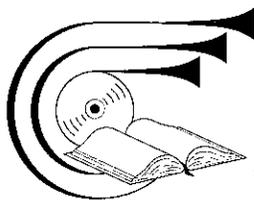


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Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS 196

Looking at the Whole truth

Stephens Pierce, as early as 1857, dealt with the topic of what law Paul meant in Galatians (e.g., Gal. 3:19). His position on this subject (which occupied quite a bit of his writing and travel) foreshadowed one of the issues that came to a head at Minneapolis in 1888. He also pointed the fledgling church in a helpful direction that we still desperately need to pursue in dealing with "either-or" issues.

Extracts of his comments in the October 3, 1857 issue of the *Review and Herald* (Vol. x, No. 23) will help to introduce some reflections of a general nature that speak to us today. In reference to Galatians 3, he says,

"Some will here ask, if in verse 19 the Moral Law is not referred to; and others if the typical, or ceremonial law is not referred to. We answer, no more than any particular sticks of timber which are constituent parts of an edifice, are referred to

when only speaking of that edifice, as such. But that great system, or dispensation, or embodiment of law, of which these were constituent parts, is only referred to; and as a system, as a dispensation as a whole, it was added." And after quoting Gal. 5:3, he notes, "The phrase, whole law, is proof in itself what law is referred to. Whole law, means all law that had ever been given."

While his handling of other aspects of Paul's message had not yet reached the more mature understandings that the church was confronted with corporately in the 1888 experience (and confirmed by the testimony of Jesus), his pointed comments above reflect on the need we have to see how truth deals with the whole picture and not just separate, disjointed parts.

Scripture has multiple, explicit cases of the wholeness of what God has made. If we are willing to let our understanding of reality be molded by the Word, we will see how God has put things together. There are often two parts to what He has created. Each must be understood in its proper role, but never divorced from the other. For examples, consider:

•
Truth looks at the whole picture and not just separate, disjointed parts.
 •

Continued on page 7

Ellen White's testimony to his life in 1864 was, "Brethren in Vermont have overlooked the moral worth of men like the Brethren Bourdeau, Pierce, and Stone, who have a depth of experience and whose influence has been such as to gain the confidence of the community. Their industrious and consistent lives have made them daily, living preachers, and their labors have removed a great amount of prejudice and have gathered and built up. Yet brethren have not appreciated the labor of these men, while they have been pleased with that of some who will not bear to be tested and proved, and who can show but little fruit of their labor."

Testimony for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 449.

Then, in 1871 she wrote, "The prosperity of the cause of God in Minnesota is due more to the labors of Brother Pierce than to your own efforts. His labors have been a special blessing to that state. He is a man of tender conscience. The fear of God is before him. Infirmities have weighed heavily upon him, and this has led him to question whether he was in the way of his duty and to fear that God was not favoring his efforts. God loves Brother Pierce. He has but little self-esteem, and he fears and doubts and dreads labor; for the thought is constantly upon his mind that he is not worthy or capable to help others. If he would overcome timidity and possess more confidence that God would be with him and strengthen him he would be much more happy and a greater blessing to others. In the life of Brother Pierce there has been a failure to read character. He believed others to be as honest as himself, and in some cases has been deceived. He has not the discernment that some have....In his age and feebleness Brother Pierce may be imposed upon, yet all should esteem him highly for his work's sake. He commands the love and tenderest sympathy of his brethren, for he is a conscientious, God-fearing man.

"God loves Sister Pierce. She is one of the timid, fearing ones, conscientious in the performance of her duty; and she will receive a reward when Jesus comes if she is faithful to the end. She has not made a display of her virtues, she has been retiring, one of the more silent ones; yet her life has been useful; she has blessed many by her influence. Sister Pierce has not much self-esteem and self-confidence. She has many fears, yet does not come under the head of the fearful and unbelieving, who will find no place in the kingdom of God....Those who possess the qualifications here enumerated {in the Sermon on the Mount} will not only be blessed of God here in this life, but will be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality in His kingdom."

Testimony for the Church, Vol. 2, pp. 629-631.

Stephen Pierce Mentioned in the Spirit of Prophecy

In This Issue

Stephen Pierce led the way to a vital understanding of truth. One of the reasons that there are so many voices today, each proclaiming, "This is the way. Walk ye in it!", and that the ways proclaimed are all different, is that there are so many frames of reference in which truth is set, that the truth is wrested and distorted to fit the frame. Stephen Pierce was one of the early Advent pioneers who set forth the principle of including the whole truth in an understanding of truth. This principle seems too simple to be profound, yet it is vital. When partial truth is proclaimed as the whole truth, ignoring a vital part of the truth, then untruth is proclaimed. In this issue, this principle of taking the whole truth as truth is highlighted. A guest article from Elder Leroy Moore, pastor of the Northport and Inchelium churches, WA, is inserted as a loose leaflet. Elder Moore focuses on the fact that the different parts of truth are characteristically paradoxical. The natural man would not see that these paradoxical parts of truth are essential to each other.

1 John 4:16

GOD IS LOVE

*by Elder Stephen Pierce
1804-1883*

Perhaps there is no plain, simple expression of Scripture more difficult to understand than this. If God is infinite in each of his attributes, why does not Inspiration say, God is goodness; God is justice; or God is mercy, as well as, God is love. But no such expressions are found. Therefore, we conclude that love is the source from which all other divine characteristics originate, or the foundation of them all, although there are other attributes not necessarily connected with it; as wisdom, knowledge, power, etc. From a variety of scriptures it is evident that all goodness in finite beings proceeds from love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10. Therefore love must be the source of all goodness.

If further evidence is required, we refer the reader to the two great commandments enjoining upon us the duty of loving God with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves, upon which hang all the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:37-40); also to the saying of the wise man, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13. No further evidence is necessary to show that all good acts of created beings proceed from love. How, then, can it be otherwise with the acts of the Creator? The execution of justice upon the sinner may not originate directly in love to the offender upon whom it is to be executed; but it proceeds from a universal love of all, or more especially a love of right or impartiality. From it originates also pity or compassion. It is that from which springs the attribute of mercy, so necessary in the salvation of lost men.

Then if all other excellent moral principles originate from love, it is far greater than any other which human beings can possess (1 Cor. 13), it being perfection itself,— "the bond of perfectness." Col. 3:14. Hence we clearly see the force of the expression, "God is love," in its infinite magnitude; for love is the leading characteristic of an infinite being.

The love of God extends to all his creatures. We learn from his word that his parental love, or guardian care, is over all that have life. Even the fishes of the sea are the beneficiaries of divine Providence. (Psalm 104:25-28 quoted)....

He loves and cares for a lost world of human intelligences. "God so loved the world [a race of rebel sinners], that he gave his only begotten Son [the darling object of his affections], that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:7,8. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" but Jesus died for his enemies, to rescue them from eternal destruction. Not for a part merely; he tasted death for every man. Heb. 2:9. The invitation is universal. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:22. The gospel of Christ, which is the richest production of this excellent characteristic, is called "the mystery of God." 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 10:7. The gospel will soon be finished, but that love which devised and achieved it will ever remain a mystery to angels and men. Here is a miracle of love which caused all unfallen created beings to marvel, which even the angels desire to look into. 1 Pet. 1:12.

*We understand by the language
of John 3:16
that Christ's love for sinners
is inexpressible;
but his love for his people
is inconceivable. It "passeth knowl-
edge." Eph. 3:19.
It is so deep and boundless that the
wisdom of all
created beings can never fathom
or comprehend it.*

Continued on Page 6

Stephen Pierce...

*Hesitant.
Helpful.*

Born in Cavendish, Vermont, in 1804, Stephen Pierce was led by God step by step to have a part as one of the leading pioneers in the early years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Growing up in Vermont, he became acquainted with Almira Tarbell, daughter of Oliver Tarbell, Esq., who was also born in Cavendish, November 22, 1806. She joined the Baptist Church in 1831, and after their marriage, they continued members of the Baptist Church. He believed the Millerite view of Christ's literal second coming, and took part with James and Ellen White and Joseph Bates in the Sabbath Conferences of 1848-1850 in trying to come to an understanding of truth.

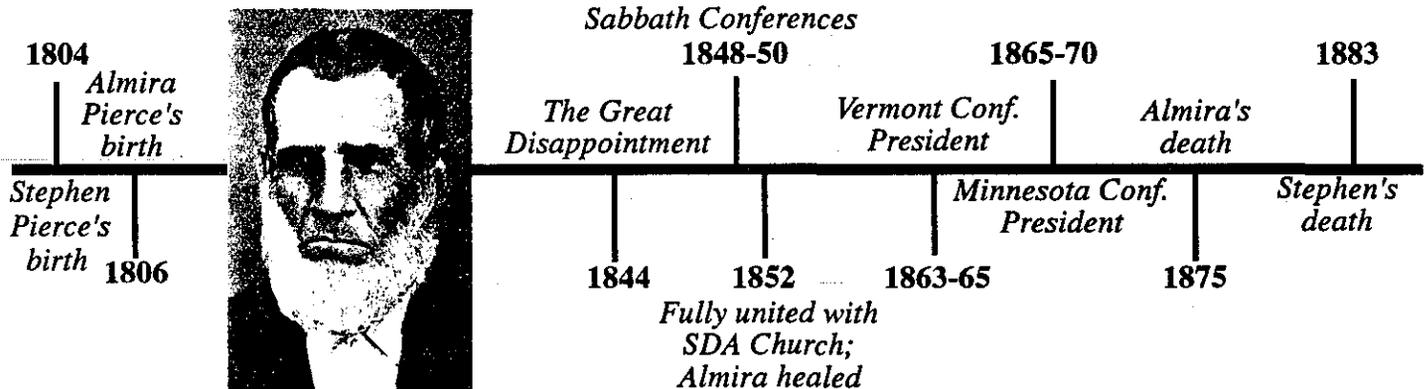
In 1851, Ellen White wrote a letter to "Dear Brother Pierce" with some counsel of encouragement and that he should not follow his feelings or be too exclusive.

"I saw Brother Pierce would often try to talk the truth; if he did not have that liberty and success, that freedom he anticipated, he settled down, [thinking] that God did not call him to that work. Now, if it had not been for this, Brother Pierce might have been more useful than he has been. All, every one of God's called and chosen servants, have had just such times, and if they had followed their feelings, would have given up, [thinking] that that was not the work God had given them to do. But the servants of God will always have obstacles to surmount. But do not yield up readily; keep trying, and plow your way through the darkness. Look away to Jesus; depend on Him entirely. You follow feelings too much, and if you feel clouds come over you, you let it influence you too much. Feeling is as unsafe a guide as you can follow. You make altogether too much of a happy flight of feeling or a shouting time. These times will come, but they are not always an undoubted evidence that we are right. You have made too much of these seasons, and in some of them there has been a fanatical spirit not in accordance with the spirit of truth. I saw that there was a more useful place for your gifts to be occupied where they can move and stir souls. Now is the time for God's people not to be in a corner, not where they have been over and over, but where their gifts are new.... Brother Pierce, you have been silent too much; too much shut up with yourself... your gift is needed." *Manuscript Release No. 1339.*

Early in 1852 Stephen and Almira Pierce took their stand on present truth. He stated, "We were then members of the Baptist Church, in a backslidden state, into which we had fallen, for the reason, that we did not receive our portion of meat in due season, and could find no truth applicable to the time, except 2 Tim. 3:1-5, hence, you will see, we were not in the second angel's message. Still, for these seven years, to us there has not been a more palpable truth, than that the churches had fallen. But what that gloomy condition of things did portend, we found no means to know, except the scripture above quoted: or by what means to extricate ourselves we could not tell, till mercy came by the present truth. I was led to investigate, and I feel somewhat happy in the reflection that my mind was thus led to see whether these things were so." *Review and Herald*, Vol.3, Jan. 20, 1853, p. 143. He went on to express his gratitude for what the Lord had done for him and his family in sending them this last message of mercy to their doubting and despondent minds.

Almira had for many years had occasional seasons of hopeless despair, and a climax of darkness had settled on her after they had embraced the Sabbath. In 1852, when the Whites made an Eastern tour, including Vermont, Ellen became acquainted with Sister Pierce at Wolcott. "My heart was drawn out in sympathy and love for her, for I had been in a similar state of mind." Again, Brother and Sister Pierce were

Stephen Pierce Time Line



present at Panton, Vermont, where the Lord revealed Himself to Sister White in vision, and a comforting message was given her for Sister Pierce. *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, pp 169-171 gives their statements of her condition and the help Sister White was to her after the Lord had "perfectly instructed her what to do", and from that time she was in a great measure happily changed. She was able to sleep undisturbed, and did not hesitate from attending meetings, but was able to do her work. Her husband stated, "I believe this favorable change in her condition at that time to be exclusively the effect of the visions given.... Truly I have since believed there was occasion for gratitude that this gift is in the church." In his letter in the *Review and Herald* given above, his heart is overflowing: "I am scarcely able to express my thanks for what the Lord has done of late for my dear companion, who for many years has waded in darkness, and recently for some months in despondency or despair, but now is restored in a good measure to that peace, which a love for God's law imparts, and that hope which the faith of Jesus inspires. Hallelujah to God!"

From 1863 to 1865 Stephen Pierce was president of the Vermont Conference, and in the late summer of 1865, he moved to Minnesota. Recommended by the General Conference Committee to the churches there as being faithful and efficient, he served as president of the Minnesota Conference from 1865 to 1870. He was also a corresponding editor of the *Review and Herald*, listed as such on its front page from December 4, 1855, to May 28, 1861.

He later moved to Iowa, where Almira died September 26, 1875 of "congestive chill fever", at 68 years of age. Her obituary by George Butler read, "Sister Pierce was an excellent woman, a lover of truth and righteousness, one who would

not do a wrong knowingly for anything. She feared God greatly through her whole Christian life, and we cannot doubt but that like Mr. Fearing, in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, she will triumphantly enter through the gates into the city. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.'" *Review and Herald*, Jan. 13, 1876, p. 15.

After moving to South Dakota, Stephen Pierce died 8 years later of typho-malarial fever at the age of 79. His obituary in the *Review and Herald* of October 9, 1883, stated:

"He was a man of deep and genuine piety, possessing at the same time much of the precious grace of humility. The Bible was his study and delight, and he was an able expositor of its truths, seeming to have a clear understanding of many of its parts 'which are hard to be understood.'

"Bro. Pierce was ever a friend of the poor and suffering; and while he made few claims for himself, he was thoughtful of the comfort and convenience of others. His last sickness was borne with much patience, and he earnestly desired to have death come that he might be at rest. God has spoken by His Spirit that Bro. Pierce was a man of fine conscience, and the fear of the Lord has been before him. Yet at times he doubted, and feared he was not accepted of God. We have good reason to believe he will come forth at the first resurrection and share in the triumph of God's people."

Continued from page 3

H GOD IS LOVE

is love for his people is also everlasting. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me *draw* him." And this is the way they are drawn: The Holy Spirit shows the sinner something of his lost condition, and something of what God is willing to do for him; and thus wins him back to his allegiance to God.

God loves backsliders, though they are in a worse condition than that of the sinner who never was converted. But when an individual, a church, or a nation refuses mercy, though the Lord sends to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he has compassion on his people (2 Chron. 36:15), when all has been done that infinite wisdom and goodness can devise, and the sinner will not turn from his evil ways, there is no remedy, and justice must take its course. But even then the loving heart of our Heavenly Father yearns over the lost one. Listen to the words of Inspiration: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? [i.e., to the tormentors.] How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? [Admah and Zeboim were destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah. Deut. 29:23.] Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Hosea 11:8

The tender mercy and loving-kindness of the great heart of Love are further expressed in the following pathetic lament over his backslidden people: "I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies." Jer. 12:7. Such compassion might a tender parent manifest toward a reckless son, who, guilty of capital crime, has been sentenced to punishment. Read the words of Jesus, as he wept over Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. 23:37.... Why will they resist the pleadings of the Spirit of God till even infinite resources are exhausted,

and the Great Vinedresser exclaims, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, than I have not done in it?"

Though infinite justice is found in the embodiment of the divine perfections, the execution of it upon the wicked, is to the Lord, a strange work. "Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" Job 31:3. "The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." Isa. 28:21. Then this act is so inconsonant with the divine predilections, that it is called "his strange work," "his strange act." "Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel." Eze. 33:11. [*Review and Herald*, May 6, 1880, p. 293. (Concluded the following week, excerpts of which are below.)]

...It has been stated that God's love extends to all created beings. Many may consider this an erroneous assertion, supposing that there is no divine commiseration or pity exercised toward the fallen angels.... But let us see if we cannot find something in the Bible quite different from this. The prophet says (Eze. 28:12), "Son of man, *take up a lamentation* upon the king of Tyrus."... Now the description given of him, and also his residence, which was "in Eden the garden of God," where every precious stone was his covering, and he was the anointed cherub, could not possibly apply to any human being. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that reference is here made to Satan, the prince of devils. But why called the king of Tyrus, rather than the king of any other place? Because Tyrus means strength. Dr. Clarke says, "Every proper name in the Bible has a signification." Hence king of strength would signify that he was the strongest created being.

Mark the language. It is not, Son of man, take up a railing, a reproach, or even the mildest censure, upon the one who is the instigator of sin, who led angels and men to ruin, and who is the cause of all the misery and death that ever has existed or ever will exist.... Take up a lamentation, and mourn that one so high should fall so low; that one so noble should become so infamous; that one so wise should become supremely foolish; that one so perfect in character should become inexpressibly vile.... Weep over him with emotions of commiseration and grief.... Here is a manifestation of such loving pity...[,] such perfection of character as human imagination has never been able to reach.... We here come back to the great fountain from which flow streams of exhaustless blessings to everything that has life.

What shall we withhold from a God, who, though terrible in judgment, is infinite in love and compassion? How shall we make suitable returns for all his beneficence to us? Let us ardently aspire after the highest attainment in the heavenly characteristic—love.

[—written from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1880, p. 309.]

Continued from page 1

"LOOKING AT THE
WHOLE
TRUTH"

1. Body (dust of the ground) and spirit (breath of life) (Gen. 2:7; James 2:26)
2. Man and woman (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5, 6)
3. Faith and works (James 2:17, 26; Gal. 5:6)
4. Justice and mercy (Psa. 89:14)
5. Love to God and love to man (Luke 10:27; 1John 4:20)
6. Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, free and bond (and any other parts into which our human walls of partition may have divided God's whole) (Prov. 22:2; Gal. 3:28)

Our dualistic tendencies (to split things up into two) lead us to emphasize one or the other of these dimensions of reality, even to the total exclusion of one. We deeply need the holistic view of Scripture, with the beautiful and symmetrical picture it paints of the whole with its God-created parts functioning in their God-ordained ways.

But just as truly as there is a need to keep together what God has joined, so we must understand the need to keep separate what God never intended together. In our desire for the wholeness of what He has made, we must not run to the extreme of thinking that everything fits together. The devil is just as interested in joining together what God says must stay apart as he is in separating what God has united. Some examples of these are:

1. Good and evil (Gen. 2:17)
2. Believers and unbelievers, righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, temple of God and idol (2Cor. 6:14-16)
3. Truth and error (1John 4:6) (cf. 5T389)
4. God's people and the "strange woman" (Prov. 5:20; 6:24; 7:5) (Let us realize that this illicit union or fornication is primarily the spiritual adultery that describes sin from its beginning to the end; cf. Rev. 14:8; 17:4)
5. All "abominations" in Scripture describe things that don't fit; they were never intended to be, and their end is to make desolate what God has created for good.

May we accept the grace God has freely given to discern and experience more and more the wholeness of what He has put together, purified of the pollution which is the distortion of the devil, until that day when He Himself will dwell with us and all that has to do with sin will be forever separated from us. (Rev. 21:3,4) —FB

WORLDLY AND HEAVENLY INTERESTS CONTRASTED

by Stephen Pierce

Worldly men may tell us of the friendship of great men: but we will tell them of the friendship of One that sticketh closer than a brother.

They may tell us of the love of dignified associates: we will tell them of the matchless depths of a Saviour's love.

They may tell us of the wealth of splendid cities here: we will tell them of a city, the streets of which, are pure gold, like unto transparent glass. And if they have a taste for costly gems and pearls, we will show them that the walls of that city are built of jasper and its foundation garnished with all manner of precious stones, and the twelve stupendous gates each of one solid pearl.

They may tell us of the honors of men; we will tell them of the honor which comes from God only. Jesus says "If any man will serve me, him will my Father honor." Who, oh! who, can estimate or describe that honor?

They may tell us even of crowns, scepters and thrones, without any certainty of being secure for a day: we will tell them of One on whose head are many crowns, whose scepter sways the universe, and whose throne has rainbow beauties all about it, in sight like unto an emerald. And those who are nearest that throne, are they who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; while all the holy angels stand back in the rear ranks; and if they aspire after these crowns, scepters, and thrones, we will inform them what course to pursue in this life in order to become kings and priests to God and reign on the earth, not for days nor months nor years; but for a long eternity, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father, and shall die no more.

They may tell us of realms more genial on account of the more efficient rays of nature's sun: we will tell them of a realm that has no need of the sun nor of the moon; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. Oh! who would not have such possessions as these?

Review and Herald, Sept. 26, 1871, p. 117

"FATHER PIERCE"

AT THE SABBATH
CONFERENCES

"Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder [Hiram] Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, 'We can do nothing more,' the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, and I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me."

1 Selected Messages, p. 206

ELDER PIERCE ON WISDOM

Excerpts from *Review and Herald*,

Oct. 13, 1868, pp 201-3.

..."Wisdom is the *principal* thing, therefore get wisdom." If it were anything of an earthly nature, inspiration would not call it the *principal* thing; nor would the Spirit of the Lord enjoin upon us so imperatively to get it. Hence we conclude rather that it is the pearl of great price, which when a man has found, he goes and sells all that he has, and buys it. Many have done this, and even given their lives in addition to all else, to obtain the inestimable treasure.

And here we will try to present some of its winning attractions and excellent qualities.

1. The pleasantness of her paths...Prov. 3:17...
2. Her protection...Prov. 4:6...
3. The near relation she sustains to those who choose her ways...Prov. 7:4...
4. The righteousness of her principles...Prov. 8:6-8...
5. Her affectionate call to the children of men...Prov. 8:1-5...
6. What she does for those who love and seek her...Prov. 8:17...
7. Her bestowments...Prov. 8:34, 35...
8. How shall this heavenly wisdom be obtained?...Prov. 2:1-6 ...By seeking for it...[,] we should cherish a love for it, and seek without delay in order to obtain it...[,] purchase it...[,] obtained by prayer. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. Oh! that we poor Laodiceans may lay all these to heart, and move forward with such a commendable zeal that we shall obtain the blessing. Amen.

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
Fred Bischoff, Gary Foster,
Ray and Frances Foster

LOGO: Donna Wical

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