

# Delay No Longer

**MEMORY TEXT:** “*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*” (Ephesians 4:30).

“Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 120.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 537-541. (At the bottom of this page)

## 1. ASKING FOR HELP

Sunday, April 2

**a. Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), do any deserve to be justified? Job 25:4–6.**

**Romans 3:23**

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

**Job 25:4-6**

How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? **5** Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. **6** How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?

**b. How can we be saved if we do not deserve it? Psalm 55:16; Acts 2:21.**

**Psalm 55:16**

As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.

**Acts 2:21**

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

**c. How is it possible that I, in my sinfulness, can call upon God’s holy name? Psalm 55:17; 2 Chronicles 6:36–39; Romans 8:26; 1 John 1:7, 9.**

**Psalm 55:17**

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

## 2 Chronicles 6:36-39

If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; **37** Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; **38** If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: **39** Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

## Romans 8:26

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

## 1 John 1:7, 9

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

“From these scriptures it is evident that it is not God’s will that you should be distrustful and torture your soul with the fear that God will not accept you because you are sinful and unworthy. ‘Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you’ (James 4:8). Present your case before Him, pleading the merits of the blood shed for you upon Calvary’s cross. Satan will accuse you of being a great sinner, and you must admit this, but you can say: ‘I know I am a sinner, and that is the reason I need a Saviour. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. . . . I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation, but I present before God the all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my only plea. The name of Jesus gives me access to the Father. His ear, His heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and He supplies my deepest necessities.’ ”—*Faith and Works*, pp. 105, 106.

## 2. BEHIND THE SCENES OF REPENTANCE

Monday, April 3

### a. For what are we to pray? Acts 3:19; Psalm 51:1.

#### Acts 3:19

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

#### Psalm 51:1

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

**b. As we have received forgiveness from sin, we have repented. But how do we arrive at the point of repentance? Acts 5:30, 31; John 16:7, 8.**

**Acts 5:30, 31**

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. **31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

**John 16:7, 8**

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. **8** And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

“Like Nicodemus, we must be willing to enter into life in the same way as the chief of sinners. Than Christ, ‘there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ Acts 4:12. Through faith we receive the grace of God; but faith is not our Saviour. It earns nothing. It is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ, and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin. And we cannot even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 175.

**c. It is true that the Lord has left His people in this world to call sin by its right name (Isaiah 58:1), but what is necessary in order to bring conviction to the heart of one we are trying to reach? John 14:26; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.**

**Isaiah 58:1**

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

**John 14:26**

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

**Luke 24:49**

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

**Acts 1:8**

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

“The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of

Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, 'I delight to do Thy will, O my God.' Psalm 40:8."—*Ibid.*, p.176.

**d. Since the work of the Holy Spirit is so important, what warning is given us regarding His reception? Matthew 12:31, 32; Ephesians 4:30.**

**Matthew 12:31, 32**

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

**Ephesians 4:30**

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

“We often sorrow because our evil deeds bring unpleasant consequences to ourselves; but this is not repentance. Real sorrow for sin is the result of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit reveals the ingratitude of the heart that has slighted and grieved the Saviour, and brings us in contrition to the foot of the cross. By every sin Jesus is wounded afresh; and as we look upon Him whom we have pierced, we mourn for the sins that have brought anguish upon Him. Such mourning will lead to the renunciation of sin.”—*Ibid.*, p.300.

### 3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GRIEVE HIM?

Tuesday, April 4

**a. What specific action causes the Holy Spirit to be grieved? Hebrews 10:26, 27; 2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11.**

**Hebrews 10:26, 27**

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

**2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11**

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

“What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the

power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified: 'If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!' (Matthew 6:25). For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy's ground, standing under his black banner."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 634.

**b. How does one willfully commit a sin—and is it possible to prevent this? Proverbs 28:13; Hebrews 3:15.**

**Proverbs 28:13**

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

**Hebrews 3:15**

While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

**c. What are the results of this condition? Proverbs 28:9; Matthew 12:45; 2 Peter 2:20–22.**

**Proverbs 28:9**

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

**Matthew 12:45**

Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

**2 Peter 2:20-22**

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. **21** For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. **22** But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

“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.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 114.

**a. Is the sin against the Holy Spirit something that happens instantaneously—or does it occur gradually? 2 Chronicles 36:16.**

### 2 Chronicles 36:16

But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

“There are none so hardened as those who have slighted the invitation of mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven’s invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.

“In rejecting Christ the Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error. We offer insult to the Prince of life, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ. So long as one does this, he can find no hope or pardon, and he will finally lose all desire to be reconciled to God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 324, 325.

**b. Is it possible to reclaim someone after they have reached the last stages of this process? Jeremiah 8:20; Hosea 4:17; Amos 8:11, 12; Hebrews 6:4–6.**

### Jeremiah 8:20

The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

### Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.

### Amos 8:11, 12

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: **12** And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

### Hebrews 6:4-6

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, **5** And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, **6** If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

“For more than a thousand years the Jewish nation had abused God’s mercy and invited His judgments. They had rejected His warnings and slain His prophets. . . .

“In every age there is given to men their day of light and privilege, a probationary time in which they may become reconciled to God. But there is a limit to this grace.

Mercy may plead for years and be slighted and rejected; but there comes a time when mercy makes her last plea. The heart becomes so hardened that it ceases to respond to the Spirit of God. Then the sweet, winning voice entreats the sinner no longer, and reproofs and warnings cease.

“That day had come to Jerusalem. Jesus wept in anguish over the doomed city, but He could not deliver her. He had exhausted every resource. In rejecting the warnings of God’s Spirit, Israel had rejected the only means of help. There was no other power by which they could be delivered.

“The Jewish nation was a symbol of the people of all ages who scorn the pleadings of Infinite Love. The tears of Christ when He wept over Jerusalem were for the sins of all time. In the judgments pronounced upon Israel, those who reject the reproofs and warnings of God’s Holy Spirit may read their own condemnation.”—*Ibid.*, pp.584–587.

## 5. HOPE

Thursday, April 6

### a. How do we know if we have gone too far in grieving God? Isaiah 30:21.

#### Isaiah 30:21

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

“In this generation there are many who are treading on the same ground as were the unbelieving Jews. They have witnessed the manifestation of the power of God; the Holy Spirit has spoken to their hearts; but they cling to their unbelief and resistance. God sends them warnings and reproof, but they are not willing to confess their errors, and they reject His message and His messenger. The very means He uses for their recovery becomes to them a stone of stumbling.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 587.

### b. As we look at the plan of salvation, what do we need to realize—and for what should we plead with our Saviour? Psalm 51:11, 12; Hebrews 3:7, 8.

#### Psalm 51:11, 12

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. **12** Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

#### Hebrews 3:7, 8

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, **8** Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

“The rebuke of the Lord is upon His people for their pride and unbelief. He will not restore unto them the joys of His salvation while they are departing from the instructions of His word and His Spirit. He will give grace to those who fear Him and walk in the truth, and He will withdraw His blessing from all that assimilate to the world. Mercy and truth are promised to the humble and penitent, and judgments are denounced against the rebellious.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 190.

“Transformation of character is to be the testimony to the world of the indwelling love of Christ. The Lord expects His people to show that the redeeming power of grace

can work upon the faulty character and cause it to develop in symmetry and abundant fruitfulness.

“But in order for us to fulfill God’s purpose, there is a preparatory work to be done. The Lord bids us empty our hearts of the selfishness which is the root of alienation. He longs to pour upon us His Holy Spirit in rich measure, and He bids us clear the way by self-renunciation.”—*Ibid.*, vol.6, p. 43.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Friday, April 7

1. What is the specific way in which God invites the sinner to repentance?
2. Because of the important role of the Holy Spirit, what warning is given us?
3. How is it possible for us to grieve the Holy Spirit today?
4. What is involved in sinning against the Holy Ghost?
5. What should we be continually evaluating about our personal life?

**Suggested Reading: The Desire of Ages, pp. 537-541**

Bethany was so near Jerusalem that the news of the raising of Lazarus was soon carried to the city. Through spies who had witnessed the miracle the Jewish rulers were speedily in possession of the facts. A meeting of the Sanhedrin was at once called to decide as to what should be done. Christ had now fully made manifest His control of death and the grave. That mighty miracle was the crowning evidence offered by God to men that He had sent His Son into the world for their salvation. It was a demonstration of divine power sufficient to convince every mind that was under the control of reason and enlightened conscience. Many who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus were led to believe on Jesus. But the hatred of the priests against Him was intensified. They had rejected all lesser evidence of His divinity, and they were only enraged at this new miracle. The dead had been raised in the full light of day, and before a crowd of witnesses. No artifice could explain away such evidence. For this very reason the enmity of the priests grew deadlier. They were more than ever determined to put a stop to Christ’s work. **(DA 537.1)**

The Sadducees, though not favorable to Christ, had not been so full of malignity toward Him as were the Pharisees. Their hatred had not been so bitter. But they were now thoroughly alarmed. They did not believe in a resurrection of the dead. Producing so-called science, they had reasoned that it would be an impossibility for a dead body to be brought to life. But by a few words from Christ their theory had been overthrown. They were shown to be ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. They could see no possibility of removing the impression made on the people by the miracle. How could men be turned away from Him who had prevailed to rob the grave of its dead? Lying reports were put in circulation, but the miracle could not be denied, and how to counteract its effect they knew not. Thus far the Sadducees had not encouraged the plan of putting Christ to death. But after the resurrection of Lazarus they decided that only by His death could His fearless denunciations against them be stopped. **(DA 537.2)**

The Pharisees believed in the resurrection, and they could not but see that this miracle was an evidence that the Messiah was among them. But they had ever opposed Christ’s

work. From the first they had hated Him because He had exposed their hypocritical pretensions. He had torn aside the cloak of rigorous rites under which their moral deformity was hidden. The pure religion that He taught had condemned their hollow professions of piety. They thirsted to be revenged upon Him for His pointed rebukes. They had tried to provoke Him to say or do something that would give them occasion to condemn Him. Several times they had attempted to stone Him, but He had quietly withdrawn, and they had lost sight of Him. **(DA 538.1)**

The miracles He performed on the Sabbath were all for the relief of the afflicted, but the Pharisees had sought to condemn Him as a Sabbathbreaker. They had tried to arouse the Herodians against Him. They represented that He was seeking to set up a rival kingdom, and consulted with them how to destroy Him. To excite the Romans against Him, they had represented Him as trying to subvert their authority. They had tried every pretext to cut Him off from influencing the people. But so far their attempts had been foiled. The multitudes who witnessed His works of mercy and heard His pure and holy teachings knew that these were not the deeds and words of a Sabbathbreaker or blasphemer. Even the officers sent by the Pharisees had been so influenced by His words that they could not lay hands on Him. In desperation the Jews had finally passed an edict that any man who professed faith in Jesus should be cast out of the synagogue. **(DA 538.2)**

So, as the priests, the rulers, and the elders gathered for consultation, it was their fixed determination to silence Him who did such marvelous works that all men wondered. Pharisees and Sadducees were more nearly united than ever before. Divided hitherto, they became one in their opposition to Christ. Nicodemus and Joseph had, in former councils, prevented the condemnation of Jesus, and for this reason they were not now summoned. There were present at the council other influential men who believed on Jesus, but their influence prevailed nothing against that of the malignant Pharisees. **(DA 538.3)**

Yet the members of the council were not all agreed. The Sanhedrin was not at this time a legal assembly. It existed only by tolerance. Some of its number questioned the wisdom of putting Christ to death. They feared that this would excite an insurrection among the people, causing the Romans to withhold further favors from the priesthood, and to take from them the power they still held. The Sadducees were united in their hatred of Christ, yet they were inclined to be cautious in their movements, fearing that the Romans would deprive them of their high standing. **(DA 539.1)**

In this council, assembled to plan the death of Christ, the Witness was present who heard the boastful words of Nebuchadnezzar, who witnessed the idolatrous feast of Belshazzar, who was present when Christ in Nazareth announced Himself the Anointed One. This Witness was now impressing the rulers with the work they were doing. Events in the life of Christ rose up before them with a distinctness that alarmed them. They remembered the scene in the temple, when Jesus, then a child of twelve, stood before the learned doctors of the law, asking them questions at which they wondered. The miracle just performed bore witness that Jesus was none other than the Son of God. In their true significance, the Old Testament Scriptures regarding Christ flashed before their minds. Perplexed and troubled, the rulers asked, "What do we?" **John 11:47**. There was a division in the council. Under the impression of the Holy Spirit, the priests and rulers could not banish the conviction that they were fighting against God. **(DA 539.2)**

While the council was at the height of its perplexity, Caiaphas the high priest arose. Caiaphas was a proud and cruel man, overbearing and intolerant. Among his family connections were Sadducees, proud, bold, reckless, full of ambition and cruelty, which they hid under a cloak of pretended righteousness. Caiaphas had studied the prophecies, and although ignorant of their true meaning, he spoke with great authority and assurance: “Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” **John 11:50**. Even if Jesus were innocent, urged the high priest, He must be put out of the way. He was troublesome, drawing the people to Himself, and lessening the authority of the rulers. He was only one; it was better that He should die than that the authority of the rulers should be weakened. If the people were to lose confidence in their rulers, the national power would be destroyed. Caiaphas urged that after this miracle the followers of Jesus would likely rise in revolt. The Romans will then come, he said, and will close our temple, and abolish our laws, destroying us as a nation. What is the life of this Galilean worth in comparison with the life of the nation? If He stands in the way of Israel’s well-being, is it not doing God a service to remove Him? Better that one man perish than that the whole nation be destroyed. **(DA 539.3)**

In declaring that one man should die for the nation, Caiaphas indicated that he had some knowledge of the prophecies, although it was very limited. But John, in his account of this scene, takes up the prophecy, and shows its broad and deep significance. He says, “And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” **John 11:52**. How blindly did the haughty Caiaphas acknowledge the Saviour’s mission! **(DA 540.1)**

On the lips of Caiaphas this most precious truth was turned into a lie. The policy he advocated was based on a principle borrowed from heathenism. Among the heathen, the dim consciousness that one was to die for the human race had led to the offering of human sacrifices. So Caiaphas proposed by the sacrifice of Jesus to save the guilty nation, not from transgression, but in transgression, that they might continue in sin. And by his reasoning he thought to silence the remonstrances of those who might dare to say that as yet nothing worthy of death had been found in Jesus. **(DA 540.2)**

At this council Christ’s enemies had been deeply convicted. The Holy Spirit had impressed their minds. But Satan strove to gain control of them. He urged upon their notice the grievances they had suffered on account of Christ. How little He had honored their righteousness. He presented a righteousness far greater, which all who would be children of God must possess. Taking no notice of their forms and ceremonies, He had encouraged sinners to go directly to God as a merciful Father, and make known their wants. Thus, in their opinion, He had set aside the priesthood. He had refused to acknowledge the theology of the rabbinical schools. He had exposed the evil practices of the priests, and had irreparably hurt their influence. He had injured the effect of their maxims and traditions, declaring that though they strictly enforced the ritual law, they made void the law of God. All this Satan now brought to their minds. **(DA 540.3)**

Satan told them that in order to maintain their authority, they must put Jesus to death. This counsel they followed. The fact that they might lose the power they then exercised, was, they thought, sufficient reason for coming to some decision. With the exception of

a few who dared not speak their minds, the Sanhedrin received the words of Caiaphas as the words of God. Relief came to the council; the discord ceased. They resolved to put Christ to death at the first favorable opportunity. In rejecting the proof of the divinity of Jesus, these priests and rulers had locked themselves in impenetrable darkness. They had come wholly under the sway of Satan, to be hurried by him over the brink of eternal ruin. Yet such was their deception that they were well pleased with themselves. They regarded themselves as patriots, who were seeking the nation's salvation. **(DA 541.1)**

The Sanhedrin feared, however, to take rash measures against Jesus, lest the people should become incensed, and the violence meditated toward Him should fall upon themselves. On this account the council delayed to execute the sentence they had pronounced. The Saviour understood the plotting of the priests. He knew that they longed to remove Him, and that their purpose would soon be accomplished. But it was not His place to hasten the crisis, and He withdrew from that region, taking the disciples with Him. Thus by His own example Jesus again enforced the instruction He had given to the disciples, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." **Matthew 10:23**. There was a wide field in which to work for the salvation of souls; and unless loyalty to Him required it, the Lord's servants were not to imperil their lives. **(DA 541.2)**

Jesus had now given three years of public labor to the world. His example of self-denial and disinterested benevolence was before them. His life of purity, of suffering and devotion, was known to all. Yet this short period of three years was as long as the world could endure the presence of its Redeemer. **(DA 541.3)**

His life had been one of persecution and insult. Driven from Bethlehem by a jealous king, rejected by His own people at Nazareth, condemned to death without a cause at Jerusalem, Jesus, with His few faithful followers, found a temporary asylum in a strange city. He who was ever touched by human woe, who healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb, who fed the hungry and comforted the sorrowful, was driven from the people He had labored to save. He who walked upon the heaving billows, and by a word silenced their angry roaring, who cast out devils that in departing acknowledged Him to be the Son of God, who broke the slumbers of the dead, who held thousands entranced by His words of wisdom, was unable to reach the hearts of those who were blinded by prejudice and hatred, and who stubbornly rejected the light. **(DA 541.4)**