Living in Light

MEMORY VERSE: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4).

"The Sun of Righteousness has been shining upon the church to dispel the darkness and to call the attention of God's people to the preparation essential for those who would shine as lights in the world."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 166.

Suggested Readings: Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 309-313; Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 711-718. (At the bottom of this page)

1. VIGILANCE IN PRAYER Sun, Dec 6

a. Seeing prophecy unfolding right before our eyes, what must we ever keep in mind? 1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2; Ecclesiastes 8:5.

1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2
But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. **2** For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Ecclesiastes 8:5
Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

"We must have a greater nearness to God. Much less of self and much more of Jesus Christ and His grace must be brought into our everyday life. We are living in an important period of this world's history. The end of all things is at hand; the sands of time are fast running out; soon in heaven it will be said: 'It is done' (Revelation 21:6). 'He that is holy, let him be holy still,' 'he which is filthy, let him be filthy still' (Revelation 22:11).

"Let our testimonies be sharpened up; let us have a firmer hold on God. I cannot refrain from prayer at one, two, and three o'clock in the morning for the Lord to work upon the hearts of the people. I think of all heaven being interested in the work that is going on upon the earth. Ministering angels are waiting about the throne to instantly obey the mandate of Jesus Christ to answer every prayer offered in earnest, living faith."—Selected Messages, bk. 2, pp. 376, 377.

"Thank God, all will not be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There will be faithful ones who will discern the signs of the times. While a large

number professing present truth will deny their faith by their works, there will be some who will endure unto the end."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 10.

2. WATCHFULNESS NEEDED — Mon, Dec 7

a. Living in the last days, what reality is faced? Isaiah 13:9; Luke 17:28-30.

Isaiah 13:9
Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Luke 17:28-30
Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; **29** But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. **30** Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

"The state of corruption and apostasy that in the last days would exist in the religious world, was presented to the prophet John in the vision of Babylon, 'that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' Revelation 17:18. Before its destruction the call is to be given from heaven, 'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' Revelation 18:4. As in the days of Noah and Lot, there must be a marked separation from sin and sinners. There can be no compromise between God and the world, no turning back to secure earthly treasures. 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' Matthew 6:24.

"Like the dwellers in the vale of Siddim, the people are dreaming of prosperity and peace. 'Escape for thy life,' is the warning from the angels of God; but other voices are heard saying, 'Be not excited; there is no cause for alarm.' The multitudes cry, 'Peace and safety,' while Heaven declares that swift destruction is about to come upon the transgressor."—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 167.

b. Despite flowery promises of earthly glory from influential people, of what must we all be aware? 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

1 Thessalonians 5:3
For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

"Lawyers, mechanics, farmers, traders, and even ministers from the pulpit are crying, 'Peace and safety,' when destruction is fast coming upon them.

"Belief in the near coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven will not cause the true Christian to become neglectful and careless of the ordinary business of life. The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly, but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness. Those who flatter

themselves that careless inattention to the things of this life is an evidence of their spirituality and of their separation from the world are under a great deception. Their veracity, faithfulness, and integrity are tested and proved in temporal things. If they are faithful in that which is least they will be faithful in much. . . .

"Here is where many will fail to bear the test. They develop their true character in the management of temporal concerns. They manifest unfaithfulness, scheming, dishonesty, in dealing with their fellow men. They do not consider that their hold upon the future, immortal life depends upon how they conduct themselves in the concerns of this life, and that the strictest integrity is indispensable to the formation of a righteous character."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 309, 310.

3. CLEAR AS THE DAY — Tue, Dec 8

a. How are God's people to be distinct in this earth? 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. **5** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. **6** ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

"God would have His people, in words and in deportment, declare to the world that no earthly attractions or worldly possessions are of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of the heavenly inheritance. Those who are truly children of the light and of the day will not be vain or frivolous in conversation, in dress, or in deportment, but sober, contemplative, constantly exerting an influence to attract souls to the Redeemer. The love of Christ, reflected from the cross, is pleading in behalf of the sinner, drawing him by cords of infinite love to the peace and happiness found in our Saviour. God enjoins upon all His followers to bear a living testimony in unmistakable language by their conduct, their dress and conversation, in all the pursuits of life, that the power of true godliness is profitable to all in this life and in the life to come; that this alone can satisfy the soul of the receiver."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 580, 581.

"In the warning to 'watch and pray,' Jesus has indicated the only safe course. There is need of watchfulness. Our own hearts are deceitful; we are compassed with the weaknesses and frailties of humanity, and Satan is intent to destroy. We may be off our guard, but our adversary is never idle. Knowing his tireless vigilance, let us not sleep, as do others, but 'watch and be sober.' The spirit and influence of the world must be met, but they must not be allowed to take possession of the mind and heart.

"The active man of business, as he is brought in contact with the world, will have trials, perplexity, and anxious care. He will find that there is a tendency to let worldly thoughts and plans take the lead, and that it will require effort, and discipline of mind and soul, to maintain a devotional spirit. But divine grace waits

his demand, and his great need is the mighty argument that will prevail with God." —Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 409, 410.

b. Why can we have hope—and act accordingly? 1 Thessalonians 5:7-11.

1 Thessalonians 5:7-11
For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. **8** But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. **9** For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, **10** Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. **11** ¶ Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

"Paul teaches that it is sinful to be indifferent to the signs which are to precede the second coming of Christ. Those guilty of this neglect he calls children of the night and of darkness. . . .

"The watchful Christian is a working Christian, seeking zealously to do all in his power for the advancement of the gospel."—The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 260, 261.

4. PATIENT APPRECIATION — Wed, Dec 9

a. Name one reminder needed in Thessalonica. 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13.

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13
And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; **13** And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

"The Thessalonian believers were greatly annoyed by men coming among them with fanatical ideas and doctrines. Some were 'disorderly, working not at all, but . . . busybodies.' The church had been properly organized, and officers had been appointed to act as ministers and deacons. But there were some, self-willed and impetuous, who refused to be subordinate to those who held positions of authority in the church. They claimed not only the right of private judgment, but that of publicly urging their views upon the church. In view of this, Paul called the attention of the Thessalonians to the respect and deference due to those who had been chosen to occupy positions of authority in the church."—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 261.

b. What general admonitions are needed by all? 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15.

1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15
Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. **15** See that none

render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

"When death claims one of our number, what are our memories of the treatment he has received? Are the pictures upon memory's walls pleasant to reflect upon? Are they memories of kind words spoken, of sympathy given at the right time? Have his brethren turned away the evil surmisings of indiscreet meddlers? Have they vindicated his cause? Have they been faithful to the inspired injunction: 'Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak'? . . .

"When he with whom we have associated in the church is dead, when we know that his account in the books of heaven is fixed, and that he must meet that record in the judgment, what are the reflections of his brethren as to the course they have pursued toward him? What has been their influence upon him? How clearly now every harsh word, every unadvised act, is called to mind! How differently they would conduct themselves if they had another trial!"—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 489.

"The more you are jostled, misapprehended, misstated, misrepresented, the more evidence you have that you are doing a work for the Master, and the more closely you must cling to your Saviour. In all your difficulties be calm and undisturbed, patient and forbearing, not rendering evil for evil, but good for evil. Look to the top of the ladder. God is above it. His glory shines on every soul ascending heavenward. Jesus is this ladder. Climb up by Him, cling to Him, and erelong you will step off the ladder into His everlasting kingdom."—Ibid., vol. 8, p. 130.

5. KEYS TO SUCCESS — Thur, Dec 10

a. When in trial, what are we to remember? 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
Rejoice evermore. **17** Pray without ceasing. **18** In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

"You will meet with trials, but hold fast your integrity. Never show anything but a noble spirit. The heavenly universe is watching the conflict. Satan is watching, anxious to catch you off your guard, anxious to see you acting impetuously, that he may obtain the advantage over you. Fight manfully the battle of the Lord. Do just as Christ would do were He in your place. Let there be no inconsistency in your faith or practice. Do not allow yourself to become wrought up over the vexatious troubles that are constantly arising. Keep calm, think of Jesus, and do what you can to please Him. The grace of Christ and the Holy Spirit are God's gifts to you, that you may be strengthened with all might in the inner man."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, p. 132.

"If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change your present order and mingle praise

with your petitions. When you consider His goodness and mercies you will find that He will consider your wants."—Ibid., vol. 5, p. 317.

b. Name some habits of victorious thinking. 1 Thessalonians 5:19–21.

1 Thessalonians 5:19–21
Quench not the Spirit. **20** Despise not prophesyings. **21** Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

"Men have the power to quench the Spirit of God; the power of choosing is left with them. They are allowed freedom of action. They may be obedient through the name and grace of our Redeemer, or they may be disobedient, and realize the consequences. . . .

"The Spirit of God is continually convicting, and souls are deciding for or against the truth."—Gospel Workers, p. 174.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS — Fri, Dec 11

1. How can I develop more vigilant prayer habits—and why is it important?
2. When we hear claims of "peace and safety," what should we remember?
3. What distinguishes the children of light/day from those of darkness/night?
4. Whom do I know that may be aggravating but should be appreciated?
5. What is to accompany our petitions to God?

Suggested Readings: Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 309-313

These words of Christ should sink into the hearts of all who believe present truth: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Our danger is presented before us by Christ Himself. He knew the perils we should meet in these last days, and would have us prepare for them. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." They were eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the Flood came and swept them all away. The day of God will find men absorbed in like manner in the business and pleasures of the world, in feasting and gluttony, and in indulging perverted appetite in the defiling use of liquor and the narcotic tobacco. This is already the condition of our world, and these indulgences are found even among God's professed people, some of whom are following the customs and partaking of the sins of the world. Lawyers, mechanics, farmers, traders, and even ministers from the pulpit are crying, "Peace and safety," when destruction is fast coming upon them.

Belief in the near coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven will not cause the true Christian to become neglectful and careless of the ordinary business of life. The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly,

but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness. Those who flatter themselves that careless inattention to the things of this life is an evidence of their spirituality and of their separation from the world are under a great deception. Their veracity, faithfulness, and integrity are tested and proved in temporal things. If they are faithful in that which is least they will be faithful in much.
I have been shown that here is where many will fail to bear the test. They develop their true character in the management of temporal concerns. They manifest unfaithfulness, scheming, dishonesty, in dealing with their fellow men. They do not consider that their hold upon the future, immortal life depends upon how they conduct themselves in the concerns of this life, and that the strictest integrity is indispensable to the formation of a righteous character. Dishonesty is practiced all through our ranks, and this is the cause of lukewarmness on the part of many who profess to believe the truth. They are not connected with Christ and are deceiving their own souls. I am pained to make the statement that there is an alarming lack of honesty even among Sabbathkeepers.

I was referred to Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Here we have the injunction of the Great Teacher: "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." This command of Christ is of the highest importance and should be strictly obeyed. It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. How many carry out in their lives the principle Christ has here enjoined, and deal with others just as they would wish to be dealt with under similar circumstances? Reader, please answer.

An honest man, according to Christ's measurement, is one who will manifest unbending integrity. Deceitful weights and false balances, with which many seek to advance their interests in the world, are abomination in the sight of God. Yet many who profess to keep the commandments of God are dealing with false weights and false balances. When a man is indeed connected with God, and is keeping His law in truth, his life will reveal the fact; for all his actions will be in harmony with the teachings of Christ. He will not sell his honor for gain. His principles are built upon the sure foundation, and his conduct in worldly matters is a transcript of his principles. Firm integrity shines forth as gold amid the dross and rubbish of the world. Deceit, falsehood, and unfaithfulness may be glossed over and hidden from the eyes of man, but not from the eyes of God. The angels of God, who watch the development of character and weigh moral worth, record in the books of heaven these minor transactions which reveal character. If a workman in the daily vocations of life is unfaithful and slights his work, the world will not judge incorrectly if they estimate his standard in religion according to his standard in business.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." It is not the magnitude of the matter that makes it fair or unfair. As a man deals with his fellow men, so will he deal with God. He that is unfaithful in the mammon of unrighteousness, will never be entrusted with the true riches. The children of God should not fail to remember that in all their business transactions they are being proved, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary.

Christ has said: “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” The deeds of a man’s life are the fruit he bears. If he is unfaithful and dishonest in temporal matters he is bringing forth briers and thorns; he will be unfaithful in the religious life and will rob God in tithes and offerings.

The Bible condemns in the strongest terms all falsehood, false dealing, and dishonesty. Right and wrong are plainly stated. But I was shown that God’s people have placed themselves on the enemy’s ground; they have yielded to his temptations and followed his devices until their sensibilities have become fearfully blunted. A slight deviation from truth, a little variation from the requirements of God, is thought to be, after all, not so very sinful, when pecuniary gain or loss is involved. But sin is sin, whether committed by the possessor of millions or by the beggar in the streets. Those who secure property by false representations are bringing condemnation on their souls. All that is obtained by deceit and fraud will be only a curse to the receiver.

Adam and Eve suffered the terrible consequences of disobeying the express command of God. They might have reasoned: This is a very small sin, and will never be taken into account. But God treated the matter as a fearful evil, and the woe of their transgression will be felt through all time. In the times in which we live, sins of far greater magnitude are often committed by those who profess to be God’s children. In the transaction of business, falsehoods are uttered and acted by God’s professed people that bring His frown upon them and a reproach upon His cause. The least departure from truthfulness and rectitude is a transgression of the law of God. Continual indulgence in sin accustoms the person to a habit of wrongdoing, but does not lessen the aggravated character of the sin. God has established immutable principles, which He cannot change without a revision of His whole nature. If the word of God were faithfully studied by all who profess to believe the truth, they would not be dwarfs in spiritual things. Those who disregard the requirements of God in this life would not respect His authority were they in heaven.

Every species of immorality is plainly delineated in the word of God and its result spread before us. The indulgence of the lower passions is presented before us in its most revolting character. No one, however dark may be his understanding, need to err. But I have been shown that this sin is cherished by many who profess to be walking in all the commandments of God. God will judge every man by His word.

Said Christ: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.” The Bible is an unerring guide. It demands perfect purity in word, in thought, and in action. Only virtuous and spotless characters will be permitted to enter the presence of a pure and holy God. The word of God, if studied and obeyed, would lead the children of men, as the Israelites were led by a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day. The Bible is God’s will expressed to man. It is the only perfect standard of character, and marks out the duty of man in every circumstance of life. There are many responsibilities resting upon us in this life, a neglect of which will not only cause suffering to ourselves, but others will sustain loss in consequence.

Men and women professing to revere the Bible and follow its teachings fail in many respects to perform its requirements. In the training of children they follow their own perverse natures rather than the revealed will of God. This neglect of duty involves the loss of thousands of souls. The Bible lays down rules for the correct discipline of children. Were these requirements of God heeded by parents, we should today see a different class of youth coming upon the stage of action. But parents who profess to be Bible readers and Bible followers are going directly contrary to its teachings. We hear the cry of sorrow and anguish from fathers and mothers who bewail the conduct of their children, little realizing that they are bringing this sorrow and anguish upon themselves, and ruining their children, by their mistaken affection. They do not realize their God-given responsibilities to train their children to right habits from their babyhood.

Parents, you are in a great degree responsible for the souls of your children. Many neglect their duty during the first years of their children's lives, thinking that when they get older they will then be very careful to repress wrong and educate them in the right. But the very time for them to do this work is when the children are babes in their arms. It is not right for parents to pet and humor their children; neither is it right for them to abuse them. A firm, decided straightforward course of action will be productive of the best results.

Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 711–718.

A great crisis awaits the people of God. A crisis awaits the world. The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are now taking place before our eyes. Already the question of an amendment to the Constitution restricting liberty of conscience has been urged upon the legislators of the nation. The question of enforcing Sunday observance has become one of national interest and importance. We well know what the result of this movement will be. But are we ready for the issue? Have we faithfully discharged the duty which God has committed to us of giving the people warning of the danger before them?

There are many, even of those engaged in this movement for Sunday enforcement, who are blinded to the results which will follow this action. They do not see that they are striking directly against religious liberty. There are many who have never understood the claims of the Bible Sabbath and the false foundation upon which the Sunday institution rests. Any movement in favor of religious legislation is really an act of concession to the papacy, which for so many ages has steadily warred against liberty of conscience. Sunday observance owes its existence as a so-called Christian institution to "the mystery of iniquity;" and its enforcement will be a virtual recognition of the principles which are the very cornerstone of Romanism. When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act join hands with popery; it will be nothing else than giving life to the tyranny which has long been eagerly watching its opportunity to spring again into active despotism.

The National Reform movement, exercising the power of religious legislation, will, when fully developed, manifest the same intolerance and oppression that have

prevailed in past ages. Human councils then assumed the prerogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic power liberty of conscience; and imprisonment, exile, and death followed for those who opposed their dictates. If popery or its principles shall again be legislated into power, the fires of persecution will be rekindled against those who will not sacrifice conscience and the truth in deference to popular errors. This evil is on the point of realization.
When God has given us light showing the dangers before us, how can we stand clear in His sight if we neglect to put forth every effort in our power to bring it before the people? Can we be content to leave them to meet this momentous issue unwarned?

There is a prospect before us of a continued struggle, at the risk of imprisonment, loss of property, and even of life itself, to defend the law of God, which is made void by the laws of men. In this situation worldly policy will urge an outward compliance with the laws of the land, for the sake of peace and harmony. And there are some who will even urge such a course from the Scripture: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.... The powers that be are ordained of God.”

But what has been the course of God’s servants in ages past? When the disciples preached Christ and Him crucified, after His resurrection, the authorities commanded them not to speak any more nor to teach in the name of Jesus. “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” They continued to preach the good news of salvation through Christ, and the power of God witnessed to the message. The sick were healed, and thousands were added to the church. “Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.”

But the God of heaven, the mighty Ruler of the universe, took this matter into His own hands; for men were warring against His work. He showed them plainly that there is a ruler above man, whose authority must be respected. The Lord sent His angel by night to open the prison doors, and he brought forth these men whom God had commissioned to do His work. The rulers said, Speak not “at all nor teach in the name of Jesus;” but the heavenly messenger sent by God said, “Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.”

Those who seek to compel men to observe an institution of the papacy, and trample upon God’s authority, are doing a work similar to that of the Jewish leaders in the days of the apostles. When the laws of earthly rulers are brought into opposition to the laws of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, then those who are God’s loyal subjects will be true to Him.

We as a people have not accomplished the work which God has committed to us. We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. It is our duty, as we see the signs of approaching peril, to arouse to action. Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil, comforting themselves with the belief that this work must go on because prophecy has foretold it, and that

the Lord will shelter His people. We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience. Fervent, effectual prayer should be ascending to heaven that this calamity may be deferred until we can accomplish the work which has so long been neglected. Let there be most earnest prayer, and then let us work in harmony with our prayers. It may appear that Satan is triumphant and that truth is overborne with falsehood and error; the people over whom God has spread His shield, and the country which has been an asylum for the conscience-oppressed servants of God and defenders of His truth, may be placed in jeopardy. But God would have us recall His dealings with His people in the past to save them from their enemies. He has always chosen extremities, when there seemed no possible chance for deliverance from Satan's workings, for the manifestation of His power. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. It may be that a respite may yet be granted for God's people to awake and let their light shine. If the presence of ten righteous persons would have saved the wicked cities of the plain, is it not possible that God will yet, in answer to the prayers of His people, hold in check the workings of those who are making void His law? Shall we not humble our hearts greatly before God, flee to the mercy seat, and plead with Him to reveal His mighty power?

If our people continue in the listless attitude in which they have been, God cannot pour upon them His Spirit. They are unprepared to co-operate with Him. They are not awake to the situation and do not realize the threatened danger. They should feel now, as never before, their need of vigilance and concerted action.

The peculiar work of the third angel has not been seen in its importance. God meant that His people should be far in advance of the position which they occupy today. But now, when the time has come for them to spring into action, they have the preparation to make. When the National Reformers began to urge measures to restrict religious liberty, our leading men should have been alive to the situation and should have labored earnestly to counteract these efforts. It is not in the order of God that light has been kept from our people—the very present truth which they needed for this time. Not all our ministers who are giving the third angel's message really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of so little importance that they have not thought it necessary to give much attention to it and have even felt that in so doing they would be giving time to questions distinct from the third angel's message. May the Lord forgive our brethren for thus interpreting the very message for this time.

The people need to be aroused in regard to the dangers of the present time. The watchmen are asleep. We are years behind. Let the chief watchmen feel the urgent necessity of taking heed to themselves, lest they lose the opportunities given them to see the dangers.

If the leading men in our conferences do not now accept the message sent them by God, and fall into line for action, the churches will suffer great loss. When the watchman, seeing the sword coming, gives the trumpet a certain sound, the people along the line will echo the warning, and all will have opportunity to make ready for the conflict. But too often the leader has stood hesitating, seeming to say: "Let us not be in too great haste. There may be a mistake. We must be careful

not to raise a false alarm." The very hesitancy and uncertainty on his part is crying: "'Peace and safety.' Do not get excited. Be not alarmed. There is a great deal more made of this religious amendment question than is demanded. This agitation will all die down." Thus he virtually denies the message sent from God, and the warning which was designed to stir the churches fails to do its work. The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle. Let the watchman beware lest, through his hesitancy and delay, souls shall be left to perish, and their blood shall be required at his hand.

We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and, now that the movement is right upon us, we ask: Will our people do their duty in the matter? Can we not assist in lifting the standard and in calling to the front those who have a regard for their religious rights and privileges? The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man will be made to feel the hand of oppression. Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while His holy commandments are trodden underfoot?

While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.

God calls upon us to awake, for the end is near. Every passing hour is one of activity in the heavenly courts to make ready a people upon the earth to act a part in the great scenes that are soon to open upon us. These passing moments, that seem of so little value to us, are weighty with eternal interests. They are molding the destiny of souls for everlasting life or eternal death. The words we utter today in the ears of the people, the works we are doing, the spirit of the message we are bearing, will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

My brethren, do you realize that your own salvation, as well as the destiny of other souls, depends upon the preparation you now make for the trial before us? Have you that intensity of zeal, that piety and devotion, which will enable you to stand when opposition shall be brought against you? If God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when you will be brought before councils, and every position of truth which you hold will be severely criticized. The time that so many are now allowing to go to waste should be devoted to the charge that God has given us of preparing for the approaching crisis.

The law of God should be loved and honored by His true people now more than ever before. There is the most imperative necessity of urging the injunction of Christ upon the minds and hearts of all believers, men and women, youth and children: "Search the Scriptures." Study your Bible as you have never studied it before. Unless you arise to a higher, holier state in your religious life, you will not be ready for the appearing of our Lord. As great light has been given, God expects corresponding zeal, faithfulness, and devotion on the part of His people. There must be more spirituality, a deeper consecration to God, and a zeal in His work

that has never yet been reached. Much time should be spent in prayer, that our garments of character may be washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Especially should we, with unwavering faith, seek God for grace and power to be given to His people now. We do not believe that the time has fully come when He would have our liberties restricted. The prophet saw "four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." Another angel, ascending from the east, cried to them, saying: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." This points out the work we have now to do. A vast responsibility is devolving upon men and women of prayer throughout the land to petition that God will sweep back the cloud of evil and give a few more years of grace in which to work for the Master. Let us cry to God that the angels may hold the four winds until missionaries shall be sent to all parts of the world and shall proclaim the warning against disobeying the law of Jehovah.

God employs various agencies in preparing His people to stand in the great crisis before us. He speaks by His word and by His ministers. He arouses the watchmen and sends them forth with messages of warning, of reproof, and of instruction, that the people may be enlightened. The Sentinel has been in God's order, one of the voices sounding the alarm, that the people might hear and realize their danger and do the work required at the present time. The Lord intends that His people shall heed whatever He sends them. When light is presented, it is their duty, not only to receive it, but to pass it along, adding their influence in its favor, that its full force may be felt in the church and the world. The Sentinel is like a trumpet giving a certain sound; and all our people should read it carefully and then send it to some relative or friend, thus putting to the best use the light that God has given them.

For three years, warnings have been sounding forth to the world through the columns of the Sentinel; but those who profess to believe present truth have not been influenced by these danger signals as they should have been. Had our brethren used the Sentinel as it was their privilege to do; and had all been united in recommending it in every conference and in every church, as God would have them do; had the attention of our people been called to this work, which was so essential to be done for this time; had they appreciated the light which God permitted to shine upon them in warnings, in counsels, and in the delineation of events that are taking place, we should not now, as a people, be so far behind in making preparation for the work. There have been surprising indifference and inactivity in this time of peril. Truth, present truth, is what the people need; and if the startling significance of the movements now in progress in regard to the religious amendments had been realized by our brethren in every church; if they had discerned in these movements the plain, direct fulfillment of prophecy, calling upon them to arouse to the demands of the crisis, they would not now be in such stupor and deathlike slumber.