

Reflecting Eternity

MEMORY VERSE: “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2).

“If your aptness and skill had been as much exercised in saving souls, and in disseminating the truth to those who are in darkness, as it has been to get gain and to increase your earthly possessions, you would have many stars in the crown of your rejoicing in the kingdom of glory.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 358](#).

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 92–94, 350–359; *Messages to Young People*, pp. 102–118.

1. KEEPING FOCUS

Sun, Nov 8

a. Where is to be the focus of all who commit to Christ? Colossians 3:1.

Colossians 3:1

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

“We are risen with Christ. Christ is our life. Through His mercy and gracious love we are declared to be chosen, adopted, pardoned, and justified. Then let us magnify the Lord.”—[Selected Messages, bk. 2, p. 245](#).

“Self is not to be consulted. Pride, self-love, selfishness, avarice, covetousness, love of the world, hatred, suspicion, jealousy, evil surmisings, must all be subdued and sacrificed forever. When Christ shall appear, it will not be to correct these evils and then give a moral fitness for His coming. This preparation must all be made before He comes. It should be a subject of thought, of study, and earnest inquiry, What shall we do to be saved? What shall be our conduct that we may show ourselves approved unto God?

“When tempted to murmur, censure, and indulge in fretfulness, wounding those around you, and in so doing wounding your own soul, oh! let the deep, earnest, anxious inquiry come from your soul, Shall I stand without fault before the throne of God? Only the faultless will be there. None will be translated to heaven while their hearts are filled with the rubbish of earth. Every defect in the moral character must first be remedied, every stain removed by the cleansing blood of Christ, and all the unlovely, unlovable traits of character overcome.”—

[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 705](#).

2. DECIDING WHAT TO LOVE

Mon, Nov 9

a. What deliberate choice must we consistently make to ensure our salvation? Colossians 3:2, 3; Revelation 3:11.

Colossians 3:2, 3

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Revelation 3:11

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

“Our minds take the level of the things on which our thoughts dwell, and if we think upon earthly things, we shall fail to take the impress of that which is heavenly. We would be greatly benefited by contemplating the mercy, goodness, and love of God; but we sustain great loss by dwelling upon those things which are earthly and temporal. We allow sorrow and care and perplexity to attract our minds to earth, and we magnify a molehill into a mountain. . . .

“Temporal things are not to engage our whole attention, or engross our minds until our thoughts are entirely of the earth and the earthly. We are to train, discipline, and educate the mind so that we may think in a heavenly channel, that we may dwell on things unseen and eternal, which will be discerned by spiritual vision. It is by seeing Him who is invisible that we may obtain strength of mind and vigor of spirit.”—[The SDA Bible Commentary \[E. G. White Comments\], vol. 6, p. 1100.](#)

b. What exalted privilege is offered to every follower of Christ, and how can we actively take hold of it? Colossians 3:4; 1 John 3:2, 3.

Colossians 3:4

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1 John 3:2, 3

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

“Our lives should be hid with Christ in God; and although it ‘doth not yet appear what we shall be,’ ‘When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,’ ‘we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.’ The princely dignity of the Christian character will shine forth as the sun, and the beams of light from the face of Christ will be reflected upon those who have purified themselves even as He is pure. The privilege of becoming sons of God is cheaply purchased, even at the sacrifice of everything we possess, be it life itself.

“My dear brother, you should set your face to be a man after God’s own heart. What others may venture to do or say that is not strictly in accordance with the Christian standard should be no excuse for you. You must stand before the Judge of all the earth, not to answer for another, but for yourself. We have an individual responsibility, and no man’s defects of character will be the least

excuse for our guilt; for Christ has given us in His character a perfect pattern, a faultless life. . . .

“Temptations will pour in upon us, for by them we are to be tried during our probation upon earth. This is the proving of God, a revelation of our own hearts. There is no sin in having temptations; but sin comes in when temptation is yielded to.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 357, 358.](#)

3. THE NEW MAN

Tue, Nov 10

a. In cleaving to Christ, what must we mortify, i.e., put to death—and how only is this possible? 1 Peter 2:11; Colossians 3:5–8.

1 Peter 2:11

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Colossians 3:5–8

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8 ¶ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

“The apostle charges us to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. Every perverted appetite becomes a warring lust. Appetite indulged to the injury of physical strength causes disease of the soul. The lust which the apostle mentions is not confined to the violation of the seventh commandment, but every indulgence of the taste which lessens physical vigor is a warring lust. . . .

“You need to cultivate self-control. The lesson you should have learned in your youth should be mastered now. Discipline yourself to die to self, to bring your will in subjection to the will of Christ.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 215.](#)

“When the Christian takes his baptismal vow, divine help is pledged to him. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit stand ready to work in his behalf. God places at his command the resources of heaven, that he may be an overcomer. His own power is small; but God is omnipotent, and God is his helper. Daily he is to make known his wants at the throne of grace. By faith and trust, by availing himself of the resources provided, he can be more than a conqueror.”—[Our High Calling, p. 157.](#)

b. As our heart is renewed, how does it affect our words? Colossians 3:9, 10.

Colossians 3:9, 10

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

“Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan; and

whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Yet it is not a light or an easy thing to speak the exact truth. We cannot speak the truth unless we know the truth; and how often preconceived opinions, mental bias, imperfect knowledge, errors of judgment, prevent a right understanding of matters with which we have to do! We cannot speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth.”—

[Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 68.](#)

“Satan was exulting that he had succeeded in debasing the image of God in humanity. Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory.”—[The Desire of Ages, pp. 37, 38.](#)

4. A UNIQUE PEOPLE

Wed, Nov 11

a. Describe God’s message for the entire human race He has created. Acts 17:24, 26, 27; Colossians 3:11.

Acts 17:24

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Acts 17:26, 27

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

Colossians 3:11

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

“[Christ] saw humanity sunken in wretchedness and sinfulness. He knew that men and women were depraved and degraded, and that they cherished the most loathsome vices. Angels marveled that Christ should undertake what seemed to them a hopeless task. They marveled that God could tolerate a race so sinful. They could see no room for love. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16.

“Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, black and white, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God. The Saviour has a boundless love for every human being. In each one He sees capacity for improvement. With divine energy and hope He greets those for whom He has given His life. In His strength they can live a life rich in good works, filled with the power of the Spirit.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 225.](#)

b. Name some ways in which our speech and actions can reveal a higher level of Christianity than is typically seen. Colossians 3:12-14.

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; **13** Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. **14** And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another, but with love for the brother’s soul, with a heart full of compassion, with bowels of mercy, tell him the wrong, then leave the matter with him and the Lord. You have discharged your duty. You are not to pass sentence.

“It has been made too light an affair to rein up a brother, to condemn him, and hold him under condemnation. There has been a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. If each would set his own heart in order, when the brethren meet together their testimony would be ready and come from a full soul, and the people around that believe not the truth would be moved. The manifestation of the Spirit of God would tell to their hearts that you are the children of God. Our love for one another should be visible to all. Then it will tell. It will have an influence. . . .

“Take hold of the work individually, be zealous and repent; and after all known wrongs are righted, then believe that God accepts you. Go not mourning, but take God at His word.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 165.

a. In today’s hostile world, list some refreshing qualities of a true life in Christ. Colossians 3:15-17.

Colossians 3:15-17

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. **17** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

“Forgetting our own difficulties and troubles, let us praise God for an opportunity to live for the glory of His name. Let the fresh blessings of each new day awaken praise in our hearts for these tokens of His loving care. When you open your eyes in the morning, thank God that He has kept you through the night. Thank Him for His peace in your heart. Morning, noon, and night, let gratitude as a sweet perfume ascend to heaven.

“When someone asks how you are feeling, do not try to think of something mournful to tell in order to gain sympathy. Do not talk of your lack of faith and your sorrows and sufferings. The tempter delights to hear such words. When talking on gloomy subjects, you are glorifying him. We are not to dwell on the

great power of Satan to overcome us. Often we give ourselves into his hands by talking of his power. Let us talk instead of the great power of God to bind up all our interests with His own. Tell of the matchless power of Christ, and speak of His glory. All heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They guard us against evil and press back the powers of darkness that are seeking our destruction. Have we not reason to be thankful every moment, thankful even when there are apparent difficulties in our pathway?"—[The Ministry of Healing](#), pp. 253, 254.

"Upon the heads of the overcomers, Jesus with His own right hand places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown, bearing his own 'new name,' [Revelation 2:17], and the inscription, 'Holiness to the Lord.' In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skillful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains."—[The Great Controversy](#), p. 646.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Nov 13

1. What too often shows that we might be stuck in an earthly mode?
2. How can I better prioritize my attention toward preparing for Jesus?
3. Why does Jesus want me to dwell on a higher plane of thought and action?
4. Why is discussion on racial distinctions irrelevant to real Christians?
5. How can I radiate the pure, innocence of Heaven in word and song?

Suggested Readings: Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 92-94

There was a decided failure in your education and discipline during childhood and youth. You now have to learn the great lessons of self-control which ought to have been mastered in earlier days. God brought you where your surroundings would be changed and where you could be disciplined by His Holy Spirit, that you might acquire moral power and self-control to make you a conqueror. It will require the strongest effort, the most persevering and unfaltering determination, and the strongest energy to control self. Your spirit has long chafed under restraint, and your temper has raged like a caged lion when your will has been crossed. The education which your parents should have assisted you to obtain must now be gained wholly by yourself. When young and small the twig might have been easily bent; but now, after it has grown gnarled and crooked and strong, how difficult the task! Your parents permitted it to be thus deformed; and now only by the grace of God, united with your own persistent efforts, can you become conqueror over your will. Through the merits of Christ you may part with that which scars and deforms the soul, and which develops a misshapen character. You must put away the old man with his errors and take the new man, Christ Jesus. Adopt His life as your guide then your talents and intellect will be devoted to God's service.

Oh, if mothers would only work with wisdom, with calmness and determination, to train and subdue the carnal tempers of their children, what an amount of sin would be nipped in the bud, and what a host of church trials would be saved! How many families that are now miserable would be happy! Many souls

will be eternally lost because of the neglect of parents to properly discipline their children and to teach them submission to authority in their youth. Petting faults and soothing outbreaks is not laying the ax at the root of the evil, but proves the ruin of thousands of souls. Oh, how will parents answer to God for this fearful neglect of their duty!

Brother G, you are willing to stand at the head and dictate to others, but you will not be dictated to yourself. Your pride fires in a moment at the attempt. Self-love and a haughty spirit are unruly elements in your character, hindering spiritual advancement. Those who have this temperament must take hold of the work zealously and die to self, or they will lose heaven. God makes no compromise with this element, as do fond, mistaken parents.

In my last vision I was shown that if you refuse reproof and correction, choose your own way, and will not be disciplined, God has no further use for you in connection with His holy work. If you had commenced the work of setting your own soul right with the Lord you would have seen so great a work to be done for yourself that you would not have spent so much time over the supposed wrongs of Brother H, dwelling upon them behind his back. The work of the last thirty years should inspire confidence in the integrity of Brother H. "Honor to whom honor is due."

Men in responsible positions should improve continually. They must not anchor upon an old experience and feel that it is not necessary to become scientific workers. Man, although the most helpless of God's creatures when he comes into the world, and the most perverse in his nature, is nevertheless capable of constant advancement. He may be enlightened by science, ennobled by virtue, and may progress in mental and moral dignity, until he reaches a perfection of intelligence and a purity of character but little lower than the perfection and purity of angels. With the light of truth shining upon the minds of men, and the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, we cannot conceive what they may become nor what great work they may do.

I know that the human heart is blind to its own true condition, but I cannot leave you without making an effort to help you. We love you, and we want to see you pressing on to victory. Jesus loves you. He died for you, and He wants you to be saved. We have no disposition to hold you in ----; but we do want you to make thorough work with your own soul, to right every wrong there, and make every effort to master self, lest you miss heaven. This you cannot afford to do. For Christ's sake, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp.350-359

Brother G,

In my last vision your case was shown me. I saw that you love the truth which you profess, but you are not sanctified through it. Your affections have been divided between the service of God and of mammon. This division of affection stands as a barrier in the way of your being a missionary for God. While professedly serving the cause of God, self-interest has marred your work and

greatly injured your influence. God could not work with you, because your heart was not right with Him.

So far as words go, you have been deeply interested in the truth; but when it comes to showing your faith by works, there has been a great lack. You have not correctly represented our faith. You have injured the cause of God by your manifest love of gain; and your love to trade and bicker has not been for your good, nor for the spiritual health of those with whom you are brought in contact. You are a sharp man in trade, and you often overreach. You have peculiar tact for looking out for the best end of the bargain, watching for your own good rather than that of others. If a man would cheat himself, and you were to be advantaged thereby, you have let him do it. This is not following the golden rule, doing unto others as you would wish them to do by you.

While engaged in the missionary work, you have at the same time manifested your scheming propensities in buying and selling. This makes a poor combination. You should be one thing or the other. "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." God will not accept your labors in the tract and missionary work while you are scheming to advantage yourself. You are in danger of counting gain as godliness. The tempter will present flattering inducements before you to fascinate you and allure you on to indulge a spirit of scheming which will kill your spirituality.

The world, angels, and men look upon you as a sharper, as a man who is studying his own interest and securing advantages to himself without looking carefully and conscientiously after the interest of those with whom he deals. In your business life there is a vein of dishonesty that tarnishes the soul and dwarfs religious experience and growth in grace. You are watching with keen business eye the best chance to secure a bargain. This scheming propensity has become second nature with you, and you do not see and realize the evil of encouraging it.

Business which you may engage in fairly and squarely, advantaging others as well as yourself, would be all right so far as dealing honorably is concerned; but the Lord would have accepted your service and used your powers, your keen perceptions, in securing the salvation of souls, had you been sanctified through the truth. The desire of the eye in the love of gain has warred against the Spirit. The habits and culture of years have left their deforming impress upon your character, and have been disqualifying you for God's work. You have a constant, longing desire to traffic. If sanctified to the service of God, this would make you an earnest, persevering laborer for the Master; but, abused as it has been, it has endangered your own soul, and others also are in danger of being lost through your influence.

At times reason and conscience remonstrate, and you feel rebuked because of your course; your soul longs after holiness and the surety of heaven; the din of the world looks repulsive to you, and you put it aside and cherish the Spirit of God. Then, again, your worldly propensity comes in, and overrules everything. You will surely have to meet the assaults of Satan, and you should prepare for them by firmly resisting your inclination.

While the apostle Paul was immured in prison walls that were reeking with dampness, himself a sufferer from infirmities, he greatly desired to see Timothy, his son in the gospel, and leave him his dying charge. He had no hope of release from his bondage until his life should be yielded up. The wicked Nero's heart was thoroughly satanic, and at a word or a nod from him the apostle's life would be cut short. Paul urged the immediate presence of Timothy, and yet feared he would not come soon enough to receive the last testimony from his lips. He therefore repeated the words he would speak to Timothy, to one of his fellow laborers, who was allowed to be his companion in bonds. This faithful attendant wrote the dying charge of Paul, a small portion of which we here quote:

"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." A man may be avaricious, and yet excuse himself by saying that he is working for the cause of God; but he obtains no reward, for God does not want money that is obtained by overreaching or by any semblance of dishonesty.

Paul further urges Timothy: Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica." These words, dictated by Paul just prior to his death, were written by Luke [The substitution of the name of Mark for that of Luke in the first edition was an error of the printer, and not of the manuscript. A few similar errors have been discovered and corrected in this revision.] for our profit and warning.

Christ, in teaching His disciples, said: "I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it [pruneth it], that it may bring forth more fruit." He who is united to Christ, partaking of the sap and nourishment of the Vine, will work the works of Christ. The love of Christ must be in him or he cannot be in the Vine. Supreme love to God, and love to your neighbor equal to that which you bear to yourself, is the basis of true religion.

Christ inquires of everyone professing His name: "Lovest thou Me?" If you love Jesus you will love the souls for whom He died. A man may not bear the most

pleasant exterior, he may be deficient in many respects; but if he has a reputation for straightforward honesty, he will gain the confidence of others. The love of truth, the dependence and confidence which men can place in him, will remove or overbear objectionable features in his character. Trustworthiness in your place and calling, a willingness to deny self for the purpose of benefiting others, will bring peace of mind and the favor of God.

Those who will walk closely in the footsteps of their self-sacrificing, self-denying Redeemer will have the mind of Christ reflected in their minds. Purity and the love of Christ will shine forth in their daily lives and characters, while meekness and truth will guide their way. Every fruitful branch is pruned, that it may bring forth more fruit. Even fruitful branches may display too much foliage and appear what they really are not. The followers of Christ may be doing some work for the Master and yet not be doing half what they might do. He then prunes them, because worldliness, self-indulgence, and pride are cropping out in their lives. Husbandmen clip off the surplus tendrils of the vines that are grasping the rubbish of earth, thus making them more fruitful. These hindering causes must be removed and the defective overgrowth cut away, to give room for the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

God purposed through Christ that fallen man should have another trial. Many misunderstand the object for which they were created. It was to bless humanity and glorify God, rather than to enjoy and glorify self. God is constantly pruning His people, cutting off profuse, spreading branches, that they may bear fruit to His glory and not produce leaves only. God prunes us with sorrow, with disappointment and affliction, that the outgrowth of strong, perverse traits of character may be weakened and that the better traits may have a chance to develop. Idols must be given up, the conscience must become more tender, the meditations of the heart must be spiritual, and the entire character must become symmetrical. Those who really desire to glorify God will be thankful for the exposure of every idol and every sin, that they may see these evils and put them away; but the divided heart will plead for indulgence rather than denial.

The apparently dry branch, by being connected with the living vine, becomes a part of it. Fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, it adheres to the vine till it derives its life and nourishment from the parent stock. The graft buds, blossoms, and produces fruit. The soul, dead in trespasses and sins, must experience a similar process in order to be reconciled to God and to become a partaker of Christ's life and joy. As the graft receives life when united to the vine, so the sinner partakes of the divine nature when connected with Christ. Finite man is united with the infinite God. When thus united, the words of Christ abide in us, and we are not actuated by a spasmodic feeling, but by a living, abiding principle. The words of Christ must be meditated upon and cherished and enshrined in the heart. They should not be repeated, parrot-like, finding no place in the memory and having no influence over the heart and life.

As the branch must abide in the vine to obtain the vital sap which causes it to flourish, so those who love God and keep all His sayings must abide in His love. Without Christ we cannot subdue a single sin or overcome the smallest temptation. Many need the Spirit of Christ and His power to enlighten their

understanding, as much as blind Bartimaeus needed his natural sight. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." All who are really in Christ will experience the benefit of this union. The Father accepts them in the Beloved, and they become objects of His solicitude and tender, loving care. This connection with Christ will result in the purification of the heart and in a circumspect life and faultless character. The fruit borne upon the Christian tree is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

My brother, you need a close connection with God. You have traits of character for which you are responsible. Your powers have been put to a wrong use. God cannot approve your course. Your standard is that of the worldling, and not that which Christ has given us in His life. You have looked through the eyes of the world and discerned with their unsanctified judgment. Your soul must be cleansed from the polluting influence of the world. You have repeatedly deviated from strict integrity for that which you flattered yourself was gain, but which was really loss. Every act of overreaching in deal will detract from your reward in heaven, should you gain that home. Every man will receive his reward as his works have been.

You have no time to lose, but should make diligent efforts to overcome the marked traits in your character, which, if indulged, will close the doors of glory against you. You cannot afford to lose heaven. You now need to make a decided change in your words and deeds, to overcome your avaricious spirit, and to turn your thoughts into the channel of sanctified truth. In short, you need to be transformed. Then God will accept your labors in His cause. You should be a man of such undeviating veracity that the love of gain will not seduce you and no temptation overcome you. The Lord requires of all who profess His name a strict adherence to truth. This will be as salt which has not lost its savor, as a light amid the moral darkness and deception of the world.

"Ye are the light of the world," says Christ. Those who are truly connected with God, by reflecting the light of heaven will have a saving power in the church and also in the world; for the perfume of good deeds and truthful acts will make them of good repute, even among those who are not of our faith. Those who fear God will respect and honor such a character; and even the enemies of our faith, as they see the spirit and life of Christ exhibited in their daily works, will glorify God, the source of their strength and honor.

You, my brother, should have been truly converted to the truth and wholly given to the work of God years ago. Precious years, which should have been rich with experience in the things of God and in practical labor in His cause, have been lost. Whereas you should now be able to teach others, you have failed to come to the full knowledge of the truth yourself. You ought now to have an experimental knowledge of the truth and be qualified to bear the message of warning to the world. Your services have been nearly lost to the cause of God because your mind has been divided; you have been planning and scheming, buying and selling, serving tables.

The mildew of the world has clouded your perception and perverted your intellect, so that your feeble efforts have not been acceptable offerings to God. Had you divorced yourself from your speculating propensities, and worked in the opposite direction, you would now be enriched with divine knowledge and would be a gainer in spiritual things generally, whereas you have been losing spiritual power and dwarfing your religious experience.

To have fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ is to be ennobled and elevated, and made a partaker of joys unspeakable and full of glory. Food, clothing, station, and wealth may have their value; but to have a connection with God and to be a partaker of His divine nature is of priceless value. Our lives should be hid with Christ in God; and although it “doth not yet appear what we shall be,” “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear,” “we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” The princely dignity of the Christian character will shine forth as the sun, and the beams of light from the face of Christ will be reflected upon those who have purified themselves even as He is pure. The privilege of becoming sons of God is cheaply purchased, even at the sacrifice of everything we possess, be it life itself.

My dear brother, you should set your face to be a man after God’s own heart. What others may venture to do or say that is not strictly in accordance with the Christian standard should be no excuse for you. You must stand before the Judge of all the earth, not to answer for another, but for yourself. We have an individual responsibility, and no man’s defects of character will be the least excuse for our guilt; for Christ has given us in His character a perfect pattern, a faultless life.

The most persistent attacks of the enemy of souls are made upon the truth we profess, and any deviation from the right reflects dishonor upon it. Our chief danger is in having the mind diverted from Christ. The name of Jesus has power to drive back the temptations of Satan and lift up for us a standard against him. So long as the soul rests with unshaken confidence in the virtue and power of the atonement, it will stand firm as a rock to principle, and all the powers of Satan and his angels cannot sway it from its integrity. The truth as it is in Jesus is a wall of fire around the soul that clings to Him. Temptations will pour in upon us, for by them we are to be tried during our probation upon earth. This is the proving of God, a revelation of our own hearts. There is no sin in having temptations; but sin comes in when temptation is yielded to.

If your aptness and skill had been as much exercised in saving souls, and in disseminating the truth to those who are in darkness, as it has been to get gain and to increase your earthly possessions, you would have many stars in the crown of your rejoicing in the kingdom of glory. There are but few who are as faithful in the service of God as they are in serving their own temporal interests. A resolute purpose is sure to accomplish the desired end. Many do not feel that it is essential to be as discriminating, apt, and accomplished in the work of God as in their own temporal business. The mind and heart of those who profess to believe the truth should be elevated, refined, ennobled, and spiritualized. The work of educating the mind for this great and important matter is fearfully neglected. The work of God is done negligently, slothfully, and in a most bungling manner,

because so often left to the caprice of feeling, rather than to sanctified principle and holy purpose.

There is the greatest necessity that men and women who have a knowledge of the will of God should learn to become successful workers in His cause. They should be persons of polish, of understanding, not having the deceptive outside gloss and simpering affectation of the worldling, but that refinement and true courteousness which savors of heaven, and which every Christian will have if he is a partaker of the divine nature. The lack of true dignity and Christian refinement in the ranks of Sabbathkeepers is against us as a people and makes the truth which we profess unsavory. The work of educating the mind and manners may be carried forward to perfection. If those who profess the truth do not now improve their privileges and opportunities to grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, they will be no honor to the cause of truth, no honor to Christ.

If you, my brother, had studied the Holy Scriptures as faithfully as you have watched to get gain, you would now be an able man in the word of God and able also to teach others. It is your own fault that you are not qualified to teach the truth to others. You have not been cultivating that set of faculties which will make you an intelligent, successful, spiritual worker for your Master. Such traits of character as acquisitiveness and shrewdness in worldly dealing have been exercised so much that your mind has been largely developed in the direction of buying and selling, and getting the best end of the bargain. Instead of establishing yourself in the confidence of your brethren and sisters and friends as a man who possesses true nobility of character, elevating you above all smallness and avariciousness, you make them afraid of you. Your religious faith has been used to secure the confidence of your brethren that you might practice your sharp dealing and make a saving. This has been done so much by you that it has become second nature, and you do not realize how your course appears to others. True godliness must mark all your future life and course of action if you would counteract the influence you have exerted to scatter from Christ and the truth.

Your relation to God and your fellow men demands a change in your life. In the Sermon on the Mount the injunction of the world's redeemer was: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." These words are of the highest value to us, a golden rule given us by which to measure our conduct. This is the true rule of honesty. Very much is comprehended in these words. We are here required to deal with our neighbors as we would wish them to deal with us were we in their circumstances.

Messages to Young People, pp. 102-118.

Many of the youth have not a fixed principle to serve God. They sink under every cloud, and have no power of endurance. They do not grow in grace. They appear to keep the commandments of God, but they are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Their carnal hearts must be changed. They must see beauty in holiness: then they will pant after it as the hart panteth after the water-

brooks; then they will love God and His law; then the yoke of Christ will be easy, and His burden light.

If your steps are ordered by the Lord, dear youth, you must not expect that your path will always be one of outward peace and prosperity. The path that leads to eternal day is not the easiest to travel, and at times it will seem dark and thorny. But you have the assurance that God's everlasting arms encircle you, to protect you from evil. He wants you to exercise earnest faith in Him, and learn to trust Him in the shadow as well as in the sunshine.

The follower of Christ must have faith abiding in the heart; for without this it is impossible. Have you ever watched a hawk in pursuit of a timid dove? Instinct has taught the dove that in order for the hawk to seize his prey, he must gain a loftier flight than his victim. So she rises higher and still higher in the blue dome of heaven, ever pursued by the hawk, which is seeking to obtain the advantage. But in vain. The dove is safe as long as she allows nothing to stop her in her flight, or draw her earthward; but let her once falter, and take a lower flight, and her watchful enemy will swoop down upon his victim. Again and again have we watched this scene with almost breathless interest, all our sympathies with the little dove. How sad we should have felt to see it fall a victim to the cruel hawk!

We have before us a warfare—a lifelong conflict with Satan and his seductive temptations. The enemy will use every argument, every deception, to entangle the soul; and in order to win the crown of life, we must put forth earnest, persevering effort. We must not lay off the armor or leave the battlefield until we have gained the victory, and can triumph in our Redeemer. As long as we continue to keep our eyes fixed upon the Author and Finisher of our faith, we shall be safe. But our affections must be placed upon things above, not on things of the earth. By faith we must rise higher and still higher in the attainment of the graces of Christ. By daily contemplating His matchless charms, we must grow more and more into His glorious image. While we thus live in communion with Heaven, Satan will lay his nets for us in vain.—The Youth's Instructor, May 12, 1898.

We have little idea of the strength that would be ours if we would connect with the source of all strength. We fall into sin again and again, and think it must always be so. We cling to our infirmities as if they were something to be proud of. Christ tells us that we must set our face as a flint if we would overcome. He has borne our sins in His own body on the tree; and through the power He has given us, we may resist the world, the flesh, and the devil. Then let us not talk of our weakness and inefficiency, but of Christ and His strength. When we talk of Satan's strength, the enemy fastens his power more firmly upon us. When we talk of the power of the Mighty One, the enemy is driven back. As we draw near to God, He draws near to us....

Many of us fail to improve our privileges. We make a few feeble efforts to do right, and then go back to our old life of sin. If we ever enter the kingdom of God, we must enter with perfect characters, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Satan works with increased activity as we near the close of time. He lays his snares, unperceived by us, that he may take possession of our minds. In every way he tries to eclipse the glory of God from the soul. It rests with us to decide

whether he shall control our hearts and minds, or whether we shall have a place in the new earth, a title to Abraham's farm.

The power of God, combined with human effort, has wrought out a glorious victory for us. Shall we not appreciate this? All the riches of heaven were given to us in Jesus. God would not have the confederacy of evil say that He could do more than He has done. The worlds that He has created, the angels in heaven, could testify that He could do no more. God has resources of power of which we as yet know nothing, and from these He will supply us in our time of need. But our effort is ever to combine with the divine. Our intellect, our perceptive powers, all the strength of our being, must be called into exercise.... If we will rise to the emergency, and arm ourselves like men who wait for their Lord; if we will work to overcome every defect in our characters, God will give us increased light and strength and help.—The Youth's Instructor, January 4, 1900.

Faith is not feeling. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There is a form of religion which is nothing more than selfishness. It takes pleasure in worldly enjoyment. It is satisfied with contemplating the religion of Christ, and knows nothing of its saving power. Those who possess this religion regard sin lightly because they do not know Jesus. While in this condition, they estimate duty very lightly. But a faithful performance of duty goes hand in hand with a right estimate of the character of God.—The Review and Herald, February 28, 1907.

Christ has made every provision for us to be strong. He has given us His Holy Spirit, whose office is to bring to our remembrance all the promises that Christ has made, that we may have peace and a sweet sense of forgiveness. If we will but keep our eyes fixed on the Saviour, and trust in His power, we shall be filled with a sense of security; for the righteousness of Christ will become our righteousness....

We dishonor Him by talking of our inefficiency. Instead of looking at ourselves, let us constantly behold Jesus, daily becoming more and more like Him, more and more able to talk of Him, better prepared to avail ourselves of His kindness and helpfulness, and to receive the blessings offered us.

As we thus live in communion with Him, we grow strong in His strength, a help and a blessing to those around us. If we would only do as the Lord desires us to, our hearts would become as sacred harps, every chord of which would sound forth praise and gratitude to the Redeemer sent by God to take away the sin of the world....

When temptations assail you, as they surely will, when care and perplexity surround you, when, distressed and discouraged, you are almost ready to yield to despair, look, O look, to where with the eye of faith you last saw the light: and the darkness that encompasseth you will be dispelled by the bright shining of His glory. When sin struggles for the mastery in your soul, and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, go to the Saviour. His grace is sufficient to subdue sin. He will pardon us, making us joyful in God....

Let us no longer talk of our inefficiency and lack of power. Forgetting the things that are behind, let us press forward in the heavenward way. Let us neglect no opportunity that, if improved, will make us more useful in God's service. Then like threads of gold, holiness will run through our lives, and the angels, beholding our consecration, will repeat the promise, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." All heaven rejoices when weak, faulty human beings give themselves to Jesus, to live His life.—The Review and Herald, October 1, 1908.

The conditions of salvation for man are ordained of God. Self-abasement and cross-bearing are the provisions made for the repenting sinner to find comfort and peace. The thought that Jesus submitted to humiliation and sacrifice that man will never be called to endure, should hush every murmuring voice. The sweetest joy comes to man through his sincere repentance toward God because of the transgression of His law, and faith in Jesus Christ as the sinner's Redeemer and Advocate.—The Signs of the Times, March 4, 1880.

Peace comes with dependence on divine power. As fast as the soul resolves to act in accordance with the light given, the Holy Spirit gives more light and strength. The grace of the Spirit is supplied to cooperate with the soul's resolve, but it is not a substitute for the individual exercise of faith. Success in the Christian life depends upon the appropriation of the light that God has given. It is not an abundance of light and evidence that makes the soul free in Christ; it is the rising of the powers and the will and the energies of the soul to cry out sincerely, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

I rejoice in the bright prospects of the future, and so may you. Be cheerful, and praise the Lord for His lovingkindness. That which you cannot understand, commit to Him. He loves you, and pities your every weakness. He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It would not satisfy the heart of the infinite One to give those who love His Son a lesser blessing than He gives His Son.

Satan seeks to draw our minds away from the mighty Helper, to lead us to ponder over our degeneration of soul. But though Jesus sees the guilt of the past, He speaks pardon; and we should not dishonor Him by doubting His love. The feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross, or it will poison the springs of life. When Satan thrusts his threatenings upon you, turn from them, and comfort your soul with the promises of God. The cloud may be dark in itself, but when filled with the light of heaven, it turns to the brightness of gold; for the glory of God rests upon it.

God's children are not to be subject to feelings and emotions. When they fluctuate between hope and fear, the heart of Christ is hurt; for He has given them unmistakable evidence of His love.... He wants them to do the work He has given them; then their hearts will become in His hands as sacred harps, every chord of which will send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sins of the world.

Christ's love for His children is as tender as it is strong. And it is stronger than death; for He died to purchase our salvation, and to make us one with Him, mystically and eternally one. So strong is His love that it controls all His powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good. It is without variableness or shadow of turning—the same yesterday, today, and forever. Although sin has existed for ages, trying to counteract this love and obstruct its flowing earthward, it still flows in rich currents to those for whom Christ died.—Testimonies to Ministers, 518-519.

Remember that in your life, religion is not merely one influence among others; it is to be an influence dominating all others.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 489.

Many who are sincerely seeking for holiness of heart and purity of life seem perplexed and discouraged. They are constantly looking to themselves, and lamenting their lack of faith; and because they have no faith, they feel that they cannot claim the blessing of God. These persons mistake feeling for faith. They look above the simplicity of true faith, and thus bring great darkness upon their souls. They should turn the mind from self, to dwell upon the mercy and goodness of God and to recount His promises, and then simply believe that He will fulfill His word.

We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God. When we repent of our past transgressions of His law, and resolve to render obedience in the future, we should believe that God for Christ's sake accepts us, and forgives our sins.

Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul, and threaten to overwhelm us; but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.

. Faith is the hand that takes hold of infinite help; it is the medium by which the renewed At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light.

Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on Christ." The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith. An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and assurance to the soul.

Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to Him for special grace to overcome

your peculiar faults. When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings; say to your soul, "How can I dishonor my Redeemer? I have given myself to Christ; I cannot do the works of Satan." Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol, and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father's throne, presenting His wounded hands as He pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour.

By faith look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; listen to the exultant song of the redeemed, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hast redeemed us to God! Endeavor to regard these scenes as real. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in his terrible conflict with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The Saviour of the world was revealed to him as looking down from heaven upon him with the deepest interest; and the glorious light of Christ's countenance shone upon Stephen with such brightness that even his enemies saw his face shine like the face of an angel.

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

Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest.

But if we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.

Sanctification is a daily work. Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will pardon and bless them while they are trampling upon one of His requirements. The willful commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Whatever may be the ecstasies of religious feeling, Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor Him.

"To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. "No man can serve two masters." If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. Here is where Christ's help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves.

Religion must be made the great business of life. Everything else should be held subordinate to this. All our powers of soul, body, and spirit, must be engaged in the Christian warfare. We must look to Christ for strength and grace, and we shall gain the victory as surely as Jesus died for us....

We must come nearer to the cross of Christ. Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn. The love of Jesus—who can comprehend it? Infinitely more tender and self-denying than a mother's love! If we would know the value of a human soul, we must look in living faith upon the cross, and thus begin the study which shall be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. The value of our time and our talents can be estimated only by the greatness of the ransom paid for our redemption. What ingratitude do we manifest toward God when we rob Him of His own by withholding from Him our affections and our service! Is it too much to give ourselves to Him who has sacrificed all for us? Can we choose the friendship of the world before the immortal honors which Christ proffers,—“to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne”?

Sanctification is a progressive work. The successive steps are set before us in the words of Peter: “Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Here is a course by which we may be assured that we shall never fall. Those who are thus working upon the plan of addition in obtaining the Christian graces, have the assurance that God will work upon the plan of multiplication in granting them the gifts of His Spirit.

Peter addresses those who have obtained like precious faith: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” By divine grace, all who will may climb the shining steps from earth to heaven, and at last, “with songs and everlasting joy,” enter through the gates into the city of God.—The Review and Herald, November 15, 1887.

The trials of life are God's workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our characters. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process, it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel.

But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple. Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace.—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 10.

To the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, men now and then repair; they abide for a season, and the result is manifest in noble deeds; then their faith fails, the communion is interrupted, and the life work marred. But the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion; and His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering.

As a man He supplicated the throne of God, till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that connected humanity with divinity. Receiving life from God, He imparted life to men.—Education, 80, 81.

A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment, as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome, if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is, they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols.

After the union with Christ has been formed, it can be preserved only by earnest prayer and untiring effort. We must resist, we must deny, we must conquer self. Through the grace of Christ, by courage, by faith, by watchfulness, we may gain the victory.—Testimonies for the Church 5:231. (120)

In her endeavors to reach her home, the eagle is often beaten down by the tempest to the narrow defiles of the mountains. The clouds, in black, angry masses sweep between her and the sunny heights where she secures her nest. For a while she seems bewildered, and dashes this way and that, beating her strong wings as if to sweep back the dense clouds. She awakens the doves of the mountains with her wild cry in her vain endeavors to find a way out of her prison. At last she dashes upward into the blackness, and gives a shrill scream of triumph as she emerges, a moment later, in the calm sunshine above. The darkness and tempest are all below her, and the light of heaven is shining about her. She reaches her loved home in the lofty crag, and is satisfied. It was through darkness that she reached the light. It cost her an effort to do this, but she is rewarded in gaining the object which she sought.

This is the only course we can pursue as followers of Christ. We must exercise that living faith, which will penetrate the clouds that, like a thick wall, separate us

from heaven's light. We have heights of faith to reach, where all is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.