

Special

Testimonies

No. 2

1892

W58

ADVENTIST
DANGER IN ADOPTING WORLDLY POLICY IN
THE WORK OF GOD.

NOVEMBER 3, 1890, while laboring at Salamanca, N. Y., as I was in communion with God in the night season, I was taken out of and away from myself to assemblies in different States, where I bore a decided testimony of reproof and warning. In Battle Creek a council of ministers and responsible men from the publishing house and other institutions was convened, and I heard those assembled in no gentle spirit, advance sentiments and urge measures for adoption that filled me with apprehension and distress.

Years before, I had been called to pass through a similar experience, and the Lord then revealed to me many things of vital importance, and gave me warnings that must be delivered to those in peril. On the night of November 3, these warnings were brought to my mind, and I was commanded to present them before those in responsible offices of trust, and to fail not, nor be discouraged. There were laid out before me, some things which I could not comprehend; but the assurance was given me that the Lord would not allow his people to be enshrouded in the fogs of worldly skepticism and infidelity, bound up in bundles with the world; but if they would only hear and follow his voice, rendering obedience to his commandments, he would lead them above the mists of skepticism and unbelief, and place their feet upon the Rock, where they might breathe the atmosphere of security and triumph.

While engaged in earnest prayer, I was lost to everything around me; the room was filled with light, and I

was bearing a message to an assembly that seemed to be the General Conference. I was moved by the spirit of God to make a most earnest appeal; for I was impressed that great danger was before us at the heart of the work. I had been, and still was, bowed down with distress of mind and body, burdened with the thought that I must bear a message to our people at Battle Creek, to warn them against a line of action that would separate God from the publishing house.

The eyes of the Lord were bent upon the people in sorrow mingled with displeasure, and the words were spoken, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." He who wept over impenitent Israel, noting their ignorance of God, and of Christ their Redeemer, looked upon the heart of the work at Battle Creek. Great peril was about the people, but some knew it not. Unbelief and impenitence blinded their eyes, and they trusted to human wisdom in the guidance of the most important interests of the cause of God relating to the publishing work. In the weakness of human judgment, men were gathering into their finite hands the lines of control, while God's will, God's way and counsel, were not sought as indispensable. Men of stubborn, iron-like will, both in and out of the office, were confederating together, determined to drive certain measures through in accordance with their own judgment. I said to them: "You cannot do this. The control of these large interests cannot be vested wholly in those who make it manifest that they have little experience in the things of God, and have not spiritual discernment. The people of God throughout our ranks must not, because of mismanagement on the part of

erring men, have their confidence shaken in the important interests at the great heart of the work, which have a decided influence upon our churches in the United States and in foreign lands. If you lay your hand upon the publishing work, this great instrumentality of God to place your mould and superscription upon it, you will find that it will be dangerous to your own souls, and disastrous to the work of God. It will be as great a sin in the sight of God as was the sin of Uzzah when he put forth his hand to steady the ark. There are those who have entered into other men's labors, and all that God requires of them is to deal justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God, to labor conscientiously as men employed by the people to do the work entrusted to their hands. Some have failed to do this, as their works testify. Whatever may be their position, whatever their responsibility, if they have as much authority even as had Ahab, they will find that God is above them, that his sovereignty is supreme."

Let none of the workers exalt themselves, and seek to carry through their ideas without the sanction and cooperation of the people of God. They will not succeed, for God will not permit it. The foundations of the institutions among us were laid in sacrifice. They belong to the people, and all who have denied self, and made sacrifices great or small according to their ability, to bring these instrumentalities into existence, should feel that they have a special interest in them. They should not lose their interest, or become despondent in regard to the success of the work. As the perils of the last days thicken about us, they should pray more earnestly that the work may prosper. Those who have lifted burdens when the work went hard, should have a part in important councils; for they acted a part when counseling together was considered a far more solemn and

sacred matter than it is now. No confederacy should be formed with unbelievers, neither should you call together a certain chosen number who think as you do, and who will say Amen to all that you propose, while others are excluded, who you think will not be in harmony. I was shown that there was great danger of doing this.

“For the Lord spake thus unto me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. . . . To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” The world is not to be our criterion. Let the Lord work, let the Lord's voice be heard.

Those employed in any department of the work whereby the world may be transformed, must not enter into alliance with those who know not the truth. The world know not the Father or the Son, and they have no spiritual discernment as to the character of our work, as to what we shall do, or shall not do. We must obey the orders that come from above. We are not to hear the counsel or follow the plans suggested by unbelievers. Suggestions made by those who know not the work that God is doing for this time, will be such as to weaken the power of the instrumentalities of God. By accepting such suggestions, the counsel of Christ is set at naught.

There is cherished altogether too little fear, love, and reverence for the God of heaven. There is far too little faith in the workings of his providence in matters concerning his cause, with those who are connected with the active management of the publishing house. Why is this? Because they are not spiritually wise. The

great peril is in the fact that men live so far apart from Jesus that they fail to discern his voice, receive his counsel, keep his way, and honor his name; they become self-exalted, and walk in the sparks of their own kindling. Because of this they fail to understand the devices of Satan, and are led to adopt measures that appear right, although they are instigated by the artful enemy of God and man, to place a human mould upon the work, dishonoring the name of God

As far back as 1882, testimonies of the deepest interest on points of vital importance, were presented to our people, in regard to the work, and the spirit that should characterize the workers. Because these warnings have been neglected, the same evils that they pointed out have been cherished by many, hindering the progress of the work, and imperiling many souls. Satan is wide awake, and while men sleep, he sows his tares. In completing the work of rebellion, Satan is represented as a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour. Those who are self-sufficient, who do not feel the necessity of constant prayer and watchfulness, will be ensnared. Through living faith and earnest prayer the sentinels of God must become partakers of the divine nature, or they will be found professedly working for God, but in reality giving their service to the prince of darkness. Because their eyes are not anointed with the heavenly eye-salve their understanding will be blinded, and they will be ignorant of the wonderfully specious devices of the enemy. Their vision will be perverted through their dependence on human wisdom, which is foolishness in the sight of God.

The eye of the Lord is upon all the work, all the plans, all the imaginings of every mind; he sees beneath the surface of things, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. There is not a deed of darkness, not a plan, not an imagination of the heart, not a thought of

the mind, but that he reads it as an open book. Every act, every word, every motive, is faithfully chronicled in the records by the great Heart-searcher, who said, "I know thy works."

I was shown that the follies of Israel in the days of Samuel will be repeated among the people of God to-day, unless there is greater humility, less confidence in self, and more trust in the Lord God of Israel, the Ruler of the people. It is only as divine power is combined with human effort that the work will abide the test. When men lean no longer on men or on their own judgment, but make God their trust, it will be made manifest in every instance by meekness of spirit, by less talking and much more praying, by the exercise of caution in their plans and movements. Such men will reveal the fact that their dependence is in God, that they have the mind of Christ.

Again and again I have been shown that the people of God in these last days could not be safe in trusting in men, and making flesh their arm. The mighty cleaver of truth has taken them out of the world as rough stones that are to be hewed and squared and polished for the heavenly building. They must be hewed by the prophets with reproof, warning, admonition, and advice, that they may be fashioned after the divine Pattern; this is the specified work of the Comforter, to transform heart and character, that men may keep the way of the Lord.

I now raise my voice in warning; for you are in danger. The people are to know when peril is threatening them; they are not to be left in darkness. "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way,

to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sins, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man that the righteous man sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul."

Since 1845 the dangers of the people of God have from time to time been laid open before me, and I have been shown the perils that would thicken about the remnant in the last days. These perils have been revealed to me down to the present time. Great scenes are soon to open before us. The Lord is coming with power and great glory. And Satan knows that his usurped authority will soon be forever at an end. His last opportunity to gain control of the world is now before him, and he will make most decided efforts to accomplish the destruction of the inhabitants of the earth. Those who believe the truth must be as faithful sentinels on the watchtower, or Satan will suggest specious reasonings to them, and they will give utterance to opinions that will betray sacred, holy trusts. The enmity of Satan against good, will be manifested more and more, as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion, and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe.

In a vision given in 1880 I asked, "Where is the

security for the people of God in these days of peril?" The answer was, "Jesus maketh intercession for his people, though Satan standeth at his right hand to resist him." "And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" As man's Intercessor and Advocate, Jesus will lead all who are willing to be led, saying, "Follow me upward, step by step, where the clear light of the Sun of Righteousness shines."

But not all are following the light. Some are moving away from the safe path, which at every step is a path of humility. God has committed to his servants a message for this time; but this message does not in every particular coincide with the ideas of all the leading men, and some criticise the message and the messengers. They dare even to reject the words of reproof sent to them from God through his Holy Spirit.

What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside his warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom? In the Judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences he has given you that God was in the work? "By their fruits ye shall know them." I would not now rehearse before you the evidences given in the past two years of the dealings of God by his chosen servants; but the present evidence of his working is revealed to you, and you are now under obligation to believe. You cannot neglect God's messages of warning, you cannot reject them or treat them lightly, but at the peril of infinite loss. Cavilling, ridicule, and misrepresentation can be indulged in only at the expense of the debasement of your own souls. The use of such weapons does not gain precious victories for you, but rather cheapens the mind, and

separates the soul from God. Sacred things are brought down to the level of the common, and a condition of things is created that pleases the prince of darkness, and grieves away the Spirit of God. Caviling and criticism leave the soul as devoid of the dew of grace as the hills of Gilboa were destitute of rain. Confidence cannot be placed in the judgment of those who indulge in ridicule and misrepresentation. No weight can be attached to their advice or resolutions. You must bear the divine credentials before you make decided movements to shape the working of God's cause.

To accuse and criticise those whom God is using, is to accuse and criticise the Lord, who has sent them. All need to cultivate their religious faculties, that they may have a right discernment of religious things. Some have failed to distinguish between pure gold and mere glitter, between the substance and the shadow.

The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means; the seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers. When by thorough confession, you destroy the root of bitterness, you will see light in God's light. Without this thorough work you will never clear your souls. You need to study the word of God with a purpose, not to confirm your own ideas, but to bring them to be trimmed, to be condemned or approved, as they are or are not in harmony with the word of God. The Bible should be your constant companion. You should study the Testimonies, not to pick out certain sentences to use as you see fit, to strengthen your asser-

tions, while you disregard the plainest statements given to correct your course of action.

There has been a departure from God among us, and the zealous work of repentance and return to our first love essential to restoration to God and regeneration of heart has not yet been done. Infidelity has been making its inroads into our ranks; for it is the fashion to depart from Christ, and give place to skepticism. With many the cry of the heart has been, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Baal, Baal, is the choice. The religion of many among us will be the religion of apostate Israel, because they love their own way, and forsake the way of the Lord. The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works. The love of Christ is the force and power of every message for God that ever fell from human lips. What kind of a future is before us, if we shall fail to come into the unity of the faith?

When we are united in the unity for which Christ prayed, this long controversy that has been kept up through Satanic agency will end, and we shall not see men framing plans after the order of the world because they have not spiritual eye-sight to discern spiritual things. They now see men as trees walking, and they need the divine touch, that they may see as God sees, and work as Christ worked. Then will Zion's watchmen unitedly sound the trumpet in clearer, louder notes; for they will see the sword coming, and realize

the danger in which the people of God are placed.

You will need to make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. We are surrounded by the lame and halting in the faith, and you are to help them, not by halting yourselves, but by standing, like men who have been tried and proven, in principle firm as a rock. I know that a work must be done for the people, or many will not be prepared to receive the light of the angel sent down from heaven to lighten the whole earth with his glory. Do not think that you will be found as vessels unto honor in the time of the latter rain, to receive the glory of God, if you are lifting up your souls unto vanity, speaking perverse things, in secret cherishing roots of bitterness. The frown of God will certainly be upon every soul who cherishes and nurtures these roots of dissension, and possesses a spirit so unlike the Spirit of Christ.

As the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, I seemed to be present in one of your councils. One of your number rose; his manner was very decided and earnest as he held up a paper before you. I could read plainly the heading of the paper; it was the *American Sentinel*. Criticisms were then passed upon the paper and the character of the articles therein published. Those in council pointed to certain passages, declaring that this must be cut out, and that must be changed. Strong words were uttered in criticism of the methods of the paper, and a strong unchristlike spirit prevailed. Voices were decided and defiant.

My guide gave me words of warning and reproof to speak to those who took part in this proceeding, who were not slow to utter their accusations and condemnation. In substance this was the reproof given: The Lord has not presided at this council, and there is a spirit of strife among the counselors. The minds and hearts of these men are not under the controlling in-

fluence of the Spirit of God. Let the adversaries of our faith be the ones to suggest and develop such plans as you are now discussing. From the world's point of view some of these plans are not objectionable; but they are not to be adopted by those who have had the light of heaven. The light which God has given should be respected, not only for your own safety, but also for the safety of the church of God. The steps now being taken by the few cannot be followed by the remnant people of God. Your course cannot be sustained by the Lord. It is made evident by your course of action that you have laid your plans without the aid of Him who is mighty in counsel; but the Lord will work. Those who have criticised the work of God need to have their eyes anointed, for they have felt mighty in their own strength; but there is One who can bind the arm of the mighty, and bring to naught the counsels of the prudent.

The message we have to bear is not a message that men need cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. As those who have made solemn vows to God, and who have been commissioned as the messengers of Christ, as stewards of the mysteries of the grace of God, we are under obligation to declare faithfully the whole counsel of God. We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and made us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. The mightiest conflicts are involved in the furtherance of the message, and the results of its promulgation are of moment to both heaven and earth.

The controversy between the two great powers of good and evil is soon to be ended; but to the time of its close, there will be continual and sharp contests. We should now purpose, as did Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, that we will be true to principle, come what may. The flaming fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, did not cause these faithful servants of God to turn aside from allegiance to the truth. They stood firm in the time of trial, and were cast into the furnace; and they were not forsaken of God. The form of the Fourth was seen walking with them in the flames, and they came forth not having even the smell of fire upon their garments.

The den of lions did not deter Daniel from a steady adherence to duty. He did not hide his purpose or lower his colors because death threatened him if he stood faithful to his God. Three times a day, in the face of the king's decree, he sought his Lord in his chamber, with his window open toward Jerusalem. He was cast into the den of lions, but God delivered him.

Let us look at the case of Elijah. The time has come when he must meet his mortal enemy, the cruel Ahab, the despot of Israel, the apostate from the religion of his fathers. In anger the king inquires, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Does Elijah weaken before the king? Does he cringe and cower, and resort to flattery in order to mollify the feelings of the enraged ruler? Israel has perverted her way, and forsaken the path of allegiance to God, and now shall the prophet, to preserve his life, betray sacred, holy trusts? Does he prophesy smooth things to please the king, and to obtain his favor? Will he evade the issue? Will he conceal from the king the true reason why the judgments of God are falling upon the land of Israel? No; as the messenger of God he must proclaim the truth, just such truth as the occasion demands. He carries a great

weight of sorrow on account of the apostasy of Israel. He must hold up before them their defection, that they may humble themselves in the sight of the Lord; that his fierce anger may be turned away from them. Elijah faces the enraged king, and answers, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

~~To-day the world is full of flatterers and dissemblers;~~
but God forbid that those who claim to be guardians of sacred trusts, shall betray the interests of God's cause through the insinuating suggestions and devices of the enemy of all righteousness.

There is no time now to range ourselves on the side of the transgressors of God's law, to see with their eyes, to hear with their ears, and to understand with their perverted senses. We must press together. We must labor to become a unit, to be holy in life and pure in character. Let those who profess to be servants of the living God ~~no longer bow down to the idol of men's opinions, no longer be slaves to any shameful lust, no longer bring a polluted offering to the Lord a sin-stained soul.~~

ELLEN G. WHITE.

SPECIAL TESTIMONY TO OUR MINISTERS.—NO. 2.

Dear Brethren in the Ministry :—

We feel it our duty to again send you some selections from recent writings from Sister E. G. White, that have not as yet been in print, and also to call attention to some very important extracts from writings which have already been published. We do this to bring the truths contained therein fresh to your minds ; for they are worthy of most careful consideration.

There never was a time when the responsibility of the gospel ministry was so great as at present. Few really appreciate this. As a people we have received great light, and therefore our responsibility is proportionately great. Late developments indicate that we are entering on a new era in our work. The events for which we have been looking as indicative of the closing scenes of this world's history, are here. By what has already taken place in the line of religious legislation, it is not difficult to ascertain our position. The image to the beast is virtually formed : it only remains that the further specification of the prophecy as to what it is to do, shall fully develop. The spirit of the dragon is quite manifest, and nothing is more certain than that the time has come when everything around us will move with a rapidity before unknown in our work.

We see also, wherever we look, white fields, ready for the harvest. At home and abroad the calls for help are so numerous that we cannot begin to fill them. Our

soul is greatly burdened over this matter, even to distress, because, professing to be representatives of "the last message of mercy" in this solemn time, our lives and actions do not correspond with our profession. Our people are far from being what they ought to be, and I fear that we as ministers are greatly to blame for such a state of things as we find among the churches. We have been so slow and hesitating, and so full of doubt and darkness, that we many times find our lay brethren much more ready to respond to the testimony of the Lord than do many in the ministry. This is sad, very sad, indeed. There needs to be a thorough waking up, and earnest, heartfelt repentance, that we may get into a position where God can work with us.

On every side we have evidences that the message is rising, and about to go with power. The angel spoken of in Rev. 18 : 1, "having great power ; and the earth was lightened with his glory," is about to do his work. ~~But it is possible that we may be so blinded by sin that we will no more discern the work of God at this time than did the Jews in the days of Christ.~~ The light was there, but they saw it not. The power of God was manifested, but their hearts were shut against it, and they could not receive it.

For three years the Spirit of God has been especially appealing to our ministry and people, to cast aside their cloak of self-righteousness and to seek the righteousness which is of God by faith in Christ Jesus ; but O, ~~how slow and hesitating we have been!~~ Instead of feeling a poverty of spirit, and instead of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, we have felt rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing. The testimony and earnest entreaties of the Spirit of God have not found that response in our hearts that God designed they should. In some instances, we ~~have felt free even to criticise the testimony and warn-~~ings sent by God for our good. **This is a serious matter.**

What is the result ? — It is a coldness of heart, a barrenness of soul, that is truly alarming. So manifest is this that in many instances our ministrations are a source of discouragement and darkness. The worst of all is, that the situation is not realized. There is a feeling of ease and carnal security. With many, even though their work is worse than no work at all to the Conference, perfect freedom is felt in reporting full time or nearly so, and it is expected that the auditing committee will deal liberally with them. Such work is a source of much discouragement to the churches and the Conference, and has a tendency to restrain the liberalities of the brethren. Thus one evil follows another. These professed laborers for God are scattering, instead of gathering with Christ.

Is it not time to raise a voice of warning ? Is it not time for each individual to take these things home to himself, and ask, “Is it I ?” We are generally so ready to apply reproofs and warnings to some one else, or to feel that the message is of little consequence, and so pass it by unheeded. If we had followed the instruction God has been giving us all these years, we would not now be in the condition which we have described. I will here append a few extracts from testimonies that have been in circulation among us for years :—

“The word of God was preached by his ministers in early days ‘in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.’ The hearts of men were stirred by the proclamation of the gospel. Why is it that the preaching of the truth has now so little power to move the people ? Is God less willing to bestow his blessings upon the laborers in his cause in this age than in the apostles’ day ? . . .

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more to-day. Moral darkness, like a funeral pall, covers the earth. All manner of false doctrines, heresies, and Satanic deceptions are misleading the minds of men,

Without the Spirit and power of God, it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth. . . .

“Many of our ministers, in their discourses, dwell too largely upon theory, and not enough on practical godliness. They have an intellectual knowledge of the truth, but their hearts are untouched with the genuine fervor of the love of Christ. Many have gained by the study of our publications a knowledge of the arguments that sustain the truth, but they have not become Bible students for themselves. They are not constantly seeking for a deeper and more thorough knowledge of the plan of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures. While preaching to others, they are becoming dwarfs in religious growth. They do not often go before God to plead for his Spirit and grace, that they may rightly present Christ to the world. . . .

“If we have the spirit of Christ, we shall work as he worked; we shall catch the very ideas of the Man of Nazareth, and present them to the people. If, in the place of formal professors and unconverted ministers, we were indeed followers of Christ, we would present the truth with such meekness and fervor, and would so exemplify it in our lives, that the world would not be continually questioning whether we believe what we profess. The message borne in the love of Christ, with the worth of souls constantly before us, would win even from worldlings the decision, ‘They are like Jesus.’ . . .

“Satan’s snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people. Lightness, vanity, love of ease and pleasure, selfishness, and impurity, are increasing among us. There is need now of men who are firm and fearless in declaring the whole counsel of God; men who will not sleep as do others, but watch and be sober. Knowing as I do the great lack of holiness and power with our ministers, I am deeply pained to see the efforts for self-exaltation. If they could but see Jesus as he is, and themselves as they are, so weak, so inefficient, so unlike their Master, they would say, If my name may be written in the obscurest part of the book of life, it is enough for me, so unworthy am I of his notice. . . .

“Heaven is not closed against the fervent prayers of the righteous. Elijah was a man subject to like pas-

sions as we are, yet the Lord heard, and in a most striking manner answered, his petitions. The only reason for our lack of power with God is to be found in ourselves. If the inner life of many who profess the truth were presented before them, they would not claim to be Christians. They are not growing in grace. A hurried prayer is offered now and then, but there is no real communion with God." — *Testimony for the Church*, "No. 31, pp. 153-157.

"I looked to see the humility of soul that should ever sit as a fitting garment upon our ministers, but it was not upon them. I looked for the deep love for souls that the Master said they should possess, but they had it not. I listened for the earnest prayers offered with tears and anguish of soul because of the impenitent and unbelieving in their own homes and in the church, but heard them not. I listened for the appeals made in the demonstration of the Spirit, but these were missing. I looked for the burden-bearers, who in such a time as this should be weeping between the porch and the altar, crying, Spare thy people, Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach; but I heard no such supplications. A few earnest, humble ones were seeking the Lord. At some of these meetings one or two ministers felt the burden, and were weighed down as a cart beneath sheaves. But a large majority of the ministers had no more sense of the sacredness of their work than children. . . .

"There are many flippant talkers of Bible truth, whose souls are as barren of the Spirit of God as were the hills of Gilboa of dew and rain. But what we need is men who are thoroughly converted themselves, and can teach others how to give their hearts to God. The power of godliness has almost ceased to be in our churches. And why is this? The Lord is still waiting to be gracious; he has not closed the windows of heaven. We have separated ourselves from him. We need to fix the eye of faith upon the cross, and believe that Jesus is our strength, our salvation.

"As we see so little burden of the work resting upon ministers and people, we inquire, When the Lord comes, shall he find faith on the earth? It is faith that is lacking. God has an abundance of grace and power awaiting our demand. But the reason we do not feel our great need of it is because we look to ourselves and not to Jesus. We do not exalt Jesus and rely wholly upon his merits," — *Idem*, pp. 161-163.

This is no unmeaning language. This testimony has been with us for ten years, but how has it been heeded? Had we sought the Lord as we are here exhorted to do, then the situation would have been far different from what it now is. The past ten years have not witnessed the advancement and growth in the work that God designed there should be. The success that has attended our ministry has not been what God would have been pleased to have it. Comparatively few persons have entered the ministry during this period. In some of our large Conferences, there are years that pass without a single ordination to the gospel ministry. This is not as it should be, considering the great demand for laborers. Take careful note of the following paragraph : —

“Great demands are everywhere made for the light which God has given to his people ; but these calls are for the most part in vain. Who feels the burden of consecrating himself to God and to his work ? Where are the young men who are qualifying themselves to answer these calls ? Vast territories are opened before us, where the light of truth has never penetrated. Whichever way we look we see rich harvests ready to be gathered, but there are none to do the reaping. Prayers are offered for the triumph of the truth. What do your prayers mean, brethren ? What kind of success do you desire ?—a success to suit your indolence, your selfish indulgence ?—a success that will sustain and support itself without any effort on your part ?” — *Idem*, p. 199.

Yes, there never was a time in our experience when there were so many doors and hearts open for the truth, nor when there were so many calls for help as now ; but O, how poorly prepared we are to respond to these calls ! This is a sad state of affairs. But it cannot continue this way ; there must be a change, there will be a change.

In a recent testimony I read these words : —

“Something great and decisive is to take place, and that right early. If any delay, the character of God and his throne will be compromised. The armory of heaven

is open ; all the universe of God and its equipments are ready. . . . Every movement in the universe of heaven is to prepare the world for the great crisis. Intensity is taking possession of every earthly element ; and as a people who have had great light and wonderful knowledge, many of them are represented by the five sleeping virgins with their lamps, but no oil in their vessels ; cold, senseless, with a feeble, waning piety. While a new life is being diffused and is springing up from beneath and taking fast hold of all Satan's agencies, preparatory to the last great conflict and struggle, a new light and life and power is descending from on high, and taking possession of God's people who are not dead, as many now are, in trespasses and sins." — "Appeal to Ministers and Conference Committees," pp. 38, 39.

The time has already come when new light and life and power are descending from on high, and taking possession of God's people. We know this to be so, for we have been witnesses to this fact in recent meetings. The onward movement has already begun. That the message is now rising there can be no question.

This is the time, too, when the message to the Laodicean church will do its work, and there will be more of a shaking than we have seen as yet. "Some will not bear this strait testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." Please read carefully the chapter on page 131 in "Early Writings," entitled "The Shaking." The very experience here described is that which we may expect to have from now on to the end. My dear brethren in the ministry, shall we be found among the following : "I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God" ? or shall we be found among another class ? described thus : "Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud."

We are in danger. We have been repeatedly told, as

ministers, in extracts quoted in this article, that we are not in possession of that interceding power with God that we ought to have. Will we now be admonished? will we now seek God? We are so much in need of efficient, earnest, God-fearing laborers! Everywhere fields already white are ready for the harvest. The work in our home Conferences is by no means finished. No, no; what we have already done may in truth be said to be only a beginning. Then think of the vast numbers of people in other fields, reaching out their hands to us for help. For many of these fields we have as yet done nothing. This is a matter of serious importance. Truly, here is need for humiliation of soul; need for the servants of God to weep between the porch and the altar. What can we do or say that will cause an awakening from sleep to a full realization of the situation? The blessing of God is "*waiting our demand and reception.*" We need not grope our way in doubt and darkness.

In the following testimony our dangers are again pointed out to us in a way that we cannot misunderstand. The question is, Will we take heed to the counsel of God, and seek him with all the heart, or will we treat these warnings with the neglect and indifference that we have many times in the past? God is in earnest with us, and we must not be slow to respond.

O. A. OLSEN.

REASONS FOR INEFFICIENCY, AND THE REMEDY.

~~I would address those who preach the word: "The entrance of thy word giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple."~~ All the advantages and privileges that may be multiplied for your benefit, that you should be educated and trained, rooted and grounded in the truth, will be no real help to you personally unless the mind and heart is opened so that truth shall find entrance, ~~and you make a conscientious surrender of every habit and practice, and every sin, that has closed the door against Jesus.~~ Let the light from Christ search every dark corner of the soul; with earnest determination adopt a right course of action. ~~If you hold onto a wrong course, as many of you are now doing: if the truth does not work in you with transforming power, so that you obey it from the heart, because you love its pure principles, be sure that for you the truth will lose its vitalizing power, and sin will strengthen.~~ This is why many are not efficient agents for the Master. ~~They are constantly making provision to please and glorify themselves, or they cherish lust in the heart.~~ True, they assent to the law of ten commandments, and many teach the law in theory; but they do not cherish its principles. They do not obey the command of God to be pure, to love God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves. While constantly living a lie, can such have strength? Can they have confidence? Will such become efficient workers for God?

The Saviour prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." But if the re-

ceiver of Bible knowledge makes no change in his habits or practices to correspond to the light of truth, what then? The spirit is warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit; and one of these must conquer. If the truth sanctifies the soul, sin is hated and shunned, because Christ is accepted as an honored guest. But Christ cannot share a divided heart; sin and Jesus are never in co-partnership. He who accepts the truth in sincerity, who eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God, has eternal life. "The words that I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit and they are life." When the receiver of truth co-operates with the Holy Spirit, he will go weighted with the burden of the message to souls; he will never be merely a sermonizer, He will enter heart and soul into the great work of seeking and saving that which is lost. Practicing the religion of Christ, he will accomplish a good work in winning souls.

Every believer is under bonds to God to be spiritually minded, keeping himself in the channel of light, that he may let his light shine to the world. When all those who are engaged in the sacred work of the ministry shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, they will hate sin and all selfishness. A moral renovation is constantly going on; as they continue looking to Jesus, they become conformed to his image, and are found complete in him, not having their own righteousness, but the righteousness that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The great advantage of the ministerial institutes are not half appreciated. They are rich in opportunities, but do not accomplish half what they should, because those who attend them do not practice the truth which is presented before them in clear lines. Many who are explaining the Scriptures to others have not conscientiously and entirely surrendered mind and heart and life to the control of the Holy Spirit. They love sin, and

cling to it. I have been shown that impure practices, pride, selfishness, self-glorying, have closed the door of the heart, even of those who teach the truth to others, so that the frown of God is upon them. Cannot some renovating power take hold of them? Have they fallen a prey to a moral disease which is incurable because they themselves refuse to be cured? O that every one who labors in word and doctrine would heed the words of Paul, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

How my heart goes out in rejoicing for those who walk in humility of mind, who love and fear God. They possess a power far more valuable than learning or eloquence. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and his love and fear are like a thread of gold uniting the human agent to the divine. Thus all the movements of life are simplified. When the children of God are struggling with temptation, battling against the passions of the natural heart, faith connects the soul with the only One who can give help, and they are overcomers.

May the Lord work upon the hearts of those who have received great light, that they may depart from all iniquity. Behold the cross of Calvary. There is Jesus, who gave his life, not that men might continue in sin, not that they may have license to break the law of God, but that through this infinite sacrifice they may be saved from all sin. Said Christ, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified," by the perfection of his example. Will those who preach the truth to others be sanctified by the truth themselves? Will they love the Lord with heart and mind and soul, and their neighbor as themselves? Will they meet the highest standard of Christian character? Are their tastes elevated, their appetites controlled? Are they cherishing only

noble sentiments, strong, deep sympathy, and pure purposes, that they may indeed be laborers together with God? We must have the Holy Spirit to sustain us in the conflict; for “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

ELLEN G. WHITE.

Melbourne, Australia, July 3, 1892.

NEED OF DIVINE POWER AND WISDOM.

WE have been asked why it is that there is so little power in the churches, why there is so little efficiency among our teachers. The answer is that it is because known sin in various forms is cherished among the professed followers of Christ, and the conscience becomes hardened by long violation. The answer is that men do not walk with God, but separate company with Jesus, and as a result we see manifested in the church selfishness, covetousness, pride, strife, contention, hard-heartedness, licentiousness, and evil practices. Even among those who preach the sacred word of God, this state of evil is found, and unless there is thorough reformation among those who are unholy and unsanctified, it would be better that such men should leave the ministry, and choose some other occupation, where their unregenerate thoughts would not bring disaster upon the people of God.

The apostle exhorts the brethren, saying, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” O what a day is before us! What sif-

ing will there be among those who claim to be the children of God! The unjust will be found among the just. Those who have great light and who have not walked in it, will have darkness corresponding to the light they have despised. We have need to heed the lesson contained in the words of Paul, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." The enemy is diligently working to see who he can add to the ranks of apostasy but the Lord is soon coming, and ere long every case will be decided for eternity. Those whose works correspond with the light graciously given them, will be numbered on the Lord's side.

We are waiting and watching for the grand and awful scene which will close up this earth's history. But we are not simply to be waiting; we are to be vigilantly working with reference to this solemn event. The living church of God will be waiting, watching, and working. None are to stand in a neutral position. All are to represent Christ in active, earnest effort to save perishing souls. Will the church fold her hands now? Shall we sleep as is represented in the parable of the foolish virgins? Every precaution is to be taken now; for hap-hazard work will result in spiritual declension, and that day will overtake us as a thief. The mind needs to be strengthened to look deep and discern the reasons of our faith. The soul-temple is to be purified by the truth; for only the pure in heart will be able to stand against the wiles of Satan.

We are not to copy the world's practices, and yet we are not to stand aloof from the people of the world; for our light must shine amid the moral darkness that covers the earth. There is a sad lack in the church, of Christian love one for another. This love is easily extinguished, and yet without it we cannot have Christian fellowship, nor love for those for whom Christ died.

Our brethren need to take heed to the injunction
“But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” We shall have to meet crooked elements in the world and in the church. Men will come claiming to have great light; but those who have experience in the cause of God, will see that what they present as light is great darkness. Men of this class will have to be treated according to the specifications of the word of God. Those who are in error may become excited in advocating their views, but those who are walking in the light can afford to be calm, gentle with the erring, “apt to teach,” making manifest the fact that they have asked and received wisdom of God. They will have no occasion to move excitedly, but occasion to move wisely, patiently, “in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”

“The time has come when those who are rooted and grounded in the truth may manifest their firmness and decision, may make known the fact that they are unmoved by the sophistry, maxims or fables of the ignorant and wavering. Without foundation men will make statements with all the positiveness of truth; but it is of no use to argue with them concerning their spurious assertions. The best way to deal with error is to present the truth, and leave wild ideas to die out for want of notice. Contrasted with truth, the weakness of error is made apparent to every intelligent mind. The more the erroneous assertions of opposers, and of those who rise up among us to deceive souls, are repeated, the better the cause of error is served. The more publicity

is given to the suggestions of Satan, the better pleased is his Satanic majesty ; for unsanctified hearts will be prepared to receive the chaff that he provides for them. We shall have to meet difficulties of this order even in the church. Men will make a world of an atom and an atom of a world.

Cannot we do more for the churches, that they may be aroused to act upon the light already given ? God has appointed to every man his work. The lowliest as well as the mightiest have been endowed with influence that should tell on the Lord's side, and they devote their talent to him, each working in his appointed place of duty. The Lord expects every one to do his best. When light shines into the heart, he expects our work, to correspond with our light, to be in accordance with the measure of the fullness of Christ which we have received. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge we shall have, the more power we shall acquire to do more and better work. Our talents are not our own, they are the Lord's property with which we are to trade. We are responsible for the use or the abuse of the Lord's goods. God calls upon men to invest their intrusted talents, that when the Master cometh he may receive his own with usury. With his own blood Christ has purchased us as his servants. Shall we serve him ? Shall we now study to show ourselves approved unto God ? Shall we show by our actions that we are stewards of his grace ? Every effort put forth for the Master, prompted by a pure, sincere heart, will be a fragrant offering to him.

We are walking in the sight of unseen intelligences. A witness is by our side constantly to see how we trade with the Lord's intrusted goods. When the good steward returns his talents with usury, he will claim nothing. He will realize that they are the talents that God delivered unto him, and will give glory to the Master. He knows that there would have been no gain without

the deposit, no interest without the principal. He will say, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more." Let the church now consider whether they are putting out to usury the capital the Lord has given. Without the grace of Christ, every soul would have been bankrupt for eternity; therefore we can rightfully claim nothing. ~~But while we can claim nothing, yet when we are faithful stewards the Lord rewards us as if the merit were all our own.~~ He says, "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." ~~How many will mourn for lost opportunities when it is eternally too late!~~ To-day we have talent and opportunity, but we know not how long these may be ours. Then let us work while it is day; for the night cometh in which no man can work. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find so doing." ELLEN G. WHITE.

July 3, 1892.

RETURN TO THE FIRST LOVE.

THE reason so many fail to have success is that they trust in themselves altogether too much, and do not feel the positive necessity of abiding in Christ, as they go forth to seek and save that which is lost. Until they have the mind of Christ, and teach the truth as it is in Jesus, they will not accomplish much. I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subject of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God, and say, Who is sufficient for these things? How can I talk, how can I write to my brethren, so that they will catch the beams of light flashing from heaven? What shall I say?

The atmosphere of the church is so frigid, its spirit is of such an order that men and women cannot sustain or endure the example of primitive and heaven-born piety. The warmth of their first love is frozen up, and unless they are watered over by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, their candlestick will be removed out of its place, except they repent and do their first works. The first works of the church were seen when the believers sought out friends, relatives, and acquaintances, and with hearts overflowing with love, told the story of what Jesus was to them, and what they were to Jesus. O that the Lord would awaken those who are in responsible positions, lest they undertake to do work, relying

upon their own smartness. The work that comes forth from their hands will lack the mould and superscription of Christ.

Selfishness mars all that unconsecrated workers do. They have need to pray always, but they do not. They need to watch unto prayer. They have need to feel the sacredness of the work; but they do not feel this. They handle sacred things as they do common things. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and until they can drink of the water of life, and Christ be in them as a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life, they will refresh no one, bless no one; and except they repent, their candlestick will be removed out of its place. There is need of enduring patience, of invincible charity, of omnipotent faith in the work of saving souls. Self must not be prominent. Wisdom from Christ must be exercised in dealing with human minds.

Every worker who deals with souls successfully must come to the work divested of self. There can be no scolding or fretting, no arbitrary authority exercised, no putting forth of the finger and speaking vanity; but come to the work with hearts warmed with love for Jesus, and for precious souls for whom he died. Those who are self-sufficient cannot conceal their weakness. They will come to the trial with overweening confidence in themselves, and make manifest the fact that Jesus is not with them. These self-sufficient souls are not few, and they have lessons to learn, by a hard experience of discomfiture and defeat. Few have the grace to welcome such an experience, and many backslide under the trial. They blame circumstances for their discomfiture, and think their talent is not appreciated by others. If they would humble themselves under the hand of God, he would teach them.

Those who do not learn every day in the school of Christ, who do not spend much time in earnest prayer, are not fit to handle the work of God in any of its

branches; for if they do, human depravity will surely overcome them, and they will lift up their souls unto vanity. Those who become co-workers with Jesus Christ, and who have spirituality to discern spiritual things, will feel their need of virtue and of wisdom from Heaven in handling his work. There are some who neither burn nor shine, yet are contented. They are in a wretchedly cold and indifferent condition, and a large number who know the truth, manifestly neglect duty, for which the Lord will hold them accountable.

God has given us Jesus, and in him is the revelation of God. Our Redeemer says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning remain in you, ye shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. If we know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, unspeakable gladness will come to the soul. O how we need the divine presence! For the baptism of the Holy Spirit every worker should be breathing out his prayers to God. Companies should be gathered together to call upon God for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that the people of God may know how to plan and devise and execute the work. Especially should men pray that the Lord will choose his agents, and baptize his missionaries with the Holy Spirit. For ten days the disciples prayed before the Pentecostal blessing came. It required all that time to bring them to an understanding of what it meant to offer effectual prayer, drawing nearer and nearer to God, confessing their sins, humbling their hearts before God, and by faith beholding Jesus and becoming changed into his image. When the blessing did come, it filled all the place where they were assembled, and endowed with power, they went forth to do effectual work for the Master.

Altogether too light a matter is made of selecting men to do the sacred work committed to our hands. As a consequence of this carelessness, unconverted men are at work in missionary fields, who are full of passionate lusts, who are unthankful, who are unholy. Though some of them have been often reprov'd, they have not changed their course, and their lustful practices bring reproach upon the cause of God. What will be the fruit of such labor? Why do not all our workers remember that every word, good or evil, must be met again in the Judgment? Every inspiration of the Holy Spirit leading men to goodness and to God is noted in the books of heaven, and the worker through whom the Lord has brought light will be commended in the day of God. If the workers realized the eternal responsibility that rests upon them, would they enter upon the work without a deep sense of its sacredness? Should we not expect to see the deep movings of the Spirit of God upon men who present themselves to enter the ministry?

The apostle says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." Let every soul heed these words, and know that the Lord Jesus will accept of no compromise. In accepting and retaining workers who persist in retaining their imperfections of character, and do not give full proof of their ministry, the standard has been greatly lowered. There are many in responsible positions who do not heed the injunction of the apostle, but make provision for fulfilling the lust of the flesh. Unless the worker puts on the Lord Jesus Christ and finds in him wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, how can he represent the religion of Jesus? All his efficiency, all his reward, is found in Christ. There must be evidence on the part of those who take the solemn position of shepherds, that they have without reservation, dedicated themselves to the work. They must take Christ as their personal Saviour. Why is it that those who have

been long engaged in the ministry, do not grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus? I have been shown that they gratify their selfish propensities, and do only such things as agree with their tastes and ideas. They make provision for indulgence in pride and sensuality, and carry out their selfish ambitions and plans. They are full of self-esteem. But although their evil propensities may seem to them as precious as the right hand or the right eye, they must be separated from the worker, or he cannot be acceptable before God. Hands are laid upon men to ordain them for the ministry before they are thoroughly examined as to their qualifications for the sacred work; but how much better would it be to make thorough work before accepting them as ministers, than to have to go through this rigid examination after they have become established in their position, and have put their mould upon the work.

The following quotation shows what true consecration will do, and this is what we should require of our workers:—

“Harlan Page consecrated himself to God, with a determination to live and labor to promote the Lord’s glory, in the salvation of the perishing. ‘When I first obtained hope,’ he said on his dying bed, ‘I felt that I must labor for souls. I prayed year after year that God would make me the means of saving some.’ His prayers were signally answered. Never did Page lose an opportunity of holding up the lamp to souls. By letters, by conversation, by tracts, by prayers, by appeals, and warnings, as well as by a holy and earnest example, did he try to reclaim the wandering, or edify the believer. In factories, in schools, and elsewhere did this mechanic labor, and only the mighty power of grace can explain how one so humble could achieve so much. His life is a speaking comment on the words, ‘God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things

that are.' 'Our faith in eternal realities is weak,' he cried, 'and our sense of duty faint, while we neglect the salvation of our fellow-beings. Let us awake to our duties, and while we have tongue or pen, devote them to the service of the Most High, not in our own strength; but with strong faith and firm confidence.' "

We have increased light. We have a solemn, weighty message to bear to the world, and God designs that his chosen disciples shall have a deep experience, and be endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh upon the heart." This was a lesson that David never forgot, and in his dying testimony to Solomon he said, "And thou, Solomon my son, know the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."

We are living in an important period of this earth's history; and with the light of truth shining upon us, we cannot now be excused for a moment in meeting a low standard. As co-workers with Christ, we are privileged to share with Christ in his suffering. We are to look at his life, study his character, and copy the pattern. What Christ was in his perfect humanity, we must be; for we must form characters for eternity.

July 15, 1892.

ELLEN G. WHITE.

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AWAITS OUR DEMAND AND RECEPTION.

JUST prior to his leaving his disciples for the heavenly courts, Jesus encouraged them with the promise of the Holy Spirit. This promise belongs as much to us as it did to them, and yet how rarely it is presented before the people, and its reception spoken of in the church. In consequence of this silence upon this most important theme, what promise do we know less about by its practical fulfillment than this rich promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereby efficiency is to be given to all our spiritual labor? The promise of the Holy Spirit is casually brought into our discourses, is incidentally touched upon and that is all. Prophecies have been dwelt upon, doctrines have been expounded, but that which is essential to the church in order that they may grow in spiritual strength and efficiency, in order that the preaching may carry conviction with it, and souls be converted to God, has been largely left out of ministerial effort. This subject has been set aside, as if some time in the future would be given to its consideration. Other blessings and privileges have been presented before the people until a desire has been awakened in the church for the attainment of the blessing promised of God; but the impression concerning the Holy Spirit has been that this gift is not for the church now, but that at some time in the future it would be necessary for the church to receive it. This promised blessing, if claimed by faith, would bring all other blessings in its train, and it is to be given liberally to

the people of God. Through the cunning devices of the enemy the minds of God's people seem to be incapable of comprehending and appropriating the promises of God. They seem to think that only the scantiest showers of grace are to fall upon the thirsty soul. The people of God have accustomed themselves to think that they must rely upon their own efforts, that little help is to be received from heaven; and the result is that they have little light to communicate to other souls who are dying in error and darkness. The church has long been contented with little of the blessing of God; they have not felt the need of reaching up to the exalted privileges purchased for them at infinite cost. Their spiritual strength has been feeble, their experience of a dwarfed and crippled character, and they are disqualified for the work the Lord would have them to do. They are not able to present the great and glorious truths of God's holy word that would convict and convert souls through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. A harvest of joy will be reaped by those who sow the holy seeds of truth. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

The world have received the idea from the attitude of the church, that God's people are indeed a joyless people, that the service of Christ is unattractive, that the blessing of God is bestowed at severe cost to the receivers. By dwelling upon our trials, and making much of difficulties, we misrepresent God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent; for the path to heaven is made unattractive by the gloom that gathers about the soul of the believer, and many turn in disappointment from the service of Christ. But are those who thus present Christ, believers? — No, for believers rely upon the divine promise, and the Holy Spirit is a comforter, as well as a reprover.

The Christian must build all the foundation if he would build a strong symmetrical character, if he would be well balanced in his religious experience. It is in this way that the man will be prepared to meet the demands of truth and righteousness, as they are represented in the Bible; for he will be sustained and energized by the Holy Spirit of God. He who is a true Christian combines great tenderness of feeling with great firmness of purpose, with unswerving fidelity to God; he will in no case become the betrayer of sacred trusts. He who is endowed with the Holy Spirit has great capacities of heart and intellect, with strength of will and purpose that is unconquerable.

ELLEN G. WHITE.

Dec. 28, 1891.

FURTHER COMMENTS AND EXTRACTS.

WE must realize that we are placed under great responsibilities to God and to his cause by such earnest and solemn admonitions as the foregoing. There can be no excuse for us for continuing in a wrong way. The reason of our lack of success and our lack of power with God is pointed out, so that we are not left in the dark. Our sins and our wrong ways have been faithfully set before us, but we are not left without hope; for the remedy has also been pointed out. Now it is our privilege to repent of sin, and to know the power of God's saving grace. The Holy Spirit awaits our demand and reception. What more can the Lord do for us than that which he has already done? But our danger is that we will not make application of these admonitions to our individual selves. I would intreat you in the name of the Master to give heed to this blessed instruction. God give us true, godly sorrow, should be our prayer. (See 2 Cor. 7: 10, 11.)

We have been plainly told that the standard of the ministry must be raised, and also that if we do not

come where we will meet the mind of God, we will be severed from the work. These are very solemn words to me, and I desire that they shall have their full effect on my own heart. Nothing can be more certain than that if we do not take heed to the counsel from the Lord, we shall be left to go into still greater darkness.

* From a letter from Sister White, dated Sept. 1, 1892, I quote the following: —

“‘Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works: or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.’

✕ ‘He who was seen by John in the vision, in the midst of the golden candlesticks, represents himself as walking among them, going about from church to church, from congregation to congregation, and from soul to soul. Here is unwearied vigilance. While the under-shepherds may be asleep, or engrossed with matters of small importance, he that keepeth Israel doth not slumber nor sleep. He is the true watchman. The presence and sustaining grace of Christ are the secret of all light and life. We are kept by the power of God through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

“The Lord Jesus gave the message to John to be written, to come down through the ages to the end of the world. Words of commendation are spoken to the church of Ephesus; the ‘Well done’ is pronounced on the good and faithful servant; but the message does not close here. The Saviour says: ‘Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.’ This has been brought in clear lines before me again and again, and I have presented it to the people

with pen and voice. Does this striking message mean nothing to us? Is it in no sense applicable? Why are not such solemn warnings contemplated? Why do not all, with watchfulness and humility and confession, manifest that repentance that needeth not to be repented of? Why do so many pass on without taking heed? Is love abiding in the church? Is it not almost extinct? With many their first love for Jesus has cooled. Brethren do not love brethren. The love of many has waxed cold. The True Witness represents all who have left their first love as fallen. Did he not know their peril? 'Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.'

X¹² "Shall these heart-searching truths continue to be passed by with indifference by the churches? The loss of the first love has opened the door to a great amount of selfishness, evil surmising, evil speaking, envy, jealousy, hard-heartedness. This is the fruit borne when the fervor of the first love has grown cold. There has been but little restraint upon the tongue, for prayer has been neglected. A Pharisaical righteousness has been cherished; there is deadness of spirituality, and a lack of spiritual eye-sight is the result.

"The only hope for our churches of to-day is to repent and do their first work. The name of Jesus does not kindle the heart with love. A mechanical, formal orthodoxy has taken the place of deep, fervent charity and tenderness to one another. Will any give heed to the solemn monition, 'Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?' Fall upon the Rock, and be broken; then let the Lord Jesus prepare you, mould and fashion you as a vessel unto honor. Well may the people fear and tremble under these words: 'Except thou repent, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.' What then? 'If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!'" <

' The above needs no comment. It is a most solemn and heart-searching message. God help us to take heed lest our light go out in that great darkness!

Here follows another extract from the same letter, which is full of meaning indeed: —

“One matter burdens my soul: The great lack of the love of God which has been lost through continued resistance of light and truth, and the influence of those who have been engaged in active labor, who in the face of evidence piled upon evidence, have exerted an influence to counteract the message God has sent. I point them to the Jewish nation and ask, Must we leave our brethren to pass over the same path of blind resistance, till the very end of probation? > If ever a people needed true and faithful watchmen, who will not hold their peace, who will cry day and night, sounding the warning God has given, it is the Seventh-day Adventists. Those who have had great light, blessed opportunities, who like Capernaum have been exalted to heaven in point of privileges, shall they, by non-improvement, be left to darkness corresponding to the greatness of the light given?”

Truly these are earnest words, and may God forbid that one of us should fail to take heed to this faithful counsel.

“The week of prayer is now near at hand, and we have every reason to expect a gracious outpouring of the Spirit of God. Many are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and the promise of the Lord is that they shall be filled. Never were we more needy of God's blessing than now, and never was God more willing to bestow his blessing. As ministers we should properly lead out in the work. May this be so indeed at this time. The Spirit of God is awaiting our demand and reception. Just as surely as we seek the Lord with all the heart, so surely he will be found of us.

The time for the next General Conference is also close at hand. This will be a very important meeting. Every movement shows that we are living in the very close of time. The work calls for enlarged plans to meet the demands of God at this time. The message is for the world, for every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. These plans will call for large sums of money to carry them into effect. Will the money come? It must come. The message will go with power, and the earth

is to be lightened with its glory. The time has now come when we should heed the following:—

“We ought now to be heeding the injunction of our Saviour, ‘Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.’ It is now that our brethren should be cutting down their possessions, instead of increasing them. We are about to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Then let us not be dwellers upon the earth, but be getting things into as compact a compass as possible.”—“*Testimony*,” No. 31, p. 148.

These things should be set before our people in a proper way. Much means that ought to go into the cause of God is wasted, and it is Satan’s studied plan that it should be so.

We must look largely to you, brethren, to interest yourselves in these things. The results of the week of prayer, both as to the degree of the spiritual blessing and also the amount of money that will be contributed, will depend largely on your faithfulness.

The following quotation from “*Early Writings*,” pp. 40–42, is of much significance at this time, and our people must have these things set before them in no uncertain way. But this I am fully aware of, that that which will lead our people to contribute liberally as God has blessed them, is the love of Christ in the heart; therefore spiritual revival is the matter of first importance:—

“I saw that some of the people of God are stupid and dormant, and but half awake; they do not realize the time we are now living in. . . . I begged of Jesus to save them, to spare them a little longer, and let them see their awful danger, that they might get ready before it should be forever too late. The angel said, ‘Destruction is coming like a mighty whirlwind.’ I begged of the angel to pity and to save those who loved this world, who were attached to their possessions, and were not willing to cut loose from them, and sacrifice to speed the messengers on their way to feed the hungry sheep who were perishing for want of spiritual food.”

“As I viewed poor souls dying for want of the present truth, and some who professed to believe the truth were letting them die, by withholding the necessary means to carry forward the work of God, the sight was too painful, and I begged of the angel to remove it from me. I saw that when the cause of God called for some of their property, like the young man who came to Jesus (Matt. 19: 16-22), they went away sorrowful; and that soon the overflowing scourge would pass over and sweep their possessions all away, and then it would be too late to sacrifice earthly goods, and lay up a treasure in heaven.

“I then saw the glorious Redeemer, beautiful and lovely; that he left the realms of glory, and came to this dark and lonely world, to give his precious life and die, the just for the unjust. He bore the cruel mocking and scourging, wore the platted crown of thorns, and sweat great drops of blood in the garden, while the burden of the sins of the whole world was upon him. The angel asked, ‘What for?’ O! I saw and knew that it was for us; for our sins he suffered all this, that by his precious blood he might redeem us unto God.

“Then again was held up before me those who were not willing to dispose of this world’s goods to save perishing souls by sending them the truth while Jesus stands before the Father pleading his blood, his sufferings, and his death for them, and while God’s messengers are waiting, ready to carry them the saving truth that they may be sealed with the seal of the living God. It is hard for some who profess to believe the present truth, to even do so little as to hand the messengers God’s own money, that he has lent them to be stewards over.

“The suffering Jesus, his love so deep as to lead him to give his life for man, was again held up before me; also the lives of those who professed to be his followers, who had this world’s goods, but considered it so great a thing to help the cause of salvation. The angel said, ‘Can such enter heaven?’ Another angel answered, ‘No, never, never, never. Those who are not interested in the cause of God on earth, can never sing the song of redeeming love above.’ I saw that the quick work that God was doing on earth would soon be cut short in righteousness, and that the messengers must speed swiftly on their way to search out the scattered flock. An angel said, ‘Are all messengers?’ Another answered, ‘No, no; God’s messengers have a message.’

“The mighty shaking has commenced, and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth, and to sacrifice for God and his cause. The angel said, ‘Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice? No, no. It must be a free-will offering. It will take all to buy the field.’ I cried to God to spare his people, some of whom were fainting and dying. Then I saw that judgments of the Almighty were speedily coming, and I begged of the angel to speak in his language to the people. Said he, ‘All the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai would not move those who will not be moved by the plain truths of the word of God, neither would an angel’s message awake them.’ ”

In closing we earnestly pray that God will bless the solemn admonition he has sent us for our good. By God’s grace I will take them to my heart. Heaven is full of light, and that light is for us. I am fully assured of this, that if we do not heed these faithful counsels, it will go ill with us. But I have great confidence in God, and believe we shall see of his salvation among his people, and the message will go with a power not known heretofore. Commending you to God’s love, I am your brother and fellow-laborer in Christ,

O. A. OLSEN.

