

THE RELATION OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL EVANGELISTIC WORK
TO THE CLOSING WORK OF THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

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Notes on Study given by Dr. David
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The original gospel commission included healing as well as preaching. Luke 10:9. Paul accepted this program literally, and consequently in a few short years evangelized the principal centers of the then known world.

When the early church backslid, they gradually abandoned gospel healing and substituted Sunday for the Sabbath. The Reformation of the 16th century brought about a partial restoration; but "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. 4:5), the spirit and power of Elijah is to return to the earth to "prepare a perfect people for the Lord." Luke 1:17, Syr. trans.

Early Health Reformers.

John Wesley was in a certain sense the forerunner of this special reformation. He not only proclaimed in mighty power the 16th century reformatory truths, but he was also a health reformer and a medical evangelist. But those who followed the pioneer Methodists backslid from the health reform truths that God had given them through Wesley.

A generation later God raised up a Presbyterian clergyman, Sylvester Graham, and gave him a mighty reformatory message, and there was such a revival of health reform in this country as had never been witnessed before, and perhaps since. The people everywhere were stirred to the very depths, and abandoned all defiling habits.

A Reform Institution

Then a company of consecrated New England Congregationalist families caught the Spirit by which God was then visiting the earth, and led by Rev. Shepherd, who was shown the exact location by God, in answer to prayer and fasting they founded a notable missionary training-school in what was then

the wilderness, at Oberlin, Ohio.

Dr. Jennings, who joined the movement shortly afterward, says: "Their chief object in selecting the spot for the scene of their future labors, was to free Christianity from some of its dross of worldliness, that its light might shine with greater brilliancy, and be more affective in the accomplishment of its grand mission in the world."- "Tree of Life, " p. 9

They established not only a manual training-school, but stood stiffly for dress reform, temperance reform, and the laying aside of tobacco, tea, coffee, and flesh meats.

God in a wonderful manner directed students to this humble place in the wilderness. He sent J.C. Finney, the greatest evangelist of the century, who was also a strict health reformer, to be president of the school. The attendance soon exceeded a thousand. Hundreds of students went out, spirit filled, zealous, propagating the gospel and reform; but the Congregational Church would not receive them, and refused to grant them license to preach. They met with prejudice and persecution on every hand.

On this point Dr. Jennings again says: "For a while the community did run well." It was a united and happy fraternity; they experienced in a peculiar manner strongly marked tokens of the divine favor, and as strikingly manifested evidence of popular displeasure.

A Universal Backsliding.

"And it is not a surprising thing that Oberlin should shrink back under the weight of approbrium that the arch deceiver succeeded in raising against her, and retire to a more secure and sheltered position. She has pushed her reformatory operations further into the heart of the seducer's kingdom than had ever been done before, and of course was assailed with fiercer and more malign opposition than had fallen to the lot of any other community. It was impracticable for Oberlin to remain where she first dropped anchor; she must either go forward or backward.

"There was only one of two courses she could pursue. She must weigh

anchor and get under way, keep a steady eye upon the polar star of gospel principle, and move forward, irrespective of the foaming billows around her or fears and misgivings within, - always hearing in mind the Scripture declaration, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.'" - Idem. p. 41.

Sad to say, the devil soon succeeded in doing for Oberlin College just what he has been doing among us in recent years. He introduced a general backsliding on reforms, and then Oberlin College and her students became popular; and as Jennings said later, "She must now enjoy the common repose of the churches generally. She soon lived down popular prejudice, and obtained widespread pleasant congratulations for herself among the great ones of the earth, and has accomplished much inferior good."

From this it is evident that it was the purpose of God to test the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches with reformatory truths to prepare them for the "'44 movement." Had they accepted those, God would have sent them more light; but when they repudiated them, then God raised up Joseph Bates, who not only proclaimed all the previous reformatory truths, including temperance and health reform, but also the long down-trodden Sabbath truth.

A Reformed "Called-out" People

Soon after, Sister White was raised up, she was given light that this "called-out" people had a special mission to give health and healing truths to the world. This was clearly stated in the following words. "To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the third angel's message, to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord." Test., Vol. III p. 161. Luke 1:17.

The pioneers in this movement were reformers and healers. The first health book among us was written by Elder Loughborough. When any one in a community was sick, he generally called for some Seventh-day Adventist to come and give him treatment. Finally God led out in the establishment of a central health institution.

Why Sanitariums Differ from Hospitals

The Methodist foreign missions represent spiritual conquest, while their hospitals have had no particular success in that line. The reason for this is, the Methodists got their mission idea from heaven, but their hospital idea they borrowed from the earth.

Dr. Hurd, president of the American Hospital Association, said at one of their recent annual meetings, "The Battle Creek Sanitarium was started by a vision." And that stated the exact fact.

Pattern Shown in the Mount

In a vision given Sister White, 1865, a year before the institution was opened, she was shown "that the health reform was a great enterprise, closely connected with the present truth, and that Seventh-day Adventists should have a home for the sick, where they could be treated for their diseases, and also learn how to take care of themselves so as to prevent sickness." Test. Vol. 1, p. 553.

It was further stated, "it should ever be kept prominent that the great object to be attained through this channel is not only health, but perfection and the spirit of holiness, which cannot be attained with diseased bodies and minds. This object cannot be secured by working merely from the worldling's standpoint!" Test. Vol. 1, p. 554

Spiritual Service Rather Than Miracles

To prevent the possibility of this work degenerating into a sort of Dowie movement, this was included in the original pattern: "Let no one obtain the idea that the institute is the place for them to come to be raised up by the prayer of faith. That is the place to find relief from disease by treatment, and right habits of living, and to learn how to avoid sickness. But if there is one place under the heavens more than another where soothing, sympathizing prayer should be offered by men and women of devotion and faith, it is at such an institute. Those who treat the sick should move forward in their important work with strong reliance upon God for His blessing to attend the means which He has graciously provided, and to which He has in

mercy called our attention as a people such as pure air, cleanliness, health-ful diet, proper periods of labor and repose, and the use of water." Test., Vol. 1, p. 561.

The "Work Cure" which is now attracting such remarkable attention in the world, and which we have not half succeeded in properly developing in our sanitarium work even at this late day, was a part of this original program. "I saw the beneficial influence of outdoor labor upon those of feeble vitality and depressed circulation. . . . Instead of amusements to keep these persons indoors, care should be taken to provide outdoor attractions." Test. Vol. 1. p. 562.

Health Education as Well as Healing

It was specified that connected with sanitarium work there should be a definite educational propaganda, so that nature could continue the cure after the patient had left the institution. "The object of the health reform and the Health Institute is not, like a dose of 'Pain Killer' or 'Instant Relief' to quiet the pains of today. No, indeed! Its great object is to teach the people how to live so as to give nature a chance to remove and resist disease." - Test. Vol. 1, p 643.

Even the character of the workers that should connect with this movement was specified in detail. (Vol. 1. p. 567)

It would seem as though an enterprise that was so divinely safeguarded could not fail successfully to spell out God's great program in this closing work. But where the Master sowed good seed the enemy sowed tares.

Transferring Responsibility From The Many To The Few

As a certain class of workers among us became experts in promulgating the health reform principles, and in caring for the sick, the great body of our people began to relinquish their responsibility in this respect. From becoming experts, it was only one more step to become professional, and then commercial.

First of all, Christian healing is a sacred work, and not a business

proposition. Second, if we cannot spiritualize health truths instead of presenting them purely from the popular standpoint, then it would be far better for the cause and better for our own souls if we turned over the promulgation of health truths to such men as McFadden, Prof. Fisher, and Horace Fletcher.

Principles Rather Than Narrow Ideas

It is preeminently our mission to propagate gospel of health reform principles, rather than health ideas; for we have been instructed not to "catch hold of isolated ideas, and make them a test, criticising others whose practice may not agree with your opinion; but study the subject broadly and deeply." - Christian Temperance p. 119-120

We must resist the temptation to unduly exalt health ideas which happen to be tickling the popular fancy, because they require no special self-denial, while at the same time we ignore the unpopular "weightier things of the law." The wine cup is a thousand times more important, both for here and hereafter, than the individual drinking cup. The securing of a physician's health certificate before marriage, is a commendatory measure, but is not one thousandth part as important as the woman's ability to prepare wholesome food after marriage.

It is easier to enlist people in a fly swatting campaign than it is to enlist them in an anti-cigarette crusade, although the cigarette and tobacco evil is responsible for ten thousand times more misery, sorrow, sickness and even death. We should spend our time and energy establishing health reformatory truths that the devil is trampling upon, and at the same time we should not belittle the others.

As there are but few fundamental health principles, all of our laborers can become acquainted with them, and "no argument is so powerful as is success founded on simplicity." Test. Vol. 9, page 175. "The more simple our plans for work in God's service, the more we shall accomplish." Test. Vol. 7, p. 215.

Our Future Program

As we turn our faces toward the future what must be our attitude?
"As we near the close of time, we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance, presenting it in a more positive and decided manner." Test. Vol. 6, p. 112

Temperance

We are not merely to talk temperance, but secure pledges. "We should present to the people the principles of true temperance, and call for signers to the temperance pledge." And the following instruction is given us regarding our duty toward other temperance workers: "In other churches there are Christians who are standing in defense of the principles of temperance. We should seek to come near to these workers, and make a way for them to stand shoulder to shoulder with us." Test. Vol. 6, pp. 110, 111.

Cookery

"Wherever the truth is presented, the people are to be taught how to prepare food in a simple, yet appetizing way. They are to be shown that a nourishing diet can be provided without the use of flesh foods." "Cooking schools should be established, and house-to-house instruction should be given in the art of cooking wholesome food." Test. Vol. 9, p. 161

"Nurses are to be combined with the tent efforts, for "in every place where the truth is presented, earnest efforts should be made from the first to preach the gospel to the poor and to heal the sick." Test. Vol. 6, p. 83

Enlist Doctors and Other Workers

In the city "Let the medical workers present the important truths of the third angel's message from the physician's viewpoint. . . As physicians unite with ministers in proclaiming the gospel in the great cities of the land, their combined labors will result in influencing many minds in favor of the truth for this time. . . The ordained ministers, alone, are not equal to the task. God is calling not only upon the ministers, but also upon physicians, nurses, canvassers, Bible workers, and other consecrated laymen

of varied talent who have a knowledge of present truth, to consider the needs of the unwarned cities." - Review and Herald. April 7, 1910.

Training Courses for the Laity

"There is a message regarding health reform to be borne in every church. . . The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church-members who have never been converted, and those who were once converted but who have backslidden." Test. Vol. 6, p. 370,371

"Every church should be a training-school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath-school classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health, cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors." Ministry of Healing, p. 149.

Counterfeit Healing

We must be prepared to take advance ground. The world is already permeated with the ordinary health ideas, and Christian Science is permeating the minds of the people with a counterfeit spiritual healing. Our workers must be prepared to meet this Satanic delusion with divine truth and a ripe experience, ever remembering that "it is labor lost to teach people to look to God as a healer of their infirmities, unless they are taught also to lay aside unhealthful practises." "Ministry of Healing" p. 227 "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Prov. 28:9.

A New Position and Place

We are to cooperate with God in preparing a perfect people to stand in the near future without a Mediator in the heavenly sanctuary. This will require the whole message.

"The Gospel of health has able advocates, but their work has been made very hard because so many ministers, presidents of conferences, and others in positions of influence, have failed to give the question of health

reform its proper attention. They have not recognized it in its relation to the work of the message as the right arm of the body. . . . When the third angel's message is received in its fulness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the Conference, in the work of the church, in the home, at the table, and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body." Test. Vol. 6, p. 327