garden of Gethsemane in conflict with satanic agencies.... All through the disgraceful farce of a trial He had borne Himself with firmness and dignity. But when after the second scourging the cross was laid upon Him, human nature could bear no more. He fell fainting beneath the burden.

The crowd that followed the Saviour saw His weak and staggering steps, but they manifested no compassion.... His persecutors saw that it was impossible for Him to carry His burden farther. They were puzzled to find any one who would bear the humiliating load. The Jews themselves could not do this....

At this time a stranger, Simon a Cyrenian, coming in from the country, meets the throng. He hears the taunts and ribaldry of the crowd; he hears the words contemptuously repeated, Make way for the King of the Jews! He stops in astonishment at the scene; and as he expressed his compassion, they seize him and place the cross upon his shoulders.

Simon had heard of Jesus. His sons were believers in the Saviour, but he himself was not a disciple. The bearing of the cross to Calvary was a blessing to Simon, and he was ever after grateful for this providence. It led him to take upon himself the cross of Christ from choice, and ever cheerfully stand beneath its burden.

The cross he [Simon] was forced to bear became the means of his conversion. His sympathies were deeply stirred in favor of Jesus; and the events of Calvary, and the words uttered by the Saviour, caused him to acknowledge that He was the Son of God.

Dying Thief Accepts Christ as His Saviour

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. Luke 23:42.

To the last of His work Christ is a sin-pardoner. At deepest midnight, as the Star of Bethlehem was about to sink into oblivion, lo there shines amid the moral darkness with distinct brightness the faith of a dying sinner as he lays hold upon a dying Saviour.

Such faith may be represented by the eleventh hour laborers who receive as much reward as do those who have labored for many hours. The thief asked in faith, in penitence, in contrition. He asked in earnestness, as if he fully realized that Jesus could save him if He would. And the hope in his voice was mingled with anguish as he realized, that if He did not, he would be lost, eternally lost. He cast his helpless, dying soul and body on Jesus Christ.

He had heard Pilate declare, "I find no fault in him." John 19:4. He had marked His godlike bearing, and His pitying forgiveness of His tormentors.... Among the passers-by he hears many defending Jesus. He hears them repeat His words, and tell of His works. The conviction comes ... to him that this is the Christ.... When condemned for his crime, the thief had become hopeless and despairing; but strange, tender thoughts now spring up. He calls to mind all he has heard of Jesus.... He has heard the words of those who believed in Jesus and followed Him weeping.... The Holy Spirit illuminates his mind, and little by little the chain of evidence is joined together. In Jesus, bruised, mocked, and hanging upon the cross, he sees the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Hope is mingled with anguish in his voice as the helpless, dying soul casts himself upon a dying Saviour.... Quickly the answer came. Soft and melodious the tone, full of love, compassion, and power the words: Verily I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.... To the penitent thief came the perfect peace of acceptance with God.

September—We are Laborers Together with God

Privilege of Working with God

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.1 Corinthians 3:9.

If you could only realize that the God of heaven takes those who have been rebels against His government, and says to them, You may be laborers together with Me, you would this day consecrate yourselves wholly to Him.... Is it not wonderful that we can receive the rich current of grace from the Deity, and work in harmony with Him? What does the Deity want with us—poor, weak, and feeble as we are? What can He do with us?—Everything, if we are willing to surrender all.

When God called me in my very childhood to work for Him, I used to think, What can I do? God says, Do My bidding. This is all that any of us need do. I want to tell you what each of you, from the oldest to the youngest, can do: *You* can co-operate with God, ... and with one another.... You will not study how to please yourself. You will realize that you are responsible for the influence you exert....

“We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry.” Think of it! He is seeking to work the mind, just as you work the land. He is trying to sow seed that will bear fruit to His glory. “Ye are God's building.” But He does not build without any care for you.

If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision.

Jesus has opened up all the divine fullness of His inexpressible love, and He declares to you, “Ye are laborers together with God.”

True Missionary Effort Begins in the Home

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Luke 1:6.

In forming a relationship with Christ, the renewed man is but coming back to his appointed relationship with God.... His first duty is to his children and his nearest relatives. Nothing can excuse him from neglecting the inner circle for the larger circle outside. In the day of final reckoning fathers and mothers ... will be asked what they did and said to secure the salvation of the souls they took upon themselves the responsibility of bringing into the world. Did they neglect their lambs, leaving them to the care of strangers? ... A great good done for others will not cancel the debt you owe to God to care for your children. The spiritual welfare of your family comes first.

In rightly training and molding the minds of her children, mothers are entrusted with the greatest mission ever given to mortals.

Whenever you take up the duty that lies nearest you, then God will bless you, and hear your prayers. There are too many doing outside missionary work, while their own households are left destitute of any such efforts,—going to ruin through neglect.... The first missionary work is to see that love, light, and joy come into the home circle. Let us not be looking for some great temperance or missionary work to do until we have first done the duties at home. Every morning we should think, What kind act can I do today? What tender word can I speak? Kind words at home are blessed sunshine. The husband needs them, the wife needs them, the children need them.... It ought to be the desire of every heart to make as much heaven below as possible.

A soul saved in your own family circle or in your own neighborhood, by your patient, painstaking labor, will bring as much honor to the name of Christ, and will shine as brightly in your crown as if you had found that soul in China or India.

Faithfulness in Little Things

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. Luke 16:10.

Much time is lost in longing to do some great thing, some wonderful work, while the duties lying close at hand, the performance of which would make the life fragrant, are lost sight of. The life that is Christlike in the home will be Christlike in the church. It is the neglect of the smaller duties in an effort to reach after a great work, that spoils the life of many a one.

Many admire the broad, deep river which moves majestically in its onward course to the ocean. It is worthy of admiration; for it is doing its appointed work. But what of the thousand rivulets from the mountain side, which help to swell this noble stream? It is true that they are small and narrow; but they are indispensable, for without them the river could not exist. They are unitedly doing their appointed work in fertilizing the earth; their path through fields and meadows can be traced by the living green that lines their banks. Thus they are carrying out God's plan, and adding to the prosperity of the world. The mighty river has worn for itself a channel through the everlasting hills; but in its place the brook is as necessary as the river....

Each individual member is responsible for the prosperity of the church. The world is full of work for the Master. Every day brings its burden of care and responsibility; and if just one neglects the work assigned him, some sacred interest suffers.

It is the conscientious attention to what the world calls little things that makes the great beauty and success of life. Little deeds of charity, little words of kindness, little acts of self-denial, a wise improvement of little opportunities, a diligent cultivation of little talents, make great men in God's sight.

Thoughtful courtesies, that, commencing in our families, extend outside the family circle, help make up the sum of life's happiness.

Home Duties Well Done

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Colossians 3:23.

God has given you life and all the rich blessings that make it enjoyable, and in return He has claims upon you for service, for gratitude, for love, for obedience to His law.... He requires you to control passion, to restrain selfish thoughts and actions, and to leave fretful words unspoken. Would Jesus require this self-control, if it were not for your real happiness to practice it? No; He wishes you to cultivate such traits of character as will bring peace to your own hearts, and enable you to brighten other hearts and lives with the sunshine of love, joy, and cheerful contentment.

If you are truly converted, if you are children of Jesus, you will honor your parents; you will not only do what they tell you, but will watch for opportunities to help them. In doing this you are working for Jesus. He considers all these care-taking, thoughtful deeds as done to Himself. This is the most important kind of missionary work; and those who are faithful in these little every-day duties are gaining a valuable experience.... By employing your time in some useful work, you will be closing a door against Satan's temptations. Remember that Jesus lived not to please Himself, and you must be like Him. Make this matter one of religious principle, and ask Jesus to help you. By exercising your mind in this direction, you will be preparing to become burden-bearers in the cause of God, as you have been care-takers in the home circle. You will have a good influence upon others, and may win them to the service of Christ....

When you make up your mind to do something on which your heart is set, you do not give up for difficulties, but try again and again. Put the same energy and determination to succeed in the service of Christ, and you will not fail of a reward.

Influence of a Christian Life at Home

He blesseth the habitation of the just. Proverbs 3:33.

If we have Christ abiding with us, we shall be Christians at home as well as abroad. He who is a Christian will have kind words for his relatives and associates. He will be kind, courteous, loving, sympathetic, and will be educating himself for an abode with the family above. If he is a member of the royal family, he will represent the kingdom to which he is going. He will speak with gentleness to his children, for he will realize that they too are heirs of God, members of the heavenly court. Among the children of God no spirit of hardness dwells.

Remember that just as you are in your family, so you will be in the church. Just as you treat your children, so will you treat Christ. If you cherish an un-Christlike spirit, you are dishonoring God.... Position does not make the man. It is Christ formed within that makes a man worthy of receiving the crown of life, that fadeth not away.

God wants every person to begin at home, and there live the Christ-life. In the church and in every business transaction a man will be just what he is in his home. If he submits to the Holy Spirit's guidance in the home, if he understands his responsibility to deal with minds there, then when in responsible positions he will pursue the same course. Remembering the tenderness of Christ toward him, he will manifest the same love and tenderness toward others....

The principles of heaven are to be carried out in every family, in the discipline of every church, in every establishment, in every institution, in every school, and in everything that shall be managed.

Men and women, children and youth, are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life. A Christian in the home is a Christian everywhere. Religion brought into the home exerts an influence that cannot be measured.

Good Behavior at Home Influences Others

Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly.1 Chronicles 19:13.

The Saviour of the world loves to have children and youth give their hearts to Him.... Through childhood and youth, they will be found faithful disciples of our Lord.... In your earliest years you may be a blessing in the home.

Even through children and youth the light of life may shine upon those who sit in darkness. Then watch and pray, and obtain a personal experience in the things of God. Your parents may teach you, they may try to guide your feet into safe paths; but it is impossible for them to change your heart. You must give your heart to Jesus, and walk in the precious light of truth that He has given you. Faithfully take up your duties in the home life, and, through the grace of God, you may grow up into the full stature of what Christ would have a child grow to be in Him....

In childhood and youth you may have an experience in the service of God. Do the things that you know to be right. Be obedient to your parents. Listen to their counsels; for if they love and fear God, upon them will be laid the responsibility of educating, disciplining, and training your soul for the immortal life. Thankfully receive the help they want to give you, and make their hearts glad by cheerfully submitting yourselves to the dictates of their wiser judgments. In this way you will honor your parents, glorify God, and become a blessing to those with whom you associate.

We want children and youth to be happy in this life, and to bring all that makes heaven desirable—a place of peace and bliss—into the home life. Train yourselves to behave at home, having the fear of the Lord before you, and it will become habit to behave well when away from home.... Let love be cherished, and peace, and Christian politeness, and angels will be your guests.

Job Offered Sacrifices for His Children

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually. Job 1:5.

There are two ways to deal with children,—ways that differ widely in principle and in results. Faithfulness and love, united with wisdom and firmness, in accordance with the teachings of God's Word, will bring happiness in this life and in the next. Neglect of duty, injudicious indulgence, failure to restrain or correct the follies of youth, will result in unhappiness and final ruin to the children, and disappointment and anguish to the parents....

It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interests of others; and at the same time he labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf.

He [God] desires to see gathered out from the homes of our people a large company of youth who, because of the godly influences of their homes, have surrendered their hearts to Him and go forth to give Him the highest service of their lives. Directed and trained by the godly instruction of the home, the influence of the morning and evening worship, the consistent example of parents who love and fear God, they have learned to submit to God as their teacher and are prepared to render Him acceptable service as loyal sons and daughters. Such youth are prepared to represent to the world the power and grace of Christ.

Far-reaching Influence of Christian Home

O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Psalm 71:17.

The temper, the personal peculiarities, the habits from which character is developed—everything practiced in the home will reveal itself in all the associations of life. The inclinations followed will work out in thoughts, in words, in acts of the same character.

The mission of the home extends beyond its own members. The Christian home is to be an object-lesson, illustrating the excellence of the true principles of life. Such an illustration will be a power for good in the world. Far more powerful than any sermon that can be preached is the influence of a true home.... As the youth go out from such a home, the lessons they have learned are imparted. Nobler principles of life are introduced into other households, and an uplifting influence works in the community.

The home in which the members are polite, courteous Christians exerts a far-reaching influence for good. Other families will mark the results attained by such a home, and will follow the example set, in their turn guarding the home against satanic influences. The angels of God will often visit the home in which the will of God bears sway. Under the power of divine grace such a home becomes a place of refreshing to worn, weary pilgrims. By watchful guarding, self is kept from asserting itself. Correct habits are formed. There is a careful recognition of the rights of others. The faith that works by love and purifies the soul stands at the helm, presiding over the whole household. Under the hallowed influence of such a home, the principle of brotherhood laid down in the Word of God is more widely recognized and obeyed.

The life of Christ is before us as a pattern, and it is when ministering, like angels of mercy, to the wants of others that man is closely allied to God. It is the nature of Christianity to make happy families and happy members of society.

God Fills Us With His Love

New wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.Luke 5:38.

We should earnestly seek to know and appreciate the truth, that we may present it to others as it is in Jesus. We need to have a correct estimate of the value of our own souls; then we would not be as reckless in regard to our course of action as at present. We would seek most earnestly to know God's way; ... and our constant prayer would be that we might have the mind of Christ, that we might be molded and fashioned after His likeness. It is in looking to Jesus and beholding His loveliness, having our eyes steadfastly fixed upon Him that we become changed into His image....

The end is near! We have not a moment to lose! Light is to shine forth from God's people in clear, distinct rays, bringing Jesus before the churches and before the world.... The instrumentalities to be used are those souls who gladly receive the light of truth which God communicates to them. These are God's agencies for communicating the knowledge of truth to the world. If through the grace of Christ His people will become new bottles, He will fill them with the new wine. God will give additional light, and old truths will be recovered, and replaced in the frame-work of truth; and wherever the laborers go, they will triumph. As Christ's ambassadors, they are to search the Scriptures, to seek for the truths that have been hidden beneath the rubbish of error. And every ray of light received is to be communicated to others. One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other,—Christ our righteousness....

“I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth;*for in these things I delight*,saith the Lord.” This is what needs to be brought into ... all our churches. God wants every soul to turn to the first love. He wants all to have the gold of faith and love, so that they can draw from the treasure to impart to others who need it.

God Allows Affliction and Trials

Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. Psalm 119:67.

The Lord estimates as of supreme value the holiness of His people, and He permits reverses to come upon individuals, upon families, and upon churches, that His people may see their danger, and humble their hearts before Him in repentance. He will treat His backslidden ones with tenderness. He will speak pardon to them, and clothe them with the garments of Christ's righteousness. He will honor them with His presence.

In this, the great day of atonement, it is our duty to confess our sins and acknowledge God's mercy and love in pardoning our transgressions. Let us thank the Lord for the warnings He has given to save us from our perverse ways. Let us witness to His goodness by revealing a change in our lives. If those to whom the Lord has sent reproof, warning them that they are not walking in His way, will repent, and with humility and contrition of heart make confession, the Lord will surely receive them again into favor....

A season of great trial is before us. It becomes us now to use all our capabilities and gifts in advancing the work of God. The powers the Lord has given us are to be used to build up, not to discourage and to tear down.... In all ages of the church God's appointed messengers have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth's sake. But wherever God's people may be forced to go, even though, like the beloved disciple, they are banished to desert islands, Christ will know where they are, and will strengthen and bless them, filling them with peace and joy....

He will purify His church even as He purified the temple at the beginning and close of His ministry on earth. All that He brings upon the church in test and trial comes that His people may gain deeper piety and more strength to carry the triumphs of the cross to all parts of the world. He has a work for all to do.

Persecution Helps Spread the Gospel

I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake.2 Corinthians 12:10.

In every age God's chosen messengers have been reviled and persecuted; yet through their affliction, the knowledge of God has been spread abroad. Every disciple of Christ is to step into the ranks, and carry forward the same work, knowing that its foes can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. God means that truth shall be brought to the front, and become the subject of examination and discussion, even through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated; every controversy, every reproach, every effort to restrict liberty of conscience, is God's means of awakening minds that otherwise might slumber.

How often this result has been seen in the history of God's messengers! When the noble and eloquent Stephen was stoned to death at the instigation of the Sanhedrin council, there was no loss to the cause of the gospel. The light of heaven that glorified his face, the divine compassion breathed in his dying prayer, were as a sharp arrow of conviction to the bigoted Sanhedrist who stood by, and Saul, the persecuting Pharisee, became a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ before Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. And long afterward Paul the aged wrote from his prison-house at Rome: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, ... not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds.... Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached." Through Paul's imprisonment the gospel was spread abroad, and souls were won for Christ in the very palace of the Caesars. By the efforts of Satan to destroy it, "the incorruptible seed" of the Word of God, "which liveth and abideth forever," is sown in the hearts of men; through the reproach and persecution of His children, the name of Christ is magnified, and souls are saved.

Righteous Church Members

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. Isaiah 32:17.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” The inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit is priceless. In the life of the true Christian the outward adorning is always in harmony with the inward peace and holiness. Thus in the righteousness of the members shall the church be established. God’s people are to show a faith steadfast and immovable. The Bible is their standard. Rich currents of grace from heaven will produce light in them, which they are to impart to others. In all its power the truth is to be proclaimed. Those who faithfully do this work, keeping the commandments of God in deed and in truth, will be acknowledged as laborers together with God.

“The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.” From the beginning to the end of the history of the church, Christ will be to His people all that these words express, if they will heed the invitation, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, ... 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.” Christ is to His people life and strength, efficiency and power, wisdom and holiness.

If you yield to the claims of God, and become permeated with His love, and filled with His fullness, children, youth, and young disciples will look to you for their impressions of what constitutes practical godliness; and you may thus be the means of leading them in the path of obedience to God. You will then be exerting an influence which will bear the test of God, and your work will be compared to gold, silver, and precious stones, for it will be of an imperishable nature....

There are many who are looking to you, to see what religion can do for you. If you are faithful in your God-given work, you will make right impressions, and will lead souls in the way of righteousness.

We are to Be Zealous in Our Labors

I am verily a man which ... was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. Acts 22:3.

As a people, we are not deficient in talent. There are men and women among us whose labors God would accept if they would offer them to Him, but there are so very few who have the spirit of sacrifice. Some will hand out readily of their means, and feel that when they have done this, there is no more required of them. They make no special sacrifice in thus doing. Money is good as far as it goes, but, unless accompanied by personal effort, will go but a little way toward converting souls to the truth. Not only does God call for your money, ... but He calls for you. While you have given of your means, you have selfishly withheld yourselves. One earnest worker in the vineyard is worth more than a million of money without men to do the work. This giving of yourselves will be a sacrifice if you have a correct estimate of the work, and realize its claims....

Many are not sufficiently aroused to their duty to do the work they might do if they would, and that they do not do because they have not the spirit of sacrifice. God will hold such accountable for the souls of their fellow-men. They might have done a good work in union with Christ, and they will be called to render an account for the good to souls they could have done and did not....

The night soon cometh, in which no man can work. Satan is earnest, zealous, and persevering in his work. If he fails to accomplish his purpose the first time, he tries again. He will try other plans, and work with great perseverance to bring in various temptations to ensnare souls. He never becomes so discouraged as to let souls entirely alone. If the zeal and perseverance of Christ's followers in their efforts to save souls were equal to Satan's efforts to deceive them to their eternal loss, we should see hundreds embracing the truth where we now see one.

God Places Benevolence Close Beside Prayer

Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. Acts 10:4.

True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love to Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom He came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth....

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience was alive, she would testify of needless appropriations in the gratification of the appetite, and in ministering to pride, to vanity, and to amusements, and report the squandering of their Lord's money, which should have been devoted to His cause....

The length and happiness of life consist not in the amount of our earthly possessions....

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God, are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master.... Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is His mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Representatives of God's Government

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.1 Corinthians 15:58.

The church of Christ is to be clean, pure, and sanctified unto God. Its members stand before the world as representatives of the heavenly government. They are embarked, so long as time shall last, upon an enterprise of mercy.

It is God's desire that all who profess to believe in the truth of His word shall make it known. Their persevering fidelity will be richly rewarded. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

Let us then not be weary in well-doing. Let us yield our hearts entirely to the teachings of the word of the great Medical Missionary. According to our own faith in the message will be our earnestness and our power in promoting the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We are to become "labourers together with God," always "abounding in the work of the Lord."

Every day of our lives we face new obligations. The termination of one duty is the beginning of the next. Our lives are to be spent in solemn service for the Master. We are the Lord's servants. The members of Christ's church are to be examples of life-service, of complete obedience to our great Example. Every day our work will be appointed unto us according to our several ability. In prayerful, watchful service, we shall perfect characters after the divine similitude, characters with which God will be pleased, and that will fit us for an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Lord is waiting to manifest through His people His grace and power... Individually we are to walk and talk with God; then the sacred influence of the gospel of Christ in all its preciousness will appear in our lives.

How We are to Work

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.1 Peter 3:15.

In daily doing the works of Christ, it becomes a pleasure to do His will. Christ came to our world to live out the law of God, to be our pattern in all things. He placed Himself between the mercy seat, and the vast number of heartless worshippers who were full of ostentation, pride, and vanity, and by His lessons of truth, which were “eloquent with simplicity,” He impressed the people with the necessity of spiritual worship. His lessons were impressive, beautiful and weighty with importance, and yet so simple that a child could understand them. The truth He presented was so deep that the wisest and most accomplished teacher could never exhaust it. Those who work as seeing the Invisible, will always preserve simplicity, charging the simplest words with the power of the grandest truths.

The youth may be a power for Christ, if they will maintain their simplicity, and not seek to present something startling, something original, but teach the precepts of their Lord. But to invest the simplest truths with novelty and singularity, is to rob them of their power to win souls to Christ.... The use of long words and soaring eloquence is not essential to success. What you need is a living experience in the things of God, and simplicity in presenting the love of Christ to the lost.... When the heart is aglow with the love of Jesus, you will express it to others, and become witnesses for Christ.

We are not to hide the gospel, or cover the cross of Christ with ornamental roses and thus make the preaching of it of no effect.

The true, honest expression of a son or daughter of God, spoken in natural simplicity, has power to unbolt the door to hearts that have long been closed against Christ and His love.

We are to Do Good to Our Neighbors

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it Proverbs 3:27.

So ready, so eager is the Saviour's heart to welcome us as members of the family of God, that in the very first words we are to use in approaching God, He places the assurance of our divine relationship,—“Our Father.” ... In calling God our Father, we recognize all His children as our brethren. We are all a part of the great web of humanity, all members of one family. In our petitions we are to include our neighbors as well as ourselves. No one prays aright who seeks a blessing for himself alone.

We are bound to the Lord by the strongest ties, and the manifestation of our Father's love should call forth the most filial affection and the most ardent gratitude. The laws of God have their foundation in the most immutable rectitude, and are so framed that they will promote the happiness of those who keep them.

In the lesson of faith that Christ taught on the mount, are revealed the principles of true religion. Religion brings man into personal relation with God, but not exclusively; for the principles of heaven are to be lived out, that they may help and bless humanity. A true child of God will love Him with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. He will have an interest for his fellow-men. True religion is the work of grace upon the heart, that causes the life to flow out in good works, like a fountain fed from living streams. Religion does not consist merely in meditation and prayer. The Christian's light is displayed in good works, and is thus recognized by others. Religion is not to be divorced from the business life. It is to pervade and sanctify its engagements and enterprises. If a man is truly connected with God and heaven, the spirit that dwells in heaven will influence all his words and actions. He will glorify God in his works, and will lead others to honor Him.

We are to Labor With Love

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:35.

May God help us to understand that we must be laborers together with Him. Let us begin right here to be co-workers with heaven.... Will you not unite in labor for your families and for your friends and acquaintances?

Let every one of our young disciples of Christ have an unselfish love for all other disciples of Christ.... See if there is not a poor child who is not a favorite, to whom no special kindnesses are shown, and make this one the object of your unselfish attention. Those who are especially attractive will be at no loss for friends; while those who are less pleasing in appearance, who are timid and hard to become acquainted with, may have choice traits of character, and they are the purchase of the blood of Christ.

We need to realize daily what a helper we have in Jesus. Let all understand that they can be co-workers with Jesus Christ. It is your privilege to receive grace from Christ that will enable you to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith you yourselves are comforted of God.... Let each one seek to do his work as he will wish he had done when the end of all things shall come. Let each try to help the next one. Thus you may have a little heaven here below, and angels of God will work through you to make right impressions.... Christ wants to use you as His servants. Seek to help wherever you can. Cultivate the best dispositions that the grace of God may rest richly upon you.

Young and old may learn to look to God as the One who will heal, as One who sympathizes, who understands their necessities and who will never make a mistake. Your humanity may lay hold of the divinity of Christ by living faith, and you may learn to carry out ... the principles of heaven. This will make you a blessing to all.

Defenders of the Faith

Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jude 1:3.

Crime of every type is increasing in the world, and the earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. The eternal plans of God are about to be fulfilled, and the end of all things is at hand. This is a time when those who have a knowledge of the truth of God should be ranging themselves on the side of the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. They should stand forth as defenders of the faith delivered to the saints. They should make manifest to the world what it is to keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. They should let their light shine forth in clear, strong rays upon the pathway of those who walk in darkness. The soldiers of Christ should stand shoulder to shoulder, loyal to truth, vindicators of the law of Jehovah.

Those who depart from the plain precepts of God, will support error, and be ranged against the soldiers of Christ. They will make manifest who is their leader by the course they will pursue in opposing the truth of God, and in enforcing error on the conscience by oppressive measures. It is now time to take a decided stand on the side of truth; and as God has given to every one his measure of influence, he should exert it to the glory of God and for the good of his associates. Not one of the faithful stewards of Christ will be idle in such a time as this, or will be content to live simply for self. Those who are in communion with Christ will realize that there are souls on every side who may be benefited by their help, example, and influence. They will realize that they may be agents through whom Jesus will work to save those for whom He died. This should be the experience of all who profess to believe the third angel's message. Young and old should have a rich, joyful, abundant experience in the religion of Christ.

We Are Blessed in Helping Others

The soul of blessing shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. Proverbs 11:25, margin.

There are many to whom life is a painful struggle; they feel their deficiencies, and are miserable and unbelieving; they think they have nothing for which to be grateful. Kind words, looks of sympathy, expressions of appreciation, would be to many a struggling and lonely one as the cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. A word of sympathy, an act of kindness, would lift burdens that rest heavily upon weary shoulders. And every word or deed of unselfish kindness is an expression of the love of Christ for lost humanity.

The merciful “shall obtain mercy.” “The soul of blessing shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” There is sweet peace for the compassionate spirit, a blessed satisfaction in the life of self-forgetful service for the good of others. The Holy Spirit that abides in the soul, and is manifest in the life, will soften hard hearts, and awaken sympathy and tenderness. You will reap that which you sow.

The time will come when the earth shall reel to and fro, and shall be removed like a cottage. But the thoughts, the purposes, the acts of God’s workers, although now unseen, will appear at the great day of final retribution and reward. Things now forgotten will then appear as witnesses, either to approve or to condemn.

Love, courtesy, self-sacrifice,—these are never lost. When God’s chosen ones are changed from mortality to immortality, their words and deeds of goodness will be made manifest, and will be preserved through the eternal ages. No act of unselfish service, however small or simple, is ever lost. Through the merits of Christ’s imputed righteousness, the fragrance of such words and deeds is forever preserved.

We are Created to Do Good Works

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10.

There are possibilities for work to be done by you for Jesus that you have never dreamed of. A Christian is a Christ-like man, a Christ-like woman who is active in God's service, who is present at the social meeting, whose presence will encourage others also. Religion does not consist in works, but religion works; it is not dormant. The pure religion of Jesus is the fountain from which flow streams of charity, love, self-sacrifice.... With the love of Christ in the heart, the lips will utter His praise and magnify His name. There will be a pressure upon the soul filled with Christ's love....

God's sons and daughters must show they are of heavenly extraction. The great man in God's sight is he who in the midst of crowds, of cares and financial pressure, keeps his soul unpolluted, unstained, without one blot of worldly pollution. Firmly relying upon God by prayer and faith, the soul will stand firm in moral independence, yet with perfect kindness, love, and goodness. The temptations of society are met and resisted, communion is maintained with God, and the communication between your soul and God enables you to transmit to others through your social relations the choicest blessings which Heaven has to bestow.... Exact and impartial justice will be seen in all his dealings, but his duty does not end here. God requires more. He demands of you to love as Christ has loved souls. He demands of you compassion for the suffering, the erring, those who are subject to Satan's temptations. He demands of you kindness, courtesy to even the unfortunate, a generous consideration of the feelings of others.... You must so order your intercourse and deal with the world as to secure for yourself a calm, hallowed peace, while you leave a record behind of a godly example.

God Blesses Those Who Consider the Poor

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. Psalm 41:1.

We are God's servants, doing His service. Into the great web of life we are to draw no thread of selfishness; for this would spoil the pattern. But, oh, how thoughtless men are apt to be! How seldom do they make the interest of God's suffering ones their own. The poor are all around them, but they pass on, thoughtless and indifferent, regardless of the widows and orphans who, left without resources, suffer, but do not tell their need. If the rich would place a small fund in the bank, at the disposal of the needy ones, how much suffering would be saved. The holy love of God should lead every one to see that it is his duty to care for some other one, and thus keep alive the spirit of benevolence.... He honors us by making us His helping hand. Instead of complaining, let us rejoice that we have the privilege of serving under so good and merciful a Master.

Hear what Isaiah says: "Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, cover him.... Then shall thy light break forth as the morning." Your souls shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not....

I remember the case of a poor man, who lived near a rich widow.... She had had her orchard trimmed, and the limbs and sprouts thus cut off lay by the fence. This poor man asked of her the small favor to give him this brush to use for fuel; but she refused him, saying, "I want to keep them; for the ashes will enrich my ground." I never pass the house of that woman without thinking of this incident. Ground enriched to the neglect of the poor!

When there is a failure to appreciate the necessities of humanity, an unwillingness to be God's helping hand, the most costly offerings, the grandest display of liberality, are abominable in His sight.

It is in a life of service only that true happiness is found.

We Are Told To Go Into All the World

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15.

The Lord has given to the youth capabilities and talents with which they are to do the work of God. I ask you, dear youth, are you going to give yourselves to the Lord? Are you ready to engage in the work He has left you to do? Jesus said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." In the face of this command, will you appropriate your time and your energies as inclination may dictate, instead of following the counsel of God? ...

There are souls to be saved. But in wasting your talent of influence, you cannot be laborers together with God, working for the salvation of others. God would have you rightfully direct every jot of influence you possess. He calls for you to whom He has given great light to cooperate with heavenly intelligences. Those who have great light and precious capabilities will have a large field in which their influence may tell unto life eternal; but if those who have been richly endowed of heaven, withhold their gifts from God's service, and misapply them in the service of self and the world, they will be punished in proportion to the light which they have persistently refused. God has made the youth the depositaries of the truth that is to be imparted to the world.... Christ is calling for whole-hearted, sincere servants, who will not be turned from their position of duty by allurements or opposition,—who will not fail or be discouraged. Will you give Him your names? Will you be among those who shall be light-bearers? Will you give yourself to Him to be employed as His agents to arrest the steps of many who are going on the road to perdition?

The work must extend from city to city, from country to country, and from nation to nation, moving continually onward and upward, established, strengthened, and settled.

We are Witnesses for God

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord. Isaiah 43:10.

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord.” Thank God that it is our privilege to be called witnesses for God. Then if we are witnesses, we must speak for Christ, and lift Him up among our associates. When we see the ardor and religious zeal of any of our companions growing cool, we must help and encourage such a one, pray with and for him, that he may be a true witness for the Lord....

You are to be the agent through whom God will speak to the soul. Precious things will be brought to your remembrance, and with a heart overflowing with the love of Jesus, you will speak words of vital interest and import. Your simplicity and sincerity will be the highest eloquence, and your words will be registered in the books of heaven as fit words, which are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. God will make them a healing flood of heavenly influence, awakening conviction and desire, and Jesus will add His intercession to your prayers, and claim for the sinner the gift of the Holy Spirit, and pour it upon his soul. And there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

The work above all work,—the business above all others which should draw and engage the energies of the soul,—is the work of saving souls for whom Christ has died. Make this the main, the important work of your life. Make it your special life-work. Cooperate with Christ in this grand and noble work, and become home and foreign missionaries. Be ready and efficient to work at home or in far-off climes for the saving of souls.... O that young and old were thoroughly converted to God, and would take up the duty that lies next them, and work as they have opportunity, becoming laborers together with God! Should this come to pass, multitudes of voices would show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

We Give Liberally To Spread the Gospel

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase. Proverbs 3:9.

Are you not chosen of God to be a vessel unto honor, to convey light and truth to those who are in error and darkness? The saving message of truth has come to you, and if you receive of the spirit of Christ, you will have a love for the souls who are in peril.

Men will compass land and sea for earthly gain, and endure privation and suffering to obtain their object, yet will turn away from heaven's attractions, and not regard eternal riches. Men who are in comparative poverty are usually the ones who do the most to sustain the cause of God. They are generous with their little. They have strengthened their generous impulses by continual liberalities. When their expenditures pressed close upon the income, their passion for earthly riches had no room or chance to strengthen. But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves, they fail to become rich toward God.

It should be your object, in whatever vocation you may be found, to do your work in a manner that shall glorify God. All that you gain, you should look upon as capital to be invested in the bank of heaven. It should be your joy to devote means, and time, and ability to win souls for Christ, to send the light to those who sit in darkness.

The Lord has ordained that the diffusion of light and truth in the earth shall be dependent upon the efforts and offerings of those who are partakers of the heavenly gift. He might have made angels the ambassadors of His truth; He might have made known His will, as He proclaimed the law from Sinai, with His own voice; but in His infinite love and wisdom He called men to become co-laborers with Himself, by choosing them to do this work.

We Are the Light of the World

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Matthew 5:14.

Our duty will only be discerned and appreciated when viewed in the light which shines from the life of Christ. As the sun rises in the east and passes toward the west, filling the world with light, so the true follower of Christ will be a light unto the world. He will go forth into the world as a bright and shining light, that those who are in darkness may be lightened and warmed by the rays shining forth from him. Christ says of His followers, “Ye are the light of the world.”

Those who do not work in hopefulness, keep themselves under a cloud of doubt. The enemy is not dead yet, and the nearer we come to the close of this earth’s history, the more vigilant will be the efforts of satanic agencies to keep souls under a cloud of doubt, so that the light of heaven shall not be expressed in words and acts, to bring hope and cheer and courage to others....

The world is full of hurry and disappointment. The words are addressed to you, “Let *your* light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The words in favor of truth, spoken with the assurance that comes from the possession of a right purpose, and in cheerful hope, from a pure heart, will make the angels rejoice. The Lord would have us spiritually minded, that we may be able to see the working out of His plans in our lives. We are to be laborers together with God in accomplishing the work that He would have done. Wherever we are, we are to reflect light.

When the grace of Christ is expressed in the words and works of the believers, light will shine forth to those who are in darkness; for while the lips are speaking to the praise of God, the hand will be stretched out in beneficence for the help of the perishing.

We are to Work with Christ to Save the Lost

And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. Luke 15:6.

When Jesus spoke these words, He was talking to a company, many of whom knew by experience what a shepherd's life is in Palestine. There the flocks are not kept in level, inclosed pastures, but on the hill-sides, among crags and precipices....

There was always the danger from robbers and wolves to be guarded against. Sometimes a sheep would stray away from the flock; so they were frequently numbered to see that none were lost, for the shepherd must give a strict account of all the sheep under his care.... The shepherd's life is one full of peril. If he is a trustworthy shepherd, he will not be careless and study his own ease, but he will search for the straying sheep amid storm and tempest....

This is the way the true Shepherd treats the lost sinner. He goes after him; He does not hesitate at peril, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. He is intent upon bringing the sin-burdened soul to repentance, to salvation, to peace, rest, and happiness in his Saviour's love. And it is the privilege of every one who has experienced the love of Jesus in his own heart, to think if there is not some one whom he can by personal effort, by studied tact and kindness, bring to Jesus, who is ready and willing to accept all who will come to Him. We can all do much through personal effort. We can be laborers with Jesus Christ.

Life is serious. You have a large field in which to work; and persevering search for the lost sheep will be the most successful way in which you can employ your time.... If you can exert a saving influence over one soul, remember there is joy in heaven over the one that repented.... You may, by judicious effort, be the means of bringing back the lost sheep to Jesus' fold.

Truth Will Triumph

Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not your's, but God's.2 Chronicles 20:15.

There is work for every individual who names the name of Christ. A voice from heaven is solemnly calling you to duty. Heed this voice, and go to work at once in any place, in any capacity. Why stand ye here all the day idle? There is work for you to do, a work that demands your best energies. Every precious moment of life is related to some duty which you owe to God or to your fellow men....

A great work of saving souls remains yet to be done. Every angel in glory is engaged in this work, while every demon of darkness is opposing it. Christ has demonstrated to us the great value of souls in that He came to the world with the hoarded love of eternity in His heart, offering to make man heir to all His wealth. He unveils before us the love of the Father for the guilty race and presents Him as just and the justifier of him that believeth.

There are vast numbers arrayed against the truth, whom we must meet in presenting the light to others. Our hope is not in our knowledge of the truth, and in our own ability, but in the living God.... God's glory is at stake. And there should be decided effort as far as human effort is concerned, and living faith for the mighty God to manifest His power, else all will prove a failure. God defeated the enemies of Israel. He put their forces into disorder. They fled they knew not whither. Who can stand before the Lord God of Israel?

Now we are not warring against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. The Lord would encourage us to look to Him as the source of all our strength, the One who is able to help us.... When the God of Israel undertakes work for us, He will make it a success.

Truth will triumph.

Christ Commends those Who Serve Him

Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Matthew 25:21.

The Lord is willing to do great things for us. We shall not gain the victory through numbers, but through the full surrender of the soul to Jesus. We are to go forward in His strength, trusting in the mighty God of Israel.... It is essential to have an intelligent knowledge of the truth; for how else could we meet its wily opponents? The Bible must be studied, not alone for the doctrines it teaches, but for its practical lessons. You should never be surprised, you should never be without your armor on. Be prepared for any emergency, for any call of duty. Be waiting, watching for every opportunity to present the truth, familiar with the prophecies, familiar with the lessons of Christ. But do not trust in well-prepared arguments. Argument alone is not enough. God must be sought on your knees; you must go forth to meet the people through the power and influence of His Spirit.... God would have you minute men, as were the men who composed Gideon's army.

When in the day of final awards, the reward is given to each as his works have been, it is your privilege to have redeemed souls whom you have been the means of helping, come to you and say, "You lifted me out of discouragement." And the Master will say to you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

The Lord keeps a complete list of His workers, and in Bible history He has given us the names of a few. Among those who were faithful stewards are Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Nehemiah, John, and Paul.... The workers in the vineyard of the Lord have the example of the good of all ages to stimulate them. They have to encourage them the love of God, the ministration of angels, the sympathy of Jesus, and the hope of winning precious souls to shine forever as stars in their crown of rejoicing.

When the Gospel is Preached to All

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. Matthew 24:14.

“As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” We are to bear as definite a testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, as did Christ and His apostles. Trusting in the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, we are to testify of the mercy, goodness, and love of a crucified and risen Saviour, and thus be agents through whom the darkness will be dispelled from many minds, and cause thanksgiving and praise to ascend from many hearts to God. There is a great work to be done by every son and daughter of God.

Those who will not accept the last solemn message of warning sent to our world, will pervert the Scriptures; they will attack the character, and make false statements in regard to the faith and doctrines of the advocates of Bible truth. Every possible means will be employed to divert the attention. Shows, games, horseraces, and various other kinds of amusement will be set in operation. An intense power from beneath will stir them up to oppose the message from heaven.... Let us rally under the banner of Prince Immanuel, and in the name and strength of Jesus press the battle home.

There are souls perishing. They must know the terms of salvation.... Many appear to be entombed in the darkness of ignorance, intrenched behind an invincible barrier, ... but bear in mind that heavenly intelligences are working with the human agents. The Holy Spirit can pierce the stronghold of unbelief. Jesus is leading His army to the field of battle.... Our General leads to victory.

When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfilment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned, and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory.

God will do the work if we will furnish Him the instruments.

October—We Abide in Christ

By Receiving Christ, the Source of Life

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. John 1:4.

The Lord has made every provision so that we may have a rich, abundant, joyful experience. John writes concerning Christ, saying, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” Life is associated with light, and if we have no light from the Sun of Righteousness, we can have no life in Him. But this light has been provided for every soul, and it is only as we withdraw from the light that darkness comes upon us. Jesus said, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” In the world about us there can be no life without light. Were the sun to withdraw his shining, all vegetation, all animal life, would have an end. This illustrates the fact that we cannot have spiritual life unless we place ourselves under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. If we put a flowering plant in a dark room, it will soon wither and die; and so we may have some spiritual life, and yet lose it by dwelling in an atmosphere of doubt and gloom....

We are called, as was John, not to take the place of Christ, but to witness to the light, to direct the minds of others to Him.... Let no one who would witness for Christ, make himself prominent, and seek to attract the attention of the people to himself; but let him strive to lift up Jesus.

Humanity has in itself no light. Apart from Christ, we are like an unkindled taper, like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; we have not a single ray of brightness to shed into the darkness of the world. But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence.

By Abiding in Christ, the Source of Power

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. Colossians 2:9, 10.

The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him. What a thought is this! In Christ “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him.”

Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. The Spirit conforms the renewed soul to the model, Jesus Christ. Through the influence of the Spirit, enmity against God is changed into faith and love, and pride into humility. The soul perceives the beauty of truth, and Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break out in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude.

Jehovah Emmanuel—He “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” in whom dwells “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”—to be brought into sympathy with Him, to know Him, to possess Him, as the heart opens more and more to receive His attributes; to know His love and power, to possess the unsearchable riches of Christ, to comprehend more and more “what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God,”—“this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”

By Walking as Christ Walked

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. Colossians 2:6.

You are fighting for the crown of life.... Live to please Him who thought you of such value that He gave Jesus, His only begotten Son, to save you from your sins.... Ever keep before you the thought that what is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. Depend upon God for wisdom, that you may not discourage one soul in right doing. Work with Christ in drawing souls to Him.... Do your very best in everything you undertake. Jesus is your Saviour, and rely upon Him to help you day by day, that you may not sow tares, but the good seed of the kingdom....

You must learn to see with your brain as well as your eyes. You must educate your judgment so that it shall not be feeble and inefficient. You must pray for guidance, and commit your way unto the Lord. You must close your heart against all foolishness and sin, and open it to every heavenly influence. You must make the most of your time and opportunities, in order to develop a symmetrical character....

We are to be “complete in him.” “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” This means that you are to study the life of Christ. You are to study it with as much more earnestness than you study secular lines of knowledge, as eternal interests are more important than temporal, earthly pursuits. If you appreciate the value and sacredness of eternal things, you will bring your sharpest thoughts, your best energies, to the solving of the problem that involves your eternal well-being; for every other interest sinks into nothingness in comparison with that.

You have the pattern, Christ Jesus; walk in His footsteps, and you will be qualified to fill any and every position that you may be called upon to occupy.... You are not to feel that you are a bond slave, but a son of God.

By Walking in the Truth

For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.3 John 1:3.

The Lord has a place for the very best ability He has intrusted to men. In the work of building up His kingdom, we may employ every capacity given of God, as faithfully and earnestly as did Daniel in Babylon, when he was found faithful to every duty to man, and loyal to his God.

God calls for far more tact, more wise generalship, than has yet been given Him by His human agents. There is need of sharp, sanctified thinking, and keen work to counteract the ingenious plans of Satan. There is a call for a higher standard to be met, a holier, more determined, self-sacrificing effort to be put forth in the Lord's work. Our youth must be educated to meet a higher standard, to understand that they are now deciding their own eternal destiny. There is no safeguard for any one, save in having in the heart the truth as it is in Jesus. This must be planted in the heart by the Holy Spirit. Much that is now called religion will sink out of sight when it is assailed by the hosts of Satan. Nothing will stand but the truth,—the wisdom that is from above, which will sanctify the soul.

Let no one imagine that self-indulgence is religion. Let not selfishness be pampered. Let the youth learn to restrict their desires, and to beware of extravagance in the use of means. Let all look unto Jesus, contemplate His character, and follow in His footsteps.

The truth if received is capable of constant expansion and new developments. It will increase in brightness as we behold it, and grow in height and depth as we aspire to grasp it. Thus it will elevate us to the standard of perfection, and give us faith and trust in God as our strength for the work before us.

Through the application of divine truth the perfect image of God will be reproduced.

By Keeping the Commandments in Every Detail

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.1 John 3:24.

God requires us to be faithful in the smallest details of life,—to guard our words, our spirit, and our actions. To do this, we need to acquire perfect self-control, and this will demand of us constant, ceaseless watchfulness....

Were self kept under control, serious errors in home and business life would be avoided. Among the members of many families there is practised the habit of saying loose, careless things, and the habit of tantalizing, of speaking harsh words, becomes stronger and stronger as it is indulged, and thus many objectionable words are spoken that are after Satan's order, and not after the order of God. Should those who indulge in speaking words of passion, study the Guide Book, and with a serious mind seek to know its requirements, and to do them,—should they make practical its injunctions,—what a transformation would there be in the conduct and conversation! ... Every relation in life, every position of responsibility, every affection and habit, every emotion of the mind, is to be brought to the great standard of righteousness, the commandments of God, which are exceeding broad. We must have simplicity of heart that we may understand, and willingness of mind to practise, all the teachings of God's Word....

The whole mind must be molded by the Holy Spirit. Divine power will combine with human effort, when we seek earnestly to be complete in Christ Jesus. The Lord will help every one who seeks Him with all his heart. He shall have the light of life, and that light shines from the living oracles. As the light of the sun sheds its warmth throughout all the world, so the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will shed health-giving rays into the heart.

By Being United as Children of God

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26.

We seldom find two persons exactly alike. Among human beings as well as among the things of the natural world, there is diversity. Unity in diversity among God's children—the manifestation of love and forbearance in spite of difference of disposition—this is the testimony that God sent His Son into the world to save sinners.

The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. In mind, in purpose, in character, they are one, but not in person. By partaking of the Spirit of God, conforming to the law of God, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus. Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin.

The powers of darkness stand a poor chance against believers who love one another as Christ has loved them, who refuse to create alienation and strife, who stand together, who are kind, courteous, and tender-hearted, cherishing the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. We must have the Spirit of Christ, or we are none of His.

In unity there is strength; in division there is weakness.

The closer our union with Christ, the closer will be our union with one another. Variance and disaffection, selfishness and conceit, are striving for supremacy. These are the fruits of a divided heart, open to the suggestions of the enemy of souls. Satan exults when he can sow seeds of dissension.

In unity there is a life, a power, that can be obtained in no other way.

Christ is the True Vine

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. John 15:1.

Those who would follow Christ, must believe in Him; they must open the heart to receive Him as an abiding guest. They must abide in Christ, as the branch abides in the living vine. There is a vital union formed between the parent stock and the branch, and the same fruit appears upon the branch that is seen upon the tree. Thus the Lord will work through the human agent who unites himself to Jesus Christ. Those who have an abiding trust in Christ, will, like Enoch, have a sense of the abiding presence of God. Why is it that there are so many who feel in uncertainty, who feel that they are orphans?—It is because they do not cultivate faith in the precious assurance that the Lord Jesus is their sin-bearer. It was in behalf of those who had transgressed the law, that Jesus took upon Him human nature, and became like unto us, in order that we might have everlasting peace and assurance. We have an advocate in the heavens, and whosoever accepts Him as his personal Saviour is not left an orphan to bear the curse of his own sins.

We must daily cultivate faith, daily contemplate Him who has undertaken our case, who is a merciful and faithful high priest; “for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted [not in a few things, but in all points like as we are], he is able to succour them that are tempted.” “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Even now, in heaven, He is afflicted with our afflictions; and as a living Saviour, as an interested Advocate, He is making intercession for us.

We should daily exercise faith; and that faith should daily increase as it is exercised, as we realize that He has not only redeemed us, but has loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and the Father.

We Are the Branches

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. John 15:5.

We have nothing, we are nothing, unless we receive virtue from Jesus Christ.

Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the true Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit. God will not make the slightest compromise with sin. If He could have done this, Christ need not have come to our world to suffer and die. No conversion is genuine which does not change both the character and the conduct of those who accept the truth. The truth works by love, and purifieth the soul.

Our professions are worthless unless we abide in Christ; for we cannot be living branches unless the vital qualities of the Vine abound in us. In the genuine Christian the characteristics of his Master will appear, and when we reflect the graces of Christ in our lives and characters, the Father loves us as He loves His Son. When this condition is fulfilled in those who profess to believe the present truth, we shall see a prosperous church; for its members will not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and they will be flourishing branches of the living Vine.

The root of the tree has a double office to fill. It is to hold fast by its tendrils to the earth, while it takes to itself the nourishment desired. Thus it is with the Christian. When his union with Christ, the parent stock, is complete, when he feeds upon Him, currents of spiritual strength are given to him. Can the leaves of such a branch wither?—Never! As long as the soul reaches toward Christ, there is little danger that he will wilt, and droop, and decay. The temptations that may come in like a tempest will not uproot him. The true Christian draws his motives of action from his deep love for his Redeemer. His affection for his Master is true and holy.

God Prunes Us to Make Us More Fruitful

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15:2.

Those who will walk closely in the footsteps of their self-sacrificing, self-denying Redeemer will have the mind of Christ reflected in their minds. Purity and the love of Christ will shine forth in their daily lives and characters, while meekness and truth will guide their way. Every fruitful branch is pruned, that it may bring forth more fruit. Even fruitful branches may display too much foliage and appear what they really are not. The followers of Christ may be doing some work for the Master and yet not be doing half what they might do. He then prunes them, because worldliness, self-indulgence, and pride are cropping out in their lives. Husbandmen clip off the surplus tendrils of the vines ..., thus making them more fruitful. These hindering causes must be removed and the defective outgrowth cut away, to give room for the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness....

Many misunderstand the object for which they were created. It was to bless humanity and glorify God, rather than to enjoy and glorify self. God is constantly pruning His people, cutting off profuse, spreading branches, that they may bear fruit to His glory and not produce leaves only. God prunes us with sorrow, with disappointment and affliction, that the outgrowth of strong, perverse traits of character may be weakened and that the better traits may have a chance to develop. Idols must be given up, the conscience must become more tender, the meditations of the heart must be spiritual, and the entire character must become symmetrical.

By abiding in Christ, we may have His sweetness, His fragrance, His light.... He shines in our hearts. His light in our hearts shines forth from our faces. By beholding the beauty and the glory of Christ, we become changed into the same image.

We Bear Fruit Only as We Abide in Christ

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. John 15:4.

The reason that we carelessly indulge in sin is that we do not see Jesus. We would not lightly regard sin, did we appreciate the fact that sin wounds our Lord.... A right estimate of the character of God would enable us rightly to represent Him to the world. Harshness, roughness in words or manner, evil-speaking, passionate words, cannot exist in the soul that is looking unto Jesus. He who abides in Christ is in an atmosphere that forbids evil, and gives not the slightest excuse for anything of this kind. Spiritual life is not nourished from within, but draws its nutrition from Christ, as the branch does from the vine. We are dependent upon Christ every moment; He is our source of supply. All our outside forms, prayers, fastings, and alms-giving cannot take the place of the inward work of the Spirit of God on the human heart.

When one is fully emptied of self, when every false God is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is filled by the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such a one has the faith that purifies the soul from defilement.... He is a branch of the True Vine, and bears rich clusters of fruit to the glory of God. What is the character of the fruit borne?—The fruit of the Spirit is “love,” not hatred; “joy,” not discontent and mourning; “peace,” not irritation, anxiety, and manufactured trials. It is “long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

One branch is not to borrow its sustenance from another. Our life must come from the parent vine. It is only by personal union with Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit.... Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness, all depend on our union with Christ and the degree of faith we exercise in Him.

Withered Branch Apart From Christ

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. John 15:6.

He [Judas] ... did not become transformed, and converted into a living branch through connection with the True Vine. This dry sapling adhered not to the Vine until it grew into a fruitful, living branch. He revealed that he was the graft that did not bear fruit,—the graft that did not, fiber by fiber and vein by vein, become knit with the Vine, and partake of its life.

The dry, disconnected sapling can become one with the parent vine stock only by being made a partaker of the life and nourishment of the living vine, by being grafted into the vine, by being brought into the closest relationship possible.... The twig holds fast to the life-giving vine, until the life of the vine becomes the life of the branch, and it produces fruit like that of the vine.

“I am the vine,” said Christ; “ye are the branches.” The closest possible connection is here represented. Engraft the leafless twig upon the flourishing vine stock, and it becomes a living branch, drawing sap and nourishment from the vine. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the sapling clings, until it buds and blossoms and bears fruit. The sapless twig represents the sinner. When united to Christ, soul is joined to soul, the feeble and finite to the holy and infinite, and man becomes one with Christ.

The apparently dry branch, by being connected with the living vine, becomes a part of it.... The soul, dead in trespasses and sins, must experience a similar process.... As the graft receives life when united to the vine, so the sinner partakes of the divine nature when connected with Christ. Finite man is united with the infinite God. When thus united, the words of Christ *abide* in us, and we are not actuated by a spasmodic feeling, but a living, abiding principle.

We Confess Christ

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Matthew 10:32, 33.

Are we confessing Christ in our daily life? Do we confess Him in our dress, adorning ourselves with plain and modest apparel? Is our adorning that of the meek and quiet spirit which is of so great price in the sight of God? Are we seeking to advance the cause of the Master? ... There is no use in telling you that you must not wear this or that, for if the love of these vain things is in your heart, your laying off your adornments will only be like cutting the foliage off a tree. The inclinations of the natural heart would again assert themselves. You must have a conscience of your own....

We are to abide in Him as the branch abides in the vine.... What we want is to have the ax laid at the root of the tree. We want to be dead to the world, dead to self, and alive unto God.... We need to come close to Christ, that men may know that we have been with Christ and learned of Him.

He who imitates Christ will show forth His self-denial and self-sacrifice.... Just where the conscience of the Bible Christian warns him to forbear, to deny himself, to stop, just there the worldling steps over the line to indulge his selfish propensities. On one side of the line is the self-denying follower of Jesus Christ, on the other side of the line is the self-indulgent world-lover, pandering in fashion, engaging in frivolity, and pampering himself in forbidden pleasures. On this side of the line the Christian cannot go. It is no place for him.

Our life must be hid with Christ in God, that when He shall appear, we also may appear with Him in glory.

We Bear the Fruit of Brotherly Love

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. John 15:8.

The union between Christ and His people is to be living, true, and unfailling, resembling the union that exists between the Father and the Son. This union is the fruit of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. All true children of God will reveal to the world their union with Christ and with their brethren. Those in whose hearts Christ abides will bear the fruit of brotherly love. They will realize that as members of God's family they are pledged to cultivate, cherish, and perpetuate Christian love and fellowship, in spirit, words, and action.

To be children of God, members of the royal family, means more than many suppose. Those who are accounted by God as His children will reveal Christlike love for one another. They will live and work for one object,—the proper representation of Christ to the world. By their love and unity they will show to the world that they bear the divine credentials. By the nobility of love and self-denial, they will show those around them that they are true followers of the Saviour. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." ...

The most powerful evidence a man can give that he has been born again and is a new man in Christ Jesus, is the manifestation of love for his brethren, the doing of Christlike deeds. This is the most wonderful witness that can be borne in favor of Christianity, and will win souls to the truth...

Christ brings all true believers into complete oneness with Himself, even the oneness which exists between Him and His Father. The true children of God are bound up with one another and with their Saviour. They are one with Christ in God.

Christ Prayed That We All Might Be One

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..John 17:21.

Christ has left us a perfect, sinless example. His followers are to walk in His footsteps. If they are not transformed in character, they can never dwell with Him in His kingdom. Christ died to elevate and ennoble them, and those who retain hereditary tendencies to wrong can not dwell with Him. He suffered all that it is possible for human flesh to suffer and endure, that we might pass triumphantly through all the temptations Satan may invent to destroy our faith.

In Christ is our only hope. God has daily victories for His people to gain.... By His heavenly gifts the Lord has made ample provision for His people. An earthly parent can not give his child a sanctified character. He can not transfer his character to his child. God alone can transform us. Christ breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This is the great gift of heaven. Christ imparted to them through the Spirit His own sanctification. He imbued them with His power, that they might win souls to the gospel. Henceforth Christ would live through their faculties, and speak through their words. They were privileged to know that hereafter He and they were to be one. They must cherish His principles and be controlled by His Spirit. They were no longer to follow their own way, to speak their own words. The words they spoke were to proceed from a sanctified heart, and fall from sanctified lips. No longer were they to live their own selfish life; Christ was to live in them.... He would give to them the glory that He had with the Father, that He and they might be one in God.

Young men and young women should realize that to be one with Christ is the highest honor to which they can attain.... Consecrate all that there is of you—soul, body, and spirit—to the Lord. Yield every power you have to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Oneness with Christ

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. John 17:22.

In these words we have a most convincing statement to prove the fact that unity, kindness, and love will exist among those who are Christians indeed. The world's Redeemer is exalted, glorified, in the character of all those who believe.... What tremendous consequences to the world depend upon the unity of those who claim to be Christians, who claim to believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

"Emmanuel, God with us." This means everything to us. What a broad foundation does it lay for our faith! What a hope big with immortality does it place before the believing soul! God with us in Christ Jesus to accompany us every step of the journey to heaven! The Holy Spirit with us as a Comforter, a Guide in our perplexities, to soothe our sorrows, and shield us in temptation! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" ... Cultivate love, uproot suspicion, envy, jealousy, and the thinking and the speaking of evil. Press together, work as one man. Be at peace among yourselves.

I beseech you in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to put away everything like spiritual pride and love of supremacy. Become as little children if when the warfare is ended you would become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. Read John 17 over and over again. That prayer of our Saviour offered to His Father in behalf of His disciples, is worthy to be oft repeated, and carried in the practical life. This will raise fallen man; for the Lord has promised that if we preserve this unity, God will love us as He loved His Son; the sinner will be saved, and God eternally glorified.

Angels and archangels wonder at this great plan of redemption; they admire and love the Father and the Son as they behold the mercy and love of God.

We Reflect Christ to the World

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. John 17:23.

In the intercessory prayer of Jesus with His Father, He claimed that He had fulfilled the conditions which made it obligatory upon the Father to fulfill His part of the contract made in heaven, with regard to fallen man.... He declares Himself glorified in those who believe on Him. The church, in His name, is to carry to glorious perfection the work which He has commenced; and when that church shall be finally ransomed in the Paradise of God, He will look upon the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Through all eternity the ransomed host will be His chief glory.

“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.” We are to keep the Lord ever before us. Those who do this, walk with God as did Enoch, and imperceptibly to themselves, they become one with the Father and with the Son. Day by day a change is wrought upon mind and hearts, and the natural inclination, the natural ways, are molded after God’s ways and Spirit. They increase in spiritual knowledge, and are growing up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. They reflect to the world the character of Christ, and abiding in Him, and He in them, they fulfill the mission for which they were called to be the children of God,—they become the light of the world, a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. “No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.” Those who have been lighted from above send forth the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

We Are Kept from Sinning

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.1 John 3:6.

A mere profession of godliness is worthless. It is he that abideth in Christ that is a Christian. For “every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” In every clime, in every nation, our youth should cooperate with God. The only way a person can be pure is to become like-minded with God. How can we know God?—By studying His Word....

It is through faith in Jesus Christ that the truth is accepted in the heart and the human agent is purified and cleansed. Jesus was “wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” Is it possible to be healed, while knowingly committing sin?—No; it is genuine faith that says, I know that I have committed sin, but that Jesus has pardoned my sin; and hereafter I will resist temptation in and through His might. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” He has an abiding principle in the soul, that enables him to overcome temptation.

“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.” God has power to keep the soul who is in Christ, when that soul is under temptation. “Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.” That is, every one who is a true believer is sanctified through the truth, in life and character. “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth [not professeth to do] righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.” “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; ... because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.” Now mark where the distinction is made: “Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither is he that loveth not his brother.” “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”

We Abide in His Love

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. John 17:26.

[This personal testimony will bring courage to many.—E. G. White Trustees.] Your self-pity is an injury to you; you sympathize with yourself, feel that you are not esteemed as you should be, that your work is altogether too hard, and your best efforts are unappreciated. These feelings are the result of a spiritual disease, which can be cured only through faith in Christ. The temptation seizes you when you are weary or perplexed; but when the first symptoms appear, and the enemy works to make you grumble and murmur, look unto Jesus, trust in your Saviour. This is the only cure for this spiritual malaria.... If you allow your mind to be occupied with these things, the enemy will see that you are kept busy. He puts his magnifying glass before your eyes, and mole hills of difficulty are made to appear as mountains.... You need to understand how to repose in God. A wise heart, molded by the Holy Spirit, it is your privilege to have; and this is the foundation of all true happiness....

God would have you trust in His love, and be constantly guarding your soul by locking the gate of your thoughts, that they shall not become unmanageable; for when you allow your mind to indulge these thoughts of self-pity, the enemy comes in to suggest the most unkind and unreasonable things in regard to those who would do you good, and only good....

Listen to Jesus, follow His counsel and you will not go astray from the wise and mighty Counsellor, the only true Guide, the only One who can give you peace, happiness, and fulness of joy.... Whatever others may think of us or may do to us, it need not disturb this oneness with Christ, this fellowship of the Spirit. You know we cannot find rest anywhere out of Christ.

We Dwell in Him and He in Us

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. John 6:56.

The contemplation of the Word of God will make us wise unto salvation; the knowledge of this Word will insure our happiness, and our success in the perfection of Christian character.

All who in faith receive the Word of God will be doers of that Word. Their minds will be enlarged by a true knowledge, which Christ represents as eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God. And as they practise the truth, they hold forth the Word of life to others. Thus they become an influence among influences, a savor of life unto life.

Christ said: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven...."

Satan will do everything he can to satisfy the appetite for food that does not pertain to the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Those who retain the grosser traits of character, who continue to reveal human defects in their words and disposition, bear testimony that they are not eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God.

It is the Word of God abiding in the heart that will quicken the spiritual faculties....

Jesus has loved men, and has made every provision that the blood-bought soul shall have a new birth, a new life derived from His own life.... "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Those who believe in Christ derive their motive power and the texture of their characters from Him in whom they believe.

Our Life is Hid with Christ in God through Baptism

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Colossians 3:3.

Great responsibility comes to those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Strive to understand the meaning of the words, “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” In the new life upon which you have entered, you are pledged to represent the life of Christ. Having put on the new man, “which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,” “put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

The old sinful life is dead; the new life entered into with Christ by the pledge of baptism. Practise the virtues of the Saviour’s character. Let His wisdom 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. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” ... The sins that were practised before conversion, are to be put off, with the old man. With the new man, Christ Jesus, are to be put on “kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”

Those who, in the spirit and love of Jesus, will become one with Him, will be in close fellowship one with another, bound up by the silken cords of love.... “All ye are brethren” will be the sentiment of every child of faith.... All will be equally one with Christ.

The Poor in Spirit Inherit the Kingdom

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3.

Christ longed to fill the world with a peace and joy that would be a similitude of that found in the heavenly world.... From His divine lips there fell with fullness and abundant assurance the benedictions that showed Him to be the fountain of all goodness, and that it was His prerogative to bless and impress the minds of all present. He was engaged in His peculiar, sacred province, and the treasures of eternity were at His command. In the disposal of them He knew no control. It was no robbery with Him to act in the office of God. In His blessings He embraced those who were to compose His kingdom in this world. He had brought into the world every blessing essential to the happiness and joy of every soul, and before that vast assembly He presented the riches of the grace of heaven, the accumulated treasures of the eternal, everlasting Father....

He specifies those who shall become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Himself. He proclaims publicly His choice of subjects, and assigns them their place in His service as united with Himself. Those who possess the character specified, will share with Him in the blessing and the glory and the honor that will ever come to Him.

He who feels whole, who thinks that he is reasonably good, and is contented with his condition, does not seek to become a partaker of the grace and righteousness of Christ. Pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give. There is no room for Jesus in the heart of such a person.... Those who know that they cannot possibly save themselves, or of themselves do any righteous action, are the ones who appreciate the help that Christ can bestow. They are the poor in spirit, whom He declares to be blessed.

Those Who Mourn Shall Be Comforted

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4.

The mourning here brought to view is true heart sorrow for sin.... As one is drawn to behold Jesus uplifted on the cross, he discerns the sinfulness of humanity. He sees that it is sin which scourged and crucified the Lord of glory. He sees that, while he has been loved with unspeakable tenderness, his life has been a continual scene of ingratitude and rebellion. He has forsaken his best Friend, and abused heaven's most precious gift. He has crucified to himself the Son of God afresh, and pierced anew that bleeding and stricken heart. He is separated from God by a gulf of sin that is broad and black and deep, and he mourns in brokenness of heart. Such mourning "shall be comforted." God reveals to us our guilt that we may flee to Christ, and through Him be set free from the bondage of sin, and rejoice in the liberty of the sons of God. In true contrition we may come to the foot of the cross, and there leave our burdens....

The Saviour's words have a message of comfort to those also who are suffering affliction or bereavement. Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. God "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." When He permits trials and afflictions, it is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means of turning our eyes to heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him! ...

The Lord will work for all who put their trust in Him. Precious victories will be gained by the faithful. Precious lessons will be learned. Precious experiences will be realized....

Christ lifts up the contrite heart, and refines the mourning soul, until it becomes His abode.

The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5.

There were occasions when Christ spoke with an authority that sent His words home with irresistible force, with an overwhelming sense of the greatness of the Speaker, and the human agencies shrunk into nothingness in comparison with the One before them. They were deeply moved; their minds were impressed that He was repeating the command from the most excellent glory. As He summoned the world to listen, they were spellbound and entranced, and conviction came to their minds. Every word made for itself a place, and the hearers believed and received the words that they had no power to resist. Every word He uttered seemed to the hearers as the life of God. He was giving evidence that He was the light of the world and the authority of the church, claiming pre-eminence over them all.

Jesus places meekness among the first qualifications for His kingdom. In His own life and character the divine beauty of this precious grace is revealed....

Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest; but he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place.... We feel that our highest place is at the feet of our Saviour....

Lowliness of heart, that meekness which is the fruit of abiding in Christ, is the true secret of blessing. "He will beautify the meek with salvation." ... It was through the desire for self-exaltation that sin entered into the world, and our first parents lost the dominion over this fair earth, their kingdom. It is through self-abnegation that Christ redeems that which was lost. And He says we are to overcome as He did. Through humility and self-surrender we may become heirs with Him, when the "meek shall inherit the earth."

The Hungry and Thirsty Shall Be Filled

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Matthew 5:6.

Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God; and “God is love.” It is conformity to the law of God; for “all thy commandments are righteousness;” and “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it....

No human agent can supply that which will satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. But Jesus says: “... I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

As we need food to sustain our physical strength, so do we need Christ, the bread from heaven, to sustain spiritual life, and impart strength to work the works of God. As the body is continually receiving the nourishment that sustains life and vigor, so the soul must be constantly communing with Christ, submitting to Him, and depending wholly upon Him.

As the weary traveler seeks the spring in the desert, and, finding it, quenches his burning thirst, so will the Christian thirst for and obtain the pure water of life, of which Christ is the fountain.... We need not seek to quench our thirst at shallow streams; for the great fountain is just above us, of whose abundant waters we may freely drink, if we will rise a little higher in the pathway of faith.

The words of God are the well-springs of life. As you seek unto those living springs, you will, through the Holy Spirit, be brought into communion with Christ.... You will know that Christ is leading you; a divine Teacher is at your side.

The Merciful Shall Have Mercy

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7.

The heart of man is by nature cold and dark and unloving; whenever one manifests a spirit of mercy and forgiveness, he does it not of himself, but through the influence of the Divine Spirit moving upon his heart. "We love, because he first loved us."

God is Himself the source of all mercy. His name is "merciful and gracious." He does not treat us according to our desert. He does not ask if we are worthy of His love, but He pours upon us the riches of His love, to make us worthy. He is not vindictive. He seeks not to punish, but to redeem. Even the severity which He manifests through His providences is manifested for the salvation of the wayward. He yearns with intense desire to relieve the woes of men.... All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim, and not to condemn. Christ dwelling in the soul is a spring that never runs dry. Where He abides, there will be an overflowing of beneficence.

To the appeal of the erring, the tempted, the wretched victims of want and sin, the Christian does not ask, Are they worthy? but, How can I benefit them? In the most wretched, the most debased, he sees souls whom Christ died to save.... The merciful are those who manifest compassion to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed....

He who has given his life to God in ministry to His children, is linked with Him who has all the resources of the universe at His command. His life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises with the life of God. The Lord will not fail him in the hour of suffering and need. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." And in the hour of final need the merciful shall find refuge in the mercy of the compassionate Saviour, and shall be received into everlasting habitations.

The Peacemakers are Called God's Children

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9.

Christ is “the Prince of peace,” and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Whoever consents to renounce sin, and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace.

There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ received into the heart, subdues enmity; it allays strife, and fills the soul with love. He who is at peace with God and his fellow-men can not be made miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil surmisings will find no room there; hatred can not exist. The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven, and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around. The spirit of peace will rest like dew upon hearts weary and troubled with worldly strife.

Christ's followers are sent to the world with the message of peace. Whoever, by the quiet, unconscious influence on a holy life, shall reveal the love of Christ; whoever, by word or deed, shall lead another to renounce sin and yield his heart to God, is a peacemaker.

And “blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” The spirit of peace is evidence of their connection with heaven. The sweet savor of Christ surrounds them. The fragrance of the life, the loveliness of the character, reveal to the world the fact that they are children of God. Men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. “Every one that loveth is born of God.” “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;” but “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.”

The Persecuted Receive the Kingdom

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10.

Jesus does not present to His followers the hope of attaining earthly glory and riches, and of having a life free from trial, but He presents to them the privilege of walking with their Master in the paths of self-denial and reproach, because the world knows them not.

He who came to redeem the lost world, was opposed by the united forces of the adversaries of God and man. In an unpitying confederacy, evil men and evil angels arrayed themselves against the Prince of peace. Though His every word and act breathed of divine compassion, His unlikeness to the world provoked the bitterest hostility. Because He would give no license for the exercise of the evil passions of our nature, He aroused the fiercest opposition and enmity. So it is with all who will live godly in Christ Jesus. Between righteousness and sin, love and hatred, truth and falsehood, there is an irrepressible conflict. When one presents the love of Christ and the beauty of holiness, he is drawing away the subjects of Satan's kingdom, and the prince of evil is aroused to resist it. Persecution and reproach await all who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The character of the persecution changes with the times; but the principle—the spirit that underlies it—is the same that has slain the chosen of the Lord ever since the days of Abel.

As men seek to come into harmony with God, they will find that the offense of the cross has not ceased. Principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high places are arrayed against all who yield obedience to the law of heaven. Therefore, so far from causing grief, persecution should bring joy to the disciples of Christ; for it is an evidence that they are following in the steps of their Master...

Through trials and persecution, the glory—character—of God is revealed in His chosen ones.

The Reviled are Blessed

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Matthew 5:11.

There was never one who walked among men more cruelly slandered than the Son of man. He was derided and mocked because of His unswerving obedience to the principles of God's holy law. They hated Him without a cause. Yet He stood calmly before His enemies, declaring that reproach is a part of the Christian's legacy, counseling His followers how to meet the arrows of malice, bidding them not to faint under persecution.

While slander may blacken the reputation, it can not stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him. His words, his motives, his actions, may be misrepresented and falsified, but he does not mind it, because he has greater interests at stake. Like Moses, he endures as "seeing him who is invisible." ...

Christ is acquainted with all that is misunderstood and misrepresented by men. His children can afford to wait in calm patience and trust, no matter how much maligned and despised; for nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, and those who honor God shall be honored by Him in the presence of men and angels.

"When men shall revile you and persecute you," said Jesus, "rejoice, and be exceeding glad."

"Great is the reward in heaven" of those who are witnesses for Christ through persecution and reproach. While the people are looking for earthly good, Jesus points them to a heavenly reward. But He does not place it all in the future life; it begins here.

Transgression is Forgiven, Sin is Covered

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Psalm 32:1.

That God who marks the fall of a sparrow, marks your deportment and your feelings; He marks your envy, your prejudice, your attempt to justify your action in the least matter of injustice. When you misconceive the words and acts of another, and your own feelings are stirred, so that you make incorrect statements, and it is known that you are at variance with your brother, you lead others, through their confidence in you, to regard him just as you do; and by the root of bitterness springing up, many are defiled. When it is evident that your feelings are incorrect, do you try just as diligently to remove the erroneous impressions as you did to make them? ...

Now God requires that you who have thus done the least injustice to another shall confess your fault, not only to the one you have injured, but to those who through your influence have been led to regard their brother in a false light, and to make of none effect the work God has given him to do.... By repentance and confession you can have pardon registered against your name; or you can resist the conviction of the Spirit of God, and during the rest of your life, work to make it appear that your wrong feelings and unjust conclusions could not be helped. But there stands the action, there stands the evil committed, there stands the ruin of those in whose hearts you planted the root of bitterness....

Whatever the character of your sin, confess it. If it is against God only, confess only to Him. If you have wronged or offended others, confess also to them, and the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you. In this way you die to self, and Christ is formed within.... Our consecration to God must be unreserved, our love ardent, our faith unwavering. Then the expressions of the lips will testify to the quickened intelligence of the mind and the deep movings of the Spirit of God upon the soul.

Christ in You the Hope of Glory

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27.

That which brings sickness of body and mind to nearly all is dissatisfied feelings and discontented repinings. They have not God, they have not the hope which reaches to that within the veil, which is as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. All who possess this hope will purify themselves even as He is pure. Such are free from restless longings, repinings, and discontent; they are not continually looking for evil and brooding over borrowed trouble. But we see many who are having a time of trouble beforehand; anxiety is stamped upon every feature; they seem to find no consolation, but have a continual fearful looking for of some dreadful evil.... Vain amusements will never correct the minds of such. They need the transforming influence of the Spirit of God in order to be happy. They need to be benefited by the mediation of Christ, in order to realize consolation, divine and substantial. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him ... eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." ... Those who have an experimental knowledge of this scripture are truly happy.... Christ in them the hope of glory will be health to the body and strength to the soul.

The soul that is imbued with the love of Jesus ... loves to contemplate Jesus, and by beholding Him, will become changed into His likeness. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. His confidence increases ... and his love deepens and widens, as he has the assurance that he is abiding in Christ, and Christ in him.... And we may look to Jesus for His tenderest sympathy and be encouraged to persevere, putting our whole trust in Him who has said, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

We are Glad in the Lord

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord .Psalm 104:34.

Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love, and while you meditate upon His self-denial, His infinite sacrifice made in our behalf in order that we should believe in Him, your heart will be filled with holy joy, calm peace, and indescribable love. As we talk of Jesus, as we call upon Him in prayer, our confidence that He is our personal, loving Saviour will strengthen, and His character will appear more and more lovely.... We may enjoy rich feasts of love, and as we fully believe that we are His by adoption, we may have a foretaste of heaven. Wait upon the Lord in faith. The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. We have a nearness to Him, and can hold sweet communion with Him. We obtain distinct views of His tenderness and compassion, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. We feel indeed an abiding Christ in the soul.... Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. We have a realizing sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it, it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence, we can call God our Father. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. His Spirit makes us like Jesus Christ in temper, and disposition, and we represent Christ to others. When Christ is abiding in the soul the fact cannot be hid; for He is like a well of water springing up into everlasting life. We can but represent the likeness of Christ in our character, and our words, our deportment, produces in others a deep, abiding, increasing love for Jesus, and we make manifest ... that we are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

November—We Make Constant Advancement

Seek Constantly to Improve Your Powers

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6.

You need to seek constantly the highest culture of mind and soul, that you may bring to the education and training of your children a restful spirit, a loving heart; that you may imbue them with pure aspirations, and cultivate in them a love for things honest and pure and holy.... Seek constantly to improve your powers, that you may do the most perfect, thorough work at home, by both precept and example.

You should not follow your own inclinations. You should be very careful to set a right example in all things. Do not be inactive. Arouse your dormant energies.... Take up the duties essential to be done. Study how to perform with alacrity the plain, uninteresting, homely, but most needful duties.

Parents have not yet aroused to understand the amazing power of Christian culture. There are mines of truth to be worked that have been strangely neglected. This careless indifference does not meet the approval of God. Parents, God calls upon you to look at this matter with anointed eyes. You have as yet only skimmed the surface. Take up your long-neglected work, and God will co-operate with you. Do your work with wholeheartedness, and God will help you to make improvement. Begin by bringing the gospel into the home life.

The higher soul-culture, which gives purity and elevation to the thoughts and a spiritual fragrance to words and actions, requires careful, painstaking effort. It takes patience to keep every evil motive weeded from the garden of the Lord.

Glorify God by Improving Health Habits

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.1 Corinthians 6:20.

Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good which we are capable. Hence that time is spent to good account which is directed to the establishment and preservation of sound physical and mental health.

Man is God's workmanship, His masterpiece, created for a high and holy purpose; and on every part of the human tabernacle God desires to write His law.... Every nerve and muscle, every mental and physical endowment, is to be kept pure.

God designs that the body shall be as a temple for His Spirit. Solemn is the accountability resting upon every soul. Your individual influence is exercised for good or for evil. If you defile your body, you are not only doing harm to yourself, but to many others. Christians are under obligation to God to keep soul, body, and spirit free from all that will defile; for they have been bought with a price....

No man or woman has any right to form habits which lessen the healthful action of one organ of mind or body.... Those who give themselves up to the use of tobacco and liquor do not appreciate their intellect. They do not realize the value of the faculties God has given them, to be cultivated and improved. Thus men allow their powers to wither and decay. God desires all who believe in Him to feel the necessity of improvement. Every entrusted faculty is to be enlarged. Not one gift is to be laid aside. As God's husbandry and building, man is under His supervision in every sense of the word, and the better he becomes acquainted with his Maker, the more sacred will his life become in his estimation.

God's Temple Is to Receive Constant Care

Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.2 Corinthians 6:16.

We are to obey the laws of His kingdom, making ourselves all that it is possible for us to be. Earnestly we are to cultivate the highest powers of our being, remembering that we are God's property, God's building. We are required to improve every day. Even in this world of sin and sorrow, we may, by earnest, persevering effort, rise to the highest spiritual efficiency.... We are to please God. This we may do; for Enoch pleased God, though living in a degenerate age. And there are Enochs in this our day.

The human house, God's building, His temple, requires close, vigilant, watchful guardianship. With David we can exclaim, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." God's workmanship is to be preserved, that it may be revealed to the heavenly universe and to the apostate race that men and women are temples of the living God.

The perfection of character which God requires is the fitting up of the whole being as a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Lord requires the service of the entire human machinery. He desires men and women to be all that He has made it possible for them to be. It is not enough for certain parts of the machinery to be used. All parts must be brought into action, or the service is deficient....

The physical life is to be carefully educated, cultivated, and developed, that through men and women the divine nature may be revealed in its fullness. God expects men to use the intellect He has given them. He expects them to use every reasoning power for Him. They are to give the conscience the place of supremacy that has been assigned it. The mental and physical powers, with the affections, are to be so cultivated that they can reach the highest efficiency.

God Wants Us to Have the Best Manners

**Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.1
Corinthians 15:33.**

The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver, never makes him coarse or rough or uncourteous.

There is much to do in order to fit us for the courts of the Lord. The roughness of spirit, the coarseness of speech, the cheapness of character, must be put away, or we can never wear the garment woven in the heavenly loom,—the righteousness of Christ....

Those who, under the education of Christ, make it possible to reach the highest attainments will take every divine improvement with them to the higher school. But those who are unwilling to have their characters molded after the divine similitude make the angels sad; for by clinging to their sinful habits and practices they spoil the design of God.

Be polite to God and to one another. Remember that He wants you to have the best of manners, that you may glorify Him before the world. He desires you to live in unity with one another and to love one another. Remember that if you love one another here, you will live with the redeemed through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Selfishness and pride hinder the pure love that unites us in spirit with Jesus Christ. If this love is truly cultivated, finite will blend with finite, and all will center in the Infinite. Humanity will unite with humanity, and all will be bound up with the heart of Infinite love. Sanctified love for one another is sacred. In this great work Christian love for one another,—far higher, more constant, more courteous, more unselfish, than has been seen,—preserves Christian tenderness, Christian benevolence, and politeness, and enfolds the human brotherhood in the embrace of God, acknowledging the dignity with which God has invested the rights of man. This dignity Christians must ever cultivate for the honor and glory of God.

As sons and daughters of God, we should have a conscious dignity of character, in which pride and self-importance have no part.

We are to Behave Ourselves Wisely

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.... I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.Psalm 101:2.

None are to be forward or obtrusive, but we are quietly to live out our religion, with an eye single to the glory of God.... Then we shall shine as lights in the world, without noise or friction. None need fail; for One is with them who is wise in counsel, excellent in working, and mighty to accomplish His designs. He works through His agents, seen and unseen, human and divine. This work is a grand work, and will be carried forward to the glory of God, if all who are connected with it will make their works correspond to their profession of faith. Purity of thought must be cherished as indispensable to the work of influencing others. The soul must be surrounded by a pure, holy atmosphere, an atmosphere that will tend to quicken the spiritual life of all who inhale it.

Jesus is honored or dishonored by the words and deportment of His professed followers. The heart must be kept pure and holy, for out of it are the issues of life. If the heart is purified through obedience to the truth, there will be no selfish preferences, no corrupt motives. There will be no partiality, no hypocrisy....

In the present state of society, with the lax morals of not only youth but those of age and experience, there is great danger of becoming careless, and giving especial attention to favorites, and thus creating envy, jealousy, and evil-surmising. But few realize that they drive away the Spirit of God with their selfish thoughts and feelings, their foolish, trifling talk.... If the grace of Christ were planted in their hearts, and striking its roots down deep into good soil, they would bear fruit of an altogether different character.... The converting power of God is alone sufficient to establish pure principles in the heart, so that the wicked one may find nothing to assail.... Purity in speech, and true Christian courtesy should be constantly practised.

Mercies of God Preserve and Elevate Us

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me. Psalm 40:11.

The religion of Christ will uplift the life to an elevated standard. The inward work of the Spirit of God humbles human pride, by causing us to understand something of the tender mercies and lovingkindness of God.... When you discover your own inefficiency, and look to the source of your strength, with yearning entreaty, saying, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me," you will obtain light....

You cannot have faith that the Lord will keep you by His lovingkindness, and by His truth continually preserve you, when you do not place yourselves in the channel of light. Then shun bad companions, and choose the good. The seed of truth sown in the heart must receive the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness in order to grow. The seeds of truth which do not spring up and grow, soon lose their power to germinate, and they perish. But weeds of evil habits will spring up and flourish. The precious plants of love, joy, patience, courtesy, meekness, and humility, need to be carefully cultivated if they grow and improve.

Do not be content with a superficial piety, but, young friends, grow in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Are you making advancement? Is the plant of grace waxing into a tree, or withering away? Present yourselves humbly and often at the throne of grace, and tell Jesus your every want, and do not think anything is too small for Him to notice. The Lord loves to have you seek Him, and tell Him your trials, as a child would talk with his parent. When you pray, believe Jesus hears you, and will do the things you ask of Him. Show that you have perfect trust in Jesus, and ever seek to do those things that you know will please Him, and you will have peace in Christ.

Adorned With Divine Loveliness

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4.

Exalted powers are within the reach of every one. Under God's supervision, a man may have an uncorrupted, sanctified, elevated, ennobled mind. Through the grace of Christ, man's mind is qualified to love and glorify God, the Creator.

The Lord Jesus came to our world to represent the Father... Christ was the express image of His Father's person; and He came to our world to restore in man God's moral image, in order that man although fallen, might through obedience to God's commandments become enstamped with the divine image and character.

God wants children to be lovely, not with artificial adornment, but with beauty of character, the charms of kindness and affection, which will make their hearts bound with joy and happiness.

Girls should be taught that the true charm of womanliness is not alone in beauty of form or feature, nor in the possession of accomplishments; but in a meek and quiet spirit, in patience, generosity, kindness, and a willingness to do and suffer for others. They should be taught to work, to study to some purpose, to live for some object, to trust in God and fear Him, and to respect their parents. Then as they advance in years, they will grow more pure-minded, self-reliant, and beloved. It will be impossible to degrade such a woman. She will escape the temptations and trials that have been the ruin of so many.

Christ was sent as our pattern and shall we not show that we have all His love and kindness and ... charms? And the love of Jesus Christ will take possession of our characters and our lives, and our conversation will be holy and we will dwell on heavenly things.

Rough Stones Polished for a Holy Temple

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. Ephesians 2:21.

Through the grace of Christ you will make decided endeavors to overcome all cold, rough, harsh, uncourteous ways and manners....

The mighty cleaver of truth has taken you out of the quarry of the world. You were rough stones with jagged edges, bruising and marring whoever you came in contact with; there is a work to be done to smooth off the rough edges. If you appreciated the value of the work that is to be done in the workshop of God, you would welcome the blows of the ax and the hammer. Your self-esteem will be hurt, your high opinion of yourself will be cut away by the ax and the hammer, and the roughness of your character will be smoothed off; and when self and carnal propensities are worked away, then the stone will assume proper proportions for the heavenly building, and then the polishing, refining, subduing, burnishing processes will begin, and you will be molded after the model of Christ's character. His own image is to be reflected in the polished character of His human agent, and the stone is to be fitted for the heavenly building....

If we are not better men and women, if we are not more kindhearted, more pitiful, more courteous, more full of tenderness and love; if we do not manifest to others the love that led Jesus to the world on His mission of mercy, we are not witnesses to the world of the power of Jesus Christ. Jesus lived not to please Himself.... He came to elevate, to ennoble, to make happy all with whom He came in contact.... He never did a rude action, never spoke a discourteous word.

It is the privilege of every youth to make of his character a beautiful structure.... Seek the Lord most earnestly, that you may become more and more refined, more spiritually cultured.

Joseph a Christian Gentleman

But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. Genesis 39:21.

Joseph regarded his being sold into Egypt as the greatest calamity that could have befallen him; but he saw the necessity of trusting in God as he had never done when protected by his father's love. Joseph brought God with him into Egypt, and the fact was made apparent by his cheerful demeanor amid his sorrow. As the ark of God brought rest and prosperity to Israel, so did this God-loving, God-fearing youth bring a blessing to Egypt. This was manifested in so marked a manner that Potiphar, in whose house he served, attributed all his blessings to his purchased slave.

Joseph's religion kept his temper sweet and his sympathy with humanity warm and strong, notwithstanding all his trials. There are those who if they feel they are not rightly used, become sour, ungenerous, crabbed and uncourteous in their words and deportment. They sink down discouraged, hateful and hating others. But Joseph was a Christian. No sooner does he enter upon prison life, than he brings all the brightness of his Christian principles into active exercise; he begins to make himself useful to others. He enters into the troubles of his fellow prisoners. He is cheerful, for he is a Christian gentleman. God was preparing him under this discipline for a situation of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness, and he was willing to learn; he took kindly to the lessons the Lord would teach him. He learned to bear the yoke in his youth. He learned to govern by first learning obedience himself....

The part which Joseph acted in connection with the scenes of the gloomy prison, was that which raised him finally to prosperity and honor. God designed that he should obtain an experience by temptations, adversity, and hardships, to prepare him to fill an exalted position. Joseph carried his religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity.

Abraham Ever Displayed Unselfish Courtesy

Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. Genesis 13:9.

Abraham's household comprised more than a thousand souls. Those who were led by his teachings to worship the true God found a home in his encampment; and here, as in a school, they received such instruction as would prepare them to be representatives of the faith. Abraham's affection for his children and his household led him to guard their religious faith, to impart to them a knowledge of the divine statutes, as the most precious legacy he could transmit to them, and through them to the world. All were taught that they were under the rule of the God of heaven. There was to be no oppression on the part of parents, and no disobedience on the part of children. God's law had appointed to each his duties, and only in obedience could any secure happiness and prosperity.

His own example, the silent influence of his daily life, was a constant lesson. The unswerving integrity, the benevolence and unselfish courtesy which had won the admiration of kings, were displayed in the home. There was a fragrance about the life, a nobility and loveliness of character, which revealed to all that he was connected with heaven. He did not neglect the soul of the humblest servant. In his household there was not one law for the master, and one for the servant; a royal way for the rich, and another for the poor. All were treated with justice and compassion.

He was a man of faith, who always followed principles of the strictest integrity. In all his business transactions he was courteous and honorable. His life was controlled by Christian politeness, and he placed the service of the Lord before all else. He would not swerve a hair's breadth from pure, Christian principles.

It is in the power of every one to practise true Christlike courtesy.

Capabilities Increase as Spirituality Increases

As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Daniel 1:17.

The ignorance of many is voluntary and inexcusable.

Some young persons ... do not improve their advantages. They would like to read and write accurately, but the price of excellence is hard work, and they will not pay it. They remind me of the youth whose father sent him to school, and gave him every advantage for gaining a good education; but he neglected to study, saying that his father was able to give him a liberal education, and he was not going to bother his brains about it. You will all say at once that he would remain ignorant, for there is no royal road to learning. But wishing for a healthy religious experience without making earnest, self-denying effort, will be equally useless. Sighing over your ignorance of divine things will never make you wise unto salvation. There are ten thousand sluggish tears and sighs toward heaven that will never win one smile of approval from Jesus. Do not think that a Christian experience will come to you of itself. When you make up your mind to do something on which your heart is set, you do not give up for difficulties, but try again and again.

Daniel and his three companions ... were well-balanced because they had yielded themselves to the control of the Holy Spirit. These youth gave to God all the glory of their secular, scientific, and religious endowments. Their learning did not come by chance; they obtained knowledge by the faithful use of their powers; and God gave them skill and understanding.

As in the case of Daniel, in exact proportion as the spiritual character is developed, the intellectual capabilities are increased.

The Lord will co-operate with all who earnestly strive to be faithful in His service, as He co-operated with Daniel and his three companions.

Seek New Heights in Faith

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.Psalm 42:1.

Many of the youth ... sink under every cloud, and have no power of endurance. They do not grow in grace.... Their carnal hearts must be changed. They must see beauty in holiness; then they will pant after it as the hart panteth after the water-brooks....

If your steps are ordered by the Lord, dear youth, you must not expect that your path will always be one of outward peace and prosperity. The path that leads to eternal day is not the easiest to travel, and at times it will seem dark and thorny. But you have the assurance that God's everlasting arms encircle you, to protect you from evil. He wants you to exercise earnest faith in Him, and learn to trust Him in the shadow as well as in the sunshine....

In her endeavors to reach her home, the eagle is often beaten down by the tempest to the narrow defiles of the mountains. The clouds, in black, angry masses sweep between her and the sunny heights where she secures her nest. For a while she seems bewildered, and dashes this way and that, beating her strong wings as if to sweep back the dense clouds.... At last she dashes upward into the blackness, and gives a shrill scream of triumph as she emerges, a moment later, in the calm sunshine above. The darkness and tempest are all below her, and the light of heaven is shining about her. She reaches her loved home in the lofty crag, and is satisfied. It was through darkness that she reached the light. It cost her an effort to do this, but she is rewarded in gaining the object which she sought.

This is the only course we can pursue as followers of Christ. We must exercise that living faith which will penetrate the clouds that, like a thick wall, separate us from heaven's light. We have heights of faith to reach, where all is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

We are to Increase Spiritually

**We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more.1
Thessalonians 4:10.**

You have within your reach more than finite possibilities. A man, as God applies the term, is a son of God. “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....” It is your privilege to turn away from that which is cheap and inferior, and rise to a high standard,—to be respected by men and beloved by God.

The religious work which the Lord gives to young men, and to men of all ages, shows His respect for them as His children. He gives them the work of self-government. He calls them to be sharers with Him in the great work of redemption and uplifting. As a father takes his son into partnership in his business, so the Lord takes His children into partnership with Himself....

Young men and women need more of the grace of Christ that they may bring the principles of Christianity into the daily life. The preparation for Christ’s coming is a preparation made through Christ for the exercise of our highest qualities.... But there is a positive need of keeping close to Jesus. He is our strength and efficiency and power. We can not depend on self for one moment.

Young men and young women, exercise your ability with faithfulness, generously imparting the light that God gives you. Study how best to give to others peace, and light, and truth, and the many rich blessings of heaven. Constantly improve. Keep reaching higher and still higher. It is the ability to put to the tax the powers of mind and body, ever keeping eternal realities in view, that is of value now....Persevere in the work that you have begun, until you gain victory after victory. Educate yourselves for a purpose. Keep in view the highest standard that you may accomplish greater and still greater good, thus reflecting the glory of God.

God Does Not Limit Our Advancement

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. Colossians 1:10, 11.

God fixes no limit to the advancement of those who are “filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Through prayer, through watchfulness, through growth in understanding, we are “strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” ...

God’s plan for us is so broad, so full, so complete, that we have every reason for co-operating whole-heartedly with Him in carrying it out. There is no reason for hesitancy on our part.... We need to draw fresh supplies daily from the great storehouse of God’s Word. This will give no time for novel reading, or for anything else that does not edify and strengthen for every good work.... The riches of heaven are at the command of God’s children.

Every day the tempter will be on your track with some delusive, plausible excuse for your self-serving, your self-pleasing.... The one whose heart is wholly given to God, the one who by faith receives Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, will reveal a steady growth in spirituality, in vigor of piety, in fixedness of purpose, in fidelity at any cost to the principles of our faith....

God will honor and uphold every true-hearted, earnest soul who is seeking to walk before Him in the perfection of the grace of Christ. The Lord Jesus will never leave nor forsake one humble, trembling soul.... Can we with keen, sanctified perception appreciate the strength of the promises of God, and appropriate them to our individual selves, not because we are worthy, but because Christ is worthy? Not because we are righteous, but by living faith we claim the righteousness of Christ in our behalf?

Break Up the Fallow Ground

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.Hosea 10:12.

The principles of the truth must be interwoven with our character and life. We should cherish every ray of light that falls upon our pathway, and live up to the requirements of God. We should grow in spirituality. We are losing a great deal of the blessing ... because we do not take advance steps in the Christian life....

The members of the church of Christ should gather up the divine rays of light from Jesus, and reflect them to others, leaving a bright track heavenward in the world. They are to be as the wise virgins, having their lamps trimmed and burning, representing the character of Christ to the world. We are not to be satisfied with anything short of this. We are not to be satisfied with our own righteousness, and content without the deep movings of the Spirit of God.

Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." It is this marked nothingness, so apparent in the labors of many ... that alarms us; for we know that this is an evidence that they have not felt the converting power of Christ upon their hearts. You may look from the topmost bough to the lowest branch of their work, and you will find nothing but leaves. God desires us to come up to a higher standard. It is not His will that we should have such a dearth of spirituality....

I remember visiting in Iowa when the country was new, and I saw the farmers breaking the new ground. I noticed that they had heavy teams, and made tremendous efforts to make deep furrows, but the laborers gained strength and muscle by the exercise of their physical powers. It will make our young men strong to go into new fields, and break up the fallow ground of men's hearts. This work will drive them nearer to God.... They will gain efficiency and ability by mastering difficulties and overcoming obstacles.

Continually Store Mind With Divine Truth

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.2 Peter 1:4.

It is the duty of every child of God to store his mind with divine truth; and the more he does this, the more strength and clearness of mind he will have to fathom the deep things of God. And he will be more and more earnest and vigorous, as the principles of truth are carried out in his daily life.

That which will bless humanity is spiritual life. He who is in harmony with God, will constantly depend upon Him for strength. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." It should be our life work to be constantly reaching forward to the perfection of Christian character, ever striving for conformity to the will of God. The efforts begun here will continue through eternity. The advancement made here will be ours when we enter upon the future life.

Those who are partakers of Christ's meekness, purity, and love, will be joyful in God, and will shed light and gladness upon all around them. The thought that Christ died to obtain for us the gift of everlasting life, is enough to call forth from our hearts the most sincere and fervent gratitude, and from our lips the most enthusiastic praise. God's promises are rich, and full, and free. Whoever will, in the strength of Christ, comply with the conditions, may claim these promises, with all their wealth of blessing, as his own. And being thus abundantly supplied from the treasure-house of God, he may, in the journey of life, "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;" by a godly example blessing his fellow-men, and honoring his Creator. While our Saviour would guard His followers from self-confidence by the reminder, "Without me, ye can do nothing;" He has coupled with it for our encouragement the gracious assurance, "He that abideth in me ... bringeth forth much fruit."

Put on the Whole Armor of God

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Ephesians 6:13.

Let us, under all circumstances, preserve our confidence in Christ. He is to be everything to us,—the first, the last, the best in everything. Then let us educate our tongues to speak forth His praise, not only when we feel gladness and joy, but at all times.

Let us keep the heart full of God's precious promises, that we may speak words that will be a comfort and strength to others. Thus we may learn the language of the heavenly angels, who, if we are faithful, will be our companions through the eternal ages. Every day we should make advancement in gaining perfection of character, and this we shall certainly do if we press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. Let us not talk of the great power of Satan, but of the great power of God....

In every soul two powers are struggling earnestly for the victory. Unbelief marshals its forces, led by Satan, to cut us off from the Source of our strength. Faith marshals its forces, led by Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Hour by hour, in the sight of the heavenly universe, the conflict goes forward. This is a hand-to-hand fight, and the great question is, Which shall obtain the mastery? This question each must decide for himself. In this warfare all must take a part, fighting on one side or the other. From the conflict there is no release.... We are urged to prepare for this conflict. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The warning is repeated, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

He ... to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given, will come to the help of those who trust in Him.

God Works in Us to Do His Good Pleasure

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12, 13.

Our relation to God is the same as that of little children to their parents. The God of heaven is watching His people, His church, just as loving parents watch their children. And we are as foolish as little children are; for how prone we are to think that we know everything, when really we have not begun to know what God is waiting to teach us when we show willingness to follow in His footsteps.

Will we come down from our position of self-righteousness, and as little children take hold of God's work? Will we be willing to be taught and led of Him? With tottering steps we are just beginning to walk. In time we shall learn to take firmer steps, but now we are liable at any moment to stumble and fall. From the highest to the lowest, we each have spiritual weaknesses and troubles similar to the weaknesses and troubles of helpless children. And as these inexperienced children can not place their dependence on one another, but must depend on their parents, so we must learn not to hang our helpless souls on any human being, but cling to the One mighty to save....

God calls upon us to make our movements in His *fear* and to walk *tremblingly* before Him. "Work out your own salvation," He says, "with fear and trembling...."

So long as we work in Christ's lines, laying hold of the arm of the Mighty One, we are safe; but just as soon as we loosen our grasp of His arm, and begin to depend upon human beings, we are in great danger. This very day the Lord desires us to reach a higher standard than we have ever reached in the past. Day by day we are to advance upward, ever upward, until it can be said of us as a people, "Ye are complete in him."

We Put Away Childish Things

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.1 Corinthians 13:11.

We are not always to remain children in our knowledge and experience in spiritual things. We are not always to express ourselves in the language of one who has just received Christ; but our prayers and exhortations are to grow in intelligence as we advance in experience in the truth. The language of a child of six in a child of ten years of age would not be pleasing to us, and how painful would it be to hear expressions of childish intelligence in one who had arrived at years of maturity. When a person becomes of age, we expect from him a corresponding intelligence, according to his years and opportunities.... But if we expect this manifestation of growing intelligence in the child, as he advances in years, should we not also expect to see the Christian grow in grace and experience? ...

God has given us many advantages and opportunities, and when the last great day shall be ushered in, and we shall see what we might have attained, had we taken advantage of the helps that Heaven vouchsafed to us; when we see how we might have grown in grace, and look upon these things as God looks upon them, seeing what we have lost by failing to grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ, we shall wish that we had been more in earnest.

God does not desire you to remain novices. He needs in His work everything that you can gain here in the lines of mental culture and clear discernment. He desires to have you reach the very highest round of the ladder, and then step off it into the kingdom of God.

The Lord desires you to understand the position you occupy as sons and daughters of the Most High, children of the heavenly King.

We Grow Up in Christ

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, ... but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ .Ephesians 4:14, 15.

You cannot weaken your own influence and standing more than in trying to weaken each other.

Constantly let your confidence in your brethren increase, for when you think evil, you speak evil. Thus you hurt yourself and make yourself weak when you ought to be strong in God.

It is not our privilege to measure the actions of others or to criticize their failings. God has not made us the bearers of others' sins. It is with our own selves we have to do. The more thorough the work of repentance and reform in our own lives, the less we shall see to criticize in others. We do wrong when we measure ourselves by the defects we see in others. God does not do so. He understands the circumstances of every life, and He measures the human being by the advantages that each one has had for perfecting a Christian character. He takes into consideration the opportunities the human agent has had for obtaining a knowledge of God and His truth. He who has a true estimation of the law of God will not compare his character with the character of others. He will judge his life by the holy law of God....

In His instruction to His disciples the Saviour shows how complete must be the work of eradication of evil. "If thy right eye offend thee," He declares, "pluck it out, and cast it from thee." ...

We are to make continual advancement in the perfecting of Christian character, that we may be no more "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, ... but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

The growing is a continuous work.

Our Faith Grows Exceedingly

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly. 2 Thessalonians 1:3.

It is positively necessary for those who believe the truth, to be making continual advancement, growing up into the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. There is no time for backsliding and indifference. Each one must have a living experience in the things of God. Have root in yourselves. Become grounded in the faith, so that having done all you may stand, with unwavering confidence in God, through the time that will try every man's work and character. Exercise your powers in spiritual things, till you can appreciate the deep things of God's Word, and go on from strength to strength.

There are thousands who claim to have the light of truth who take no steps in advance. They have no living experience, notwithstanding they have had every advantage.... The Word of God offers spiritual liberty and enlightenment to those who seek for it earnestly. Those who accept the promises of God, and act on them with living faith, will have the light of heaven in their lives. They will drink of the fountain of life, and lead others to the waters that have refreshed their own souls....

The fruits of doubt are not desirable. Oh! look around you and see what havoc has been wrought by the ... evil one. Error and falsehood and heresy have held high carnival in the deceived hearts of men. From century to century the adversary has repeated his experiments with growing success; for, in spite of the sad records of lives that have gone out in darkness, as moths fly to the fire, so men rush on into the ruinous deceptions that he has prepared to entrap them.... "Heaven and earth shall pass away," but "the word of the Lord endureth forever;" and unwavering faith in His Word is the only faith that will endure through the perils of the last days.

Seek to Excel

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.1 Corinthians 14:12.

Let the youth be taught from childhood that there is no excellence without great labor. Aspirations for eminence will not avail. Young friends, the mountain-top cannot be reached by standing still, and wishing yourselves there. You can gain your object only by taking one step at a time, advancing slowly perhaps, but holding every step gained. It is the energetic, persevering worker that will scale the Alps. Every youth should make the most of his talents, improving to the utmost present opportunities. He who will do this, may reach almost any height in moral and intellectual attainments. But he must possess a brave and resolute spirit. He will need to close his ears to the voice of pleasure; he must often refuse the solicitations of young companions. He must stand on guard continually, lest he be diverted from his purpose....

Leave a field uncultivated, and it will grow up to thorns and briers. You will never see a lovely flower or a choice shrub peering above the unsightly, poisonous weeds. The worthless bramble will grow luxuriantly without thought or care, while plants that are valued for use or beauty require thorough culture. Thus it is with our youth. If right habits are formed, and right principles established, there is earnest work to be done. If wrong habits are corrected, diligence and perseverance are required to accomplish the task.... It is far easier to yield to evil influences than to resist them.

Unless they feel the importance of making the improvement that is essential in their characters in order to be better men every day, and thus be enabled to carry the responsibilities that rest upon them, they will be found on the losing side.

Grow in grace, in self-reliance, in self-control. Let every day find you more nearly prepared to unite with the royal family in the heavenly courts.

Attain to the Full Stature of Christ

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13.

As you make advances in the Christian life, you will be constantly growing up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. In your experience, you will be proving what is the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the love of God, which passeth knowledge. You will feel your unworthiness. You will have no disposition to claim perfection of character, but only to exalt the perfection of your Redeemer. The more thorough and rich your experience in the knowledge of Jesus, the more humble will be your views of self...

To love God supremely, and your neighbor as yourself, is true sanctification. Bible conversion will lead to constant and abiding activity, which will be free from all selfishness, all self-exaltation, and all boastful claims of holiness. If you are truly converted to God, you will exert a strong and telling influence on the side of truth. An intelligent knowledge of what it means to be a Christian will make you a blessing wherever you go. Whether you have one, two, or five talents, all will be devoted to the service of Him who has committed them to you in trust...

God does not intend that your light shall so shine that your good words or works shall bring the praise of men to yourself; but that the Author of all good shall be glorified and exalted. Jesus, in His life, gave to men a model of character. How little power did the world have over Him to mold Him according to its standard! All its influence was thrown off.

You cannot stand still; you must either advance or retrograde.... Where there is spiritual health there is growth. The child of God grows up to the full stature of a man or woman in Christ. There is no limit to his improvement.

Going Forth Is Prepared as the Morning

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning.Hosea 6:3.

The end of all things is at hand. What we have done must not be allowed to place the period to our work. The Captain of our salvation says, "Advance. The night cometh, in which no man can work." Constantly we are to increase in usefulness. Our lives are always to be under the power of Christ...

Prayer is a heaven-ordained means of success. Appeals, petitions, entreaties, between man and man, move men, and act as a part in controlling the affairs of nations. But prayer moves heaven. That power alone that comes in answer to prayer will make men wise in the wisdom of heaven, and enable them to work in the unity of the Spirit, joined together by the bonds of peace. Prayer, faith, confidence in God, bring a divine power that sets human calculations at their real worth,—nothingness.

In all ages God has given human beings divine revelations, that thus He may fulfill His purpose of unfolding gradually to the mind the doctrines of grace. His manner of imparting the truth is illustrated by the words, "His going forth is prepared as the morning." He who places himself where God can enlighten him, advances, as it were, from the partial obscurity of dawn to the full radiance of noonday.... As the sun goes forth upon its errand of mercy and love, as the golden beams of the day flood the canopy of heaven, and beautify forest and mountain, awakening the world by dispelling the darkness of night, so the followers of Christ should go forth upon their mission of love.

It is the duty of every youth to place himself decidedly and without reserve on the side of Christ in order that he may ... grow up to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. He will then be written as a man in the book of God, and will be a man not only in the estimation of men, but in the sight of God.

We Must Constantly Look to Jesus

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews 12:2.

Many of the youth repine because they have not ability to do some large work, and they covet talents by which they might do some wonderful things; but while they are spending their time in vain desires, they are making a failure of life. They are overlooking opportunities which they might improve in doing deeds of love in the path of life in which their feet are set...

O that you would now consider the things that make for your peace, and devote your affections, your thoughts, your time, your service, to Christ. Satan is concentrating all his energies to bend your will to his, to make you his agent in opposing the plans of Christ, that you may refuse to have Jesus reign over you. Although you know that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," Satan ... will seek to draw you away from Christ, that you may become his agent in drawing others away, and thus frustrate the plans of God. He is the father of lies, and he weaves a net of falsehood in which he binds you with cords of lies to his service. The more intelligent you are, the more attractive, the harder he will work that he may persuade you to lay your talents at his feet, and aid him to accomplish his ends in alluring others under his black banner. If he can only keep the mind infatuated, he will do it. Paul inquires, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" Satan is the bewitcher, and he has wrought, that Christ may be expelled from the soul, and that he himself may be there enthroned.

I beg of you, sons and daughters, to break from the infatuation of the evil one. Flee to Jesus as your refuge, and lay hold upon eternal life.

Each day be determined that you will keep nigh to God, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.

Our Experience Will Reach Into Eternity

Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known.¹ Corinthians 13:12.

Our life-work here is a preparation for the life eternal. The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward through all eternity,—ever progressing, never completed. More and more fully will be revealed the wisdom and love of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour, as He leads His children to the fountains of living waters, will impart rich stores of knowledge. And day by day the wonderful works of God, the evidences of His power in creating and sustaining the universe, will open before the mind in new beauty. In the light that shines from the throne, mysteries will disappear, and the soul will be filled with astonishment at the simplicity of the things that were never before comprehended. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now we know in part; but then we shall know even as also we are known.

Think what it will mean to study through the eternal ages under the personal instruction of Christ! Amidst the present conflicts and temptations, in this our day of probation, we are to form characters that will prepare us to obtain a life that measures with the life of God.

We are to have an eye single to the glory of God, and thus grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The more earnestly and diligently we seek for divine wisdom, the more firmly established we shall be in the truth.

By beholding Christ, by talking of Him, by beholding the loveliness of His character we become changed. Changed from glory to glory. And what is glory? Character,—and he becomes changed from character to character. Thus we see that there is a work of purification that goes on by beholding Jesus.

Look Upon Christ—Assimilate His Image

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. John 1:14.

The strength of nations and of individuals is not found in the opportunities and facilities that appear to make them invincible; it is not found in their boasted greatness. That which alone can make them great or strong is the power of God. They themselves, by their attitude toward His purpose, decide their own destiny.

Human histories relate man's achievements, his victories in battle, his success in attaining worldly greatness. God's history describes man as heaven views him. In the divine records all his merit is seen to consist in his obedience to God's requirements....

The centuries have their mission. Every moment has its work. Each is passing into eternity with its burden.... God is still dealing with earthly kingdoms. He is in the great cities. His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the doings of the children of men. We are not to say, God was, but, God is. He sees the very sparrow's fall, the leaf that falls from the tree, and the king who is dethroned. All are under the control of the Infinite One. Everything is changing. Cities and nations are being measured by the plummet in the hand of God. He never makes a mistake. He reads correctly. Everything earthly is unsettled, but the truth abides forever.

In the eyes of the world, those who serve God may appear weak. They may be apparently sinking beneath the billows, but with the next billow, they are seen rising nearer to their heaven. I give unto them eternal life, saith our Lord, and none shall be able to pluck them out of My hand. Though kings shall be cast down, and nations removed, the souls that through faith link themselves with God's purpose shall abide forever.

Fasten your eyes upon Jesus, and by beholding you will become assimilated to His image.

We Long to Catch Glimpses of His Glory

I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. Exodus 33:18.

It is our privilege to reach high and still higher, for clearer revealings of the character of God. When Moses prayed, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory," the Lord did not rebuke him, but He granted his prayer....

It is sin that darkens our minds and dims our perceptions. As sin is purged from our hearts, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, illuminating His word, and reflected from the face of nature, more and more fully will declare Him "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

In His light shall we see light, until mind and heart and soul are transformed into the image of His holiness.

For those who thus lay hold of the divine assurances of God's Word, there are wonderful possibilities. Before them lie vast fields of truth, vast resources of power. Glorious things are to be revealed. Privileges and duties which they do not even suspect to be in the Bible will be made manifest. All who walk in the path of humble obedience, fulfilling His purpose, will know more and more of the oracles of God....

The precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His Word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love. And the natural powers are enlarged because of holy obedience.

We Are Filled With Praise

I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. Psalm 34:1.

It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His Spirit....

As we associate together, we may be a blessing to one another. If we are Christ's, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him; and as we speak to one another of His love, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be "changed into the same image from glory to glory."

The Lord Jesus ... loves you. If you doubt His love, look to Calvary. The light reflected from the cross shows you the magnitude of that love which no tongue can tell....

The mercies of God surround you every moment; and it would be profitable for you to consider how and whence your blessings come every day. Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you, and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be sensible of daily refreshment, of the protection and love of Jesus; you will be guided in the way of peace....

See Him, by the eye of faith, bending over you in love.... He wants you to live in His presence; to have eternal life and a crown of glory.

We Become Like Him

Father, 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. John 17:24.

In our work we meet with many discouragements. But we shall not gain a particle of strength by dwelling on the discouragements. By beholding we become changed. As we look in faith to Jesus, His image is engraven on the heart. We are transformed in character.

There are many who, in dwelling too largely upon theory, have lost sight of the living power of the Saviour's example. They have lost sight of Him as the humble, self-denying worker. What they need is to behold Jesus. Daily we need the fresh revealing of His presence.

As we discern the perfection of our Saviour's character, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. The more we know of God, the higher will be our ideal of character, and the more earnest our longing to reflect His likeness. A divine element combines with the human when the soul reaches out after God.

As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer he discovers in himself serious defects.... He catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master.... It is not by looking away from Him that we imitate the life of Jesus, but by talking of Him, by dwelling upon His perfections, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying, through faith and love, and by earnest, persevering effort, to approach the perfect Pattern. By having a knowledge of Christ,—His words, His habits, and His lessons of instructions,—we borrow the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, and become imbued with the spirit we have so much admired. Jesus becomes to us “the chiefest among ten thousand,” the One “altogether lovely.”

December—We Receive Our Inheritance

Now Is the Sealing Time

Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. Revelation 7:3.

Satan is now using every device in this sealing time to keep the minds of God's people from the present truth, and to cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth, and was pure in heart, was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty. Satan knew this, and he was at work in mighty power to keep the minds of as many people as he possibly could wavering and unsettled on the truth.... I saw that Satan was at work ... to distract, deceive, and draw away God's people, just now in this sealing time. I saw some who were not standing stiffly for present truth. Their knees were trembling, and their feet sliding because they were not firmly planted on the truth....

Satan was trying his every art to hold them where they were, until the sealing was past, until the covering was drawn over God's people, and they left without a shelter from the burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues.

We are brought out of the darkness of the world into God's marvelous light. If we receive the image of God, if our souls are cleansed from every moral defilement, the seal of God will be placed upon our foreheads, and we shall be prepared for the closing scenes of this earth's history. But we have no time to lose. The more we study the life of Christ with a heart to learn, the more Christlike we become.

The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure.

Seek the Lord While He May Be Found

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Isaiah 55:6.

The time is coming when it will be too late to seek God, and I have been thinking how we shall feel when probation is closed, and all our life-work ended. With what feeling shall we review the past? Shall we then wish that our efforts to serve God had been more earnest? Shall we wish that we had lived more in harmony with His revealed will? Shall we then be accounted as faithful servants? What if at this moment we should hear the voice of Christ saying, "It is done"? ...

In view of the solemn responsibilities that rest upon us, let us contemplate the future, that we may understand what we must do in order to meet it.... In the solemn assembly of the last day, in the hearing of the universe, will be read the reason of the condemnation of the sinner. For the first time parents will learn what has been the secret life of their children. Children will see how many wrongs they have committed against their parents. There will be a general revealing of the secrets and motives of the heart; for that which is hid will be made manifest. Those who have made sport of solemn things connected with the judgment, will be sobered as they face its terrible reality. Those who have despised the Word of God, will then face the Author of the inspired oracles. We cannot afford to live with no reference to the day of judgment; for though long delayed, it is now near, even at the door, and hasteth greatly....

When you consider solemn things, do you not realize, dear youth, that you must cease from your selfish, sinful course,—cease to do evil, and learn to do good? It is your own course of action that will mold your character for destruction or for the bliss of the ceaseless ages of eternity....

Will you heed the injunction, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near?"

Become God's Sons, and Heirs Through Christ

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Galatians 4:7.

The Galatians were given up to the worship of idols, but as the apostles preached to them, they rejoiced in the message that promised freedom from the thralldom of sin. Paul and his fellow-workers proclaimed the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. They presented Christ as the One who, seeing the helpless condition of the fallen race, came to redeem men and women by living a life of obedience to God's law, and by paying the penalty of disobedience. And in the light of the cross, many who had never before known of the true God, began to comprehend the greatness of the Father's love. Thus the Galatians were taught the fundamental truths concerning "God the Father," and "our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." "By the hearing of faith," they received the Spirit of God, and became "the children of God by faith in Christ."

Paul's manner of life while among the Galatians was such that he could afterward say, "I beseech you, be as I am." His lips had been touched with a live coal from off the altar, and he was enabled to rise above bodily infirmities, and to present Jesus as the sinner's only hope. Those who heard him knew that he had been with Jesus. Endued with power from on high, he was able to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and to tear down the strongholds of Satan. Hearts were broken by this presentation of the love of God, as revealed in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, and many were led to inquire, What must I do to be saved? ... The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved.

Be as Trees Planted by Rivers of Water

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Psalm 1:3.

Dangers beset every path, and he who comes off conqueror will indeed have a triumphant song to sing in the city of God. Some have strong traits of character that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. If those who are now riding upon the wave of popularity do not become giddy, it will be a miracle of mercy. If they lean to their own wisdom, as so many thus situated have done, their wisdom will prove to be foolishness. But while they shall give themselves unselfishly to the work of God, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about them the everlasting arm and will prove to them a mighty helper...

This is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God; for Satan is constantly plying his temptations upon such a person, ever trying to fill him with pride and ambition; and when God would use him, it is too often the case that he becomes independent and self-sufficient, and feels capable of standing alone...

Prayer and effort, effort and prayer, will be the business of your life. You must pray as though the efficiency and praise were all due to God, and labor as though duty were all your own. If you want power you may have it; it is waiting your draft upon it. Only believe in God, take Him at His word, act by faith, and blessings will come.... Those who have a humble, trusting, contrite heart, God accepts, and hears their prayer; and when God helps, all obstacles will be overcome.... The blessing of heaven, obtained by daily supplication, will be as the bread of life to the soul and will cause them to increase in moral and spiritual strength, like a tree planted by the river of waters.

Be Sober and Watch Unto Prayer

The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.1 Peter 4:7.

The admonition to the Israel of today is, “The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” “Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” Resist the enemy; do not be seduced by his flattering inducements and presentations. It is the work of the human agent to be strong, not in his own finite strength, but in the strength of the Lord, in the power of His might...

Christ has said, “Without me ye can do nothing.” The resolutions you may make in your own finite strength, will be only as ropes of sand; but if you pray in sincerity, surrendering yourself, soul, body, and spirit, unto God, you put on the whole armor of God, and open the soul to the righteousness of Christ; and this alone,—Christ’s imputed righteousness,—makes you able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The work of every soul is to resist the enemy in the power and might of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promise is that the devil shall flee from us. But let all realize that they are in peril, and there is no assurance of safety except as they comply with the conditions of the text. The Lord says, “Draw nigh to God.” How?—By secret, earnest examination of your own heart; by childlike, heart-felt, humble dependence upon God, making known your weakness to Jesus; and by confessing your sins. Thus you may draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.

Live Righteously and Godly

We should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus 2:12, 13.

O that our hearts may be deeply impressed with the importance of living holy lives, that the world may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him. Christian worth does not depend upon brilliant talents, lofty birth, wonderful powers, but on a clean heart,—a heart which, purified and refined, reflects the image of divinity. It is the presence of Him who gave His life for us that makes the soul beautiful.... It is the men of prayer that are men of power....

Do not allow trifling things to absorb your time and attention. Keep your mind on the glorious themes of the Word of God. A study of these themes will give you a strength that will carry you through the trials and difficulties of the last days, and bring you to where you will walk with Christ in white, because you are worthy. In the Word of God, studied and obeyed, we possess a spiritual guide and instructor by which the worst forms of evil in ourselves may be brought under the discipline of His law. If the teachings of this Word were made the controlling influence in our lives, if mind and heart were brought under its restraining power, the evils that now exist in churches and in families would find no place. Upon converted households the purest blessings would descend, and from these households an influence would go forth that would make God's people a power on the side of truth....

Now is the time to watch and pray, to put away all self-indulgence, all pride, all selfishness. The precious moments that are now by many worse than wasted should be spent in meditation and prayer....

On Christ's coronation day He will not acknowledge as His any who bear spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But to His faithful ones He will give crowns of immortal glory.

Be Without Fault

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. Revelation 14:5.

Sin is a hateful thing. It marred the moral beauty of a large number of the angels. It entered our world, and well-nigh obliterated the moral image of God in man. But in His great love God provided a way whereby man might regain the position from which he fell in yielding to the tempter. Christ came to stand at the head of humanity, to work out in our behalf a perfect character.... "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." ...

What does the Lord require of His blood-bought heritage?—The sanctification of the whole being,—purity like the purity of Christ, perfect conformity to the will of God.... Into the holy city there can enter nothing that defileth, or maketh a lie....

We can reveal the likeness of our divine Lord. We can know the science of spiritual life. We can honor our Maker....

Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. He wants our minds to be clear, our tempers sweet, our love unbounding. Then the peace that passeth knowledge will flow from us to bless all with whom we come in contact. The atmosphere surrounding our souls will be refreshing....

Many are holding onto the truth with but the tips of their fingers. The precious time that should be spent in speaking of the Saviour's power to save, is being spent by many in carrying evil reports. Unless they make a decided change, they will be found wanting. Unless they have an entire transformation of character, they will never enter heaven.... The truly converted man has no inclination to think or talk of the faults of others. His lips are sanctified, and as God's witness he testifies that the grace of Christ has transformed his heart.... Those only will enter heaven who have overcome the temptation to think and speak evil.

Overcome the World Through Faith

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.1 John 5:4.

Today Satan presents the same temptations that he presented to Christ, offering us the kingdoms of the world in return for our allegiance. But upon him who looks to Jesus as the author and finisher of his faith, Satan's temptations have no power. He can not cause to sin the one who will accept by faith the virtues of Him who was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, can not be overcome. Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace. This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sins, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin.

The Christian is not to retain his sinful habits and cherish his defects of character; but he is to be renewed in the spirit of his mind after the divine similitude. Whatever may be the nature of your defects, the Spirit of the Lord will enable you to discern them, and grace will be given you whereby they may be overcome. Through the merits of the blood of Christ you may be a conqueror, yes more than a conqueror...

The truth must be admitted into the soul, and it will work the sanctification of the character. It will refine, and elevate the life, and fit you for an entrance into the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love Him.

Heaven is worth everything to us, and if we lose heaven we lose all.

And His Reward is With Him

Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22:12.

Our work here is soon to close, and every man will receive his reward according to his own labor. I was shown the saints' reward, the immortal inheritance, and saw that those who had endured the most for the truth's sake will not think they have had a hard time, but will count heaven cheap enough.

Every day bears its burden of record of unfulfilled duties, of neglect, of selfishness, of deception, of fraud, of overreaching. What an amount of evil works is accumulating for the final judgment! When Christ shall come, ... what a revelation will then be made!

Every good and every wrong act, and its influence upon others, is traced by the Searcher of hearts, to whom every secret is revealed. And the reward will be according to the motives which prompted the action.

The coming of Christ is near and hasteth greatly. The time in which to labor is short, and men and women are perishing.... We need the converting power of God to take hold of us, that we may understand the needs of a perishing world. The burden of my message to you is: Get ready, get ready to meet the Lord. Trim your lamps, and let the light of truth shine forth into the byways and the hedges. There is a world to be warned of the near approach of the end of all things....

We need the presence of the Holy Spirit of God with us, that our hearts may be softened and that we may not bring a harsh spirit into the work. I pray that the Holy Spirit may take full possession of our hearts. Let us act like children of God who are looking to Him for counsel, ready to work out His plans wherever presented. God will be glorified by such a people, and those who witness our zeal will say; Amen and amen.

Hold Fast and Be Ready

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Revelation 3:3.

“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.” Those who have been born again remember with what joy and gladness they received the light of heaven, and how eager they were to tell everybody of their happiness....

“Hold fast.” This does not mean, Hold fast to your sins; but, hold fast to the comfort, the faith, the hope, that God has given you in His Word. Never be discouraged. A discouraged man can do nothing. Satan is seeking to discourage you, telling you it is of no use to serve God, that it does not pay, and that it is just as well to have pleasure and enjoyment in this world. But “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul”? You may have worldly pleasure at the expense of the future world; but can you afford to pay such a price? We are to “hold fast” and live up to all the light we receive from heaven. Why?—Because God wants us to grasp the eternal truth, and act as His helping hand by communicating the light to those who are not acquainted with His love for them. When you gave yourself to Christ, you made a pledge in the presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,—the three great personal Dignitaries of heaven. “Hold fast” to this pledge....

The enemy can never take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!

We are to watch vigilantly for the coming of the Lord.... Every moment is to be faithfully employed. “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

We Hasten His Return With Holy Conversation

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?2 Peter 3:11, 12.

Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ, are becoming conformed to this world, and seek more earnestly for the applause of those around them, than the approbation of God....

Many of these professed Christians dress, talk and act like the world, and the only thing by which they may be known, is their profession. Though they profess to be looking for Christ, their conversation is not in heaven, but on worldly things.

“What manner of persons” ought those to be “in all holy conversation and godliness,” who profess to be “looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?”2 Peter 3:11, 12....

The way to heaven is rugged. Briers and thorns are in the way; but we can with cheerfulness tread the rough pathway, knowing that Jesus, the King of glory, once trod it before us. We will rejoice that we can follow in His footsteps, and be partakers with Him of His sufferings, that we may finally partake of His glory.

What if reproaches are heaped upon me, even by those who profess to be looking for the Lord? ... Shall I complain, when Jesus bore the scoffs and derision of His own people? ... No, I will not complain; I will rather rejoice and be exceeding glad that I am accounted worthy to suffer for Christ’s sake, that my reward may be in heaven. Only let me have an inheritance in glory, and it will be enough....

Let us strive to be Christians (Christ-like) in every sense of the word, and let our dress, conversation and actions preach that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, and that we are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus.... My affections, interest, treasure, all, is in the bright world to come. I long to see the King in His beauty.

He Returns as Protector and Avenger of His Own

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? Luke 18:7.

At this time, when great light is shining forth from the Word of God, making dark mysteries plain as day, is the day of mercy, of hope, of joy and assurance to all who will be benefited thereby, to all who will open their minds and hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness....

There are diligent students of the Word of prophecy in all parts of the world, who are obtaining light and still greater light from searching the Scriptures. This is true of all nations, of all tribes, and all people. These will come from the grossest error, and will take the place of those who have had opportunities and privileges and have not prized them.... We are now making our choice, and we shall soon discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not....

From time to time the Lord has made known His manner of working.... And when a crisis has come, He has revealed Himself, and has interposed the working of Satan's plans. He has often permitted matters with nations, with families, and with individuals to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has let the fact be known that there is a God in Israel who would sustain and vindicate His people.

When the defiance of the law of Jehovah shall be almost universal, when His people shall be pressed in affliction by their fellow men, God will interpose. The fervent prayers of His people will be answered, for He loves to have His people seek Him with all their heart, and depend upon Him as their Deliverer. He will be sought unto to do these things for His people.... The promise is, "The Lord will avenge his own elect, which cry unto him day and night."

He Will Be to Us a Sanctuary

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. Psalm 27:5.

There is joy and consolation for the true-hearted, faithful Christian, that the world knows not of. To them it is a mystery. The Christian's hope is big with immortality and full of glory. It reacheth to that within the veil, and is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. And when the storm of God's wrath shall come upon the ungodly, this hope will not fail them, but they are hid as in the secret of His pavilion.

There are troublous times before us; the judgments of God are coming upon our world. The nations of the earth are to tremble. There will be trials and perplexities on every hand; men's hearts will fail them for fear. And what shall we do in that day? Though the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage, if we have made God our trust, He will deliver us. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee.... For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Christ sees the termination of the conflict. The battle is waging more and more fiercely. Soon He will come whose right it is, and will take possession of all earthly things. All the confusion in our world, all the violence and crime, are a fulfilment of the words of Christ. They are the signs of the nearness of His coming. In that day of His coming, Christ will preserve those who have followed Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He has pledged Himself to be their sanctuary. He says to them, Enter thou into a safe retreat for a little moment, and hide thee until I shall cleanse the earth from her iniquity.

Probation is Fast Closing

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Revelation 22:11.

All who would have their names retained in the book of life, should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin, and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged in by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another.... Every one must be tested, and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above.... In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review....

When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven.... Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure-lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments,—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence, “Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting.”

Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man’s destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy’s offer to guilty men. “Watch ye therefore ... lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”

He Calls Us to the Marriage Supper

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.Revelation 19:9.

The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan, with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of His government, stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God, seraphim and cherubim, the powers commissioned to cooperate with human agencies, look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the occupations and pleasures of heaven.

To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory. “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

Christ Comes With Power and Great Glory

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. Matthew 25:31.

No human language can portray the scenes of the second coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven.... He will come clad in the robe of light, which He has worn from the days of eternity. Angels will accompany Him. Ten thousand times ten thousand will escort Him on His way. The sound of the trumpet will be heard, calling the sleeping dead from the grave. The voice of Christ will penetrate the tomb, and pierce the ears of the dead, "and all that are in the graves ... shall come forth."

Christ is coming with power and great glory. He is coming with His own glory, and with the glory of the Father. And the holy angels will attend Him on His way. While all the world is plunged in darkness, there will be light in every dwelling of the saints. They will catch the first light of His second appearing. The unsullied light will shine from His splendor, and Christ the Redeemer will be admired by all who have served Him. While the wicked flee, Christ's followers will rejoice in His presence.

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." He is to be accompanied by all the hosts of heaven.... "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect." ...

Not until the personal advent of Christ can His people receive the kingdom.... Man in his present state is mortal, corruptible; but the kingdom of God will be incorruptible, enduring forever. Therefore man in his present state cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But when Jesus comes, He confers immortality upon His people; and then He calls them to inherit the kingdom of which they have hitherto been only heirs.

The Faithful of Earth Will Be Saved

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24:31.

In the power of Him who rides forth conquering and to conquer, weak, finite man may gain the victory.

The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of fire that speaks terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law, is a token of light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal. Everyone who is faithful will be saved. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

In comparison with the millions of the world, God's people will be, as they have ever been, a little flock; but if they stand for the truth as revealed in His Word, God will be their refuge. They stand under the broad shield of Omnipotence. God is always a majority. When the sound of the last trump shall penetrate the prison-house of the dead, and the righteous shall come forth with triumph, exclaiming, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—standing then with God, with Christ, with the angels, and the loyal and true of all ages, the children of God will be far in the majority....

In holy vision the prophet saw the ultimate triumph of God's remnant church. He writes: "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory ... stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The Dead in Christ Rise First

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead.

“The hour is coming,” Christ said, “in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.” That voice is to resound through all the habitations of the dead; and every saint who sleeps in Jesus will awake and leave his prison-house. Then the virtue of character we received from Christ’s righteousness will ally us to true greatness of the highest order.

The victory of the sleeping saints will be glorious on the morning of the resurrection.... The Life-giver will crown with immortality all who come forth from the grave.

There stands the risen host. The last thought was of death and its pangs. The last thoughts they had were of the grave and the tomb, but now they proclaim, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” ... Here they stand and the finishing touch of immortality is put upon them and they go up to meet their Lord in the air.... There are the columns of angels on either side; ... then the angelic choir strike the note of victory and the angels in the two columns take up the song and the redeemed host join as though they had been singing the song on the earth, and they have been. Oh, what music! There is not an inharmonious note. Every voice proclaims, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” He sees the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

Caught Up to Be With Christ Forever

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Jesus is coming, but not as at His first advent, a babe in Bethlehem, not as He rode into Jerusalem, when the disciples praised God with a loud voice and cried, Hosannah; but in the glory of the Father, and with all the retinue of holy angels with Him, to escort Him on His way to earth. All heaven will be emptied of the angels. The waiting saints will be looking for Him, and gazing into heaven, as were the “men of Galilee” when He ascended from the Mount of Olivet. Then, those only who are holy, those who have followed fully the meek Pattern will, with rapturous joy, exclaim as they behold Him, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us.” And they will be changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,” that wakes the sleeping saints, and calls them forth from their dusty beds, clothed with glorious immortality, shouting Victory! Victory! over death and the grave. The changed saints are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, never more to be separated from the object of their love.

To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and a familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and the glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts....

With rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth to meet the Bridegroom, saying, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us.”

All Nations Are Gathered in Judgment

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Matthew 25:32.

The judgment scene will take place in the presence of all the worlds; for in this judgment the government of God will be vindicated, and His law will stand forth as “holy, and just, and good.” Then every case will be decided, and sentence will be passed upon all. Sin will not then appear attractive, but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude.

“And before him shall be gathered all nations.” ... Every deed, small and great, is to be brought into recognition. That which has been considered trivial here will then appear as it is. The two mites of the widow will be recognized. The cup of cold water offered, the prison visited, the hungry fed,—each will bring its own reward. And that unfulfilled duty, that selfish act, will not be forgotten. In the open court around the throne of God it will appear a very different thing from what it did when it was performed.... It will be seen that these selfish pleasures and indulgences have made the human being a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God.... But it is not necessary for any to be deceived; and we shall not be if we have fully taken our stand with Christ to follow Him through evil as well as through good report.

The character which we now manifest is deciding our future destiny. The happiness of heaven will be found by conforming to the will of God, and if men become members of the royal family in heaven, it will be because heaven has begun with them on earth.... The righteous will take every grace, every precious, sanctified ability, into the courts above, and exchange earth for heaven. God knows who are the loyal and true subjects of His kingdom on earth, and those who do His will upon earth as it is done in heaven, will be made the members of the royal family above.

We Receive the Crown of Life

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. James 1:12.

When the Lord makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be looked upon with pleasure. Angels are employed in making crowns for such ones, and upon these star-gemmed crowns will be reflected, with splendor, the light which radiates from the throne of God.

Talk of heavenly things. Talk of Jesus, His loveliness and glory, and of His undying love for you, and let your heart flow out in love and gratitude to Him, who died to save you. O, get ready to meet your Lord in peace. Those who are ready will soon receive an unfading crown of life, and will dwell forever in the kingdom of God, with Christ, with angels, and with those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

It is the waiting ones who are to be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality. You need not talk ... of the honors of the world, or the praise of its great ones. They are all vanity. Let but the finger of God touch them, and they would soon go back to dust again. I want honor that is lasting, honor that is immortal, honor that will never perish; a crown that is richer than any crown that ever decked the brow of a monarch.

In that day the redeemed will shine forth in the glory of the Father and His Son. The angels of heaven, touching their golden harps, will welcome the King, and those who are the trophies of His victory,—those who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. A song of triumph will peal forth, filling all heaven. Christ has conquered. He enters the heavenly courts accompanied by His redeemed ones, the witnesses that His mission of suffering and self-sacrifice has not been in vain.

A Great Multitude Enter the City of God

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.Revelation 7:9.

Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest-day, these faithful ones, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke," will "shine as lights in the world."

Let us remember that there is a grand meeting to take place ere long. Everlasting life is before us, and the city of God. Angels of God will be there, and Christ will be there.

The gates of the city will swing back on their glittering hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth will enter in. A crown will be placed on every head. The words will be spoken, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Whom is it prepared for?—For the obedient; those who keep His commandments, and do His will.... As holy angels touch their harps, He wants you to follow, singing the song of triumph in the city of God.

We Inherit the Kingdom

Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matthew 25:34.

Every action of ours in befriending God's people will be rewarded as done unto Himself.

In the day of final reckoning, Christ does not present before men the great work He has done for them in giving His life for their redemption. He presents before them the faithful work they have done for Him. What surpassing love is this! He even mentions the work of the heathen, who have no intelligent knowledge of the law of the Lord, but who have done the very things the law required, because they have heeded the voice speaking to them in the things of nature. When the Holy Spirit implants Christ's Spirit in the heart of the savage, and he befriends God's servants, the quickening of the heart's sympathy is contrary to his nature, contrary to his education. The grace of God, working upon the darkened mind, has softened the savage nature untaught by the wisdom of men....

Christ implants His grace in the heart of the savage, and he ministers to the necessity of the missionary, even before he has heard or comprehended the words of truth and life. Behold that crowd collected about God's servant to harm him! But the Lord is working upon the heart and mind of perhaps one man to plead in behalf of His servant; and when the war council has determined the destruction of the Christian's life, the intercession of that savage turns the decision, and his life is spared. O, the love that goes forth to the savage for this one act! To such Christ says, in the Judgment: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We Eat of the Tree of Life

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.Revelation 2:7.

In view of the Lord's soon coming, how earnest we should be in forming characters after the divine similitude....

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Is not this worth striving for? If we lose heaven, we lose everything, and there are none of us who can afford to do that. If we keep in view the eternal joys awaiting the overcomer, and trust in Christ as we strive for the perfection of character, do you think we shall be unhappy? Should it make us unhappy to imitate Christ's example of self-denial and ministry? ...

We are seeking for the life that measures with the life of God; therefore our natures must be brought into conformity with the will of God. We must so conduct our life work that we can go to God in confidence and open our hearts before Him, telling Him our necessities and believing that He hears and will give us grace and strength to carry out the principles of the Word of God. What we want is heaven, the victor's crown, an entrance through the gates to the city of God, the right to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. We want to see the King in His beauty. Then daily let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, the perfection of human character, and laying hold of His divinity we shall have the strength of divinity to aid us in overcoming every evil tendency and desire.

I thank God for my life.... I have a faith that looks over into the future, and sees the tree of life. Upon it grows precious fruits, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No more broken hearts, no more sadness, no more sins, no more sorrow, no more suffering, in that kingdom of glory.

We Have Power Over the Nations

He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.Revelation 2:26.

It was our Lord Himself who promised His disciples, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself.” It was the compassionate Saviour, who, anticipating the loneliness and sorrow of His followers, commissioned angels to comfort them with the assurance that He would come again in person, even as He went into heaven. As the disciples stood gazing intently upward to catch the last glimpse of Him whom they loved, their attention was arrested by the words, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Hope was kindled afresh by the angel’s message. The disciples “returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” They were not rejoicing because Jesus had been separated from them, and they were left to struggle with the trials and temptations of the world, but because of the angel’s assurance that He would come again.

The proclamation of Christ’s coming should now be, as when made by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, good tidings of great joy. Those who really love the Saviour cannot but hail with gladness the announcement founded upon the Word of God, that He in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered, is coming again, not to be insulted, despised, and rejected, as at His first advent, but in power and glory, to redeem His people.

The gospel is to advance from conquest to conquest, from victory to victory. The greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and they shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever and ever.

We are Given Life Without End

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. Revelation 2:11.

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked. Moses declared to Israel, “I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” The death referred to in these scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is the “second death” that is placed in contrast with everlasting life.

In consequence of Adam’s sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. “There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust,” “for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. “All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” They who have been “accounted worthy” of the resurrection of life, are “blessed and holy.” “On such the second death hath no power.” But those who have not, through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression.

Said the angel, “Satan is the root, his children are the branches. They are now consumed root and branch. They have died an everlasting death. They are never to have a resurrection, and God will have a clean universe.” ... And all the redeemed host, old and young, great and small, cast their glittering crowns at the feet of their Redeemer, and prostrated themselves in adoration before Him, and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever. The beautiful new earth, with all its glory, was the eternal inheritance of the saints.

Because We are Worthy, We Shall Walk in White

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.Revelation 3:4.

When, as overcomers, we shall be “clothed in white raiment,” the Lord will acknowledge our faithfulness as verily as in the days of the early Christian church He acknowledged the “few names even in Sardis,” who had “not defiled their garments;” and we shall walk with Him in white, for through His atoning sacrifice we shall be accounted worthy....

In view of these encouraging promises, how earnestly should we strive to perfect a character that will enable us to stand before the Son of God! Only those who are clothed in the garments of His righteousness will be able to endure the glory of His presence when He shall appear with “power and great glory.”

It means much to be an overcomer. The besetments of the enemy and all his evil agencies must be firmly resisted. Every moment we must be on guard. Not for one instant are we to lose sight of Christ, and of His power to save in the hour of trial. Our hand must be placed in His, that we may be upheld by the power of His might.

If you are to sit at Christ’s table, and feast on the provisions He has furnished at the marriage supper of the Lamb, you must have a special garment, called the wedding garment, which is the white robe of Christ’s righteousness. Every one who has on this robe is entitled to enter the city of God; and if Jesus had not been very desirous you should have a place in the mansions He has gone to prepare for those who love Him, He would not, at so great an expense to Himself, have made all these arrangements that you might be happy and sit at His table and enjoy the home He has gone to prepare for His redeemed family.

We are Presented to the Father

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.Revelation 3:5.

The expression, “He that overcometh,” indicates that there is something for every one of us to overcome. The overcomer is to be clothed in the white raiment of Christ’s righteousness, and of him it is written: “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.” O, what a privilege it is to be an overcomer, and to have our names presented before the Father by the Saviour Himself!

What a precious assurance is contained in this promise! What greater inducement could be presented to us to become the sons and daughters of God? Who will put on the whole armor? Who will enlist under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel? ... Divine enlightenment may come to every struggling, tempted child of God in order that he need not fall in the strife with the powers of darkness, but be a conqueror in every battle.

The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God.... Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices.... The remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. “A fair miter” is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father’s name written in their foreheads.

We are Made Pillars in the Temple of God

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. Revelation 3:12.

The only hope of any man lies through Jesus Christ.... The pure and holy garments are not prepared to be put on by any one *after* he has entered the gate of the city. All who enter will have on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the name of God will be seen in their foreheads. This name is the symbol which the apostle saw in vision, and signifies the yielding of the mind to intelligent and loyal obedience to all of God's commandments.

The conflict that we are passing through is the last we shall have in this world. We are now in the midst of it. Two parties are striving for the supremacy. In this conflict we cannot be neutral. We must stand either on one side or on the other. If we take our position on the side of Christ, if we acknowledge Him before the world in word and work, we are bearing a living testimony as to whom we have chosen to serve and honor. In this important period of earth's history, we cannot afford to leave any one in uncertainty as to whose side we are on....

In order to gain the victory over every besetment of the enemy, we must lay hold on a power that is out of and beyond ourselves. We must maintain a constant, living connection with Christ, who has power to give victory to every soul that will maintain an attitude of faith and humility.... As those who hope to receive the overcomer's reward, we must press forward in the Christian warfare, though at every advance we meet with opposition.... As overcomers, we are to reign with Christ in the heavenly courts, and we are to overcome through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God."

We Sit With Christ on His Throne

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.Revelation 3:21.

In these words an individual work is laid out for each one of us. We are to make determined efforts to overcome as Christ overcame. From this warfare no one is excused. If for us the gates of the holy city swing ajar, if we behold the King in His beauty, we must now overcome as Christ overcame.... He laid aside His robes of royalty, ... His riches, and for our sake became poor, that we might come into possession of an immortal inheritance. In our behalf, He met and conquered the prince of darkness....

The lesson of self-control should begin with the infant in its mother's arms. The child should be taught that its will must be brought into subjection.... Who are these children committed to our care?—They are the younger members of the Lord's family. He says, Take these children and train them ... so that they will be polished after the similitude of a palace, prepared to shine in the courts of My house. What an important work! ... Remember that in your work the Creator of the universe will give you help. In His strength, and through His name, you can lead your children to be overcomers. Teach them to look to God for strength. Tell them that He hears their prayers. Teach them to overcome evil with good. Teach them to exert an influence that is elevating and ennobling. Lead them to unite with God, and then they will have strength to resist the strongest temptation. They will then receive the reward of the overcomer.

You lose much by not studying with greater earnestness and care the life of Christ. There you ... may see the victories which you have to gain ... that you may win the precious white robe of a spotless character, and stand at last without fault before the throne of God.

We Shall Inherit All Things

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son [daughter]. Revelation 21:7.

In order to inherit all things, we must resist and overcome sin.

We may have joy in the Lord if we will keep His commandments. If we indeed have our citizenship above, and a title to an immortal inheritance, an eternal substance, we have that faith which works by love and purifies the soul.... We are members of the heavenly family, children of the heavenly King, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. At His coming we shall have the crown of life that fadeth not away.

The Monarch of heaven would have you possess and enjoy all that can ennoble, expand, and exalt your being and fit you to dwell with Him forever, your existence measuring with the life of God. What a prospect is the life which is to come! What charms it possesses! How broad and deep and measureless is the love of God manifested to man!

The privileges granted to the children of God are without limit,—to be connected with Jesus Christ, who, throughout the universe of heaven and worlds that have not fallen, is adored by every heart, and His praises sung by every tongue; to be children of God, to bear His name, to become a member of the royal family; to be ranged under the banner of Prince Immanuel, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Son of God was the heir of all things, and the dominion and glory of the kingdoms of this world were promised to Him.... Even as Christ was in the world, so are His followers. They are the sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and the kingdom and dominion belong to them.

In place of the world, He will give you, for a life of obedience, the kingdom under the whole heavens. He will give you an eternal weight of glory and a life that is as enduring as eternity.