

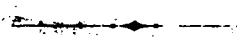
TESTIMONY

FOR

THE CHURCH,

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### YOUNG SABBATH-KEEPERS.

YOUNG Sabbath-keepers are given to pleasure-seeking. I saw that there is not one in twenty that knows what experimental religion is. They are constantly grasping after something to satisfy their desire for change, for amusement, and unless they are undeceived and their sensibilities aroused, so that they can say from the heart, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord," they are not worthy of him, and will come short of everlasting life. The young, generally, are in a terrible deception, and yet profess godliness. Their unconsecrated lives are a reproach to the Christian name, and their example is a snare to others. They hinder the sinner, for in nearly every respect they are no better than unbelievers. They have the word of God, but its warnings, admonitions, reproofs and corrections are unheeded, as are also the encouragements and promises to the obedient and faithful. God's promises are all on condition of humble obedience. One pattern only is given the young, and I feel alarmed as I witness everywhere, in every place, the frivolity of young men and women who profess to believe the truth. How do

their lives compare with the life of Christ? God does not seem to be in their thoughts. Their minds are filled with nonsense. Their conversation is only empty, vain talk. Their ear is keen for music, and the Devil knows what organs to excite to animate, to engross, and charm the mind, so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for a growth in grace, for divine knowledge, are wanting.

I was shown that the youth must take a higher stand, and make the word of God the man of their counsel and their guide. I saw that solemn responsibilities rest upon the young, which they lightly regard. The introduction of music into their homes, instead of inciting to holiness and spirituality, has been the means of diverting their minds from the truth. Frivolous songs, and the popular sheet-music of the day seem congenial to their taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should be devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find at the throne of grace alone, while humbly making known his wants, and with strong cries and tears pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of Satan. Satan is leading the young captive. Oh! what can I say to lead them to break his power of infatuation! He is a skillful charmer, luring on the young to perdition. Listen to the instructions from the inspired book of God. I

saw that Satan had blinded the minds of the youth, that they could not comprehend the truths of God's word. Their sensibilities were so blunted that they regard not the injunctions of the holy apostle:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the [new] earth.” Children who dishonor their parents, and disobey them, and disregard their advice and instructions, can have no part in the earth made new. The purified new earth will be no place for the rebellious, the disobedient, the unthankful, ungrateful son or daughter. Unless such learn obedience and submission here, they will never learn the lesson hereafter, and the peace of the ransomed will never be marred by the disobedient, unruly, unsubmitive children: No commandment-breaker can inherit the kingdom of Heaven. Will all the youth please read the fifth commandment spoken by Jehovah from Sinai, and engraven with his own finger upon tables of stone? “Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” “Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”

I was referred to many passages of Scripture that are plain, instructing the young, showing them clearly the will of God concerning them. These plain teachings they must meet in the judgment. Yet there is not one young man

or woman in twenty who professes the present truth, who heeds these Bible teachings. They do not read the word of God enough to know its claims upon them, and yet these truths will judge them in the great day of God, when young and old will be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

Says John, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you; and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

This exhortation to young men extends also to young women. Their youth does not excuse them from the responsibilities resting upon them. The youth are strong. They are not worn down with the weight of years, and with cares. Their affections are ardent, and if they are withdrawn from the world, and are placed upon Christ and Heaven, doing the will of God, they will have a hope of the better life that is enduring, and they will abide forever, being crowned with glory, honor, immortality, eternal life. If the youth live to gratify the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, they are seeking for the things of the world, are pleasing their great adversary, and separating themselves

from the Father. And when these things that are sought after pass away, their hopes are blasted and their expectations perish. Separated from God, then will they bitterly repent their folly of serving their own pleasure, of gratifying their own desires, and for a few frivolous enjoyments, of selling a life of immortal bliss that they might have enjoyed forevermore. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," says the inspired apostle. Then the warning, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is an alarming fact that the love of the world predominates in the minds of the young. They decidedly love the world and the things that are in the world, and for this very reason the love of God finds no room in their hearts. Their pleasures are found in the world, and in the things of the world, and they are strangers to the Father and the graces of his Spirit. Frivolity and fashion, and empty, vain talking and laughing, characterize the life of the youth generally, and God is dishonored. Titus exhorts the youth to sobriety. "Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

I entreat the youth for their souls' sake to heed the exhortation of the inspired apostle. All these gracious instructions, warnings, and reproofs, will be either a savor of life unto life

or of death unto death. Many of the young are reckless in their conversation. They choose to forget that by their words they shall be justified, or by their words be condemned. Take heed to the words of our Saviour: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of the heart bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." How little regard is paid even to the instructions of the heavenly Teacher. The word of God is either not studied at all, or if it is, its solemn truths are not heeded, and these plain truths will rise up in judgment and condemn them.

Words and acts testify plainly what is in the heart. If vanity and pride, love of self and love of dress fill the heart, the conversation will be upon the fashions, the dress, and the appearance, but not on Christ or the kingdom of Heaven. If envious feelings dwell in the heart, the same will be manifested in words and acts. Those who measure themselves by others, and do as others do, and make no higher attainments, and excuse themselves over the wrongs and faults of others, are feeding on husks, and will remain spiritual dwarfs as long as they gratify the Devil by thus indulging their own unconsecrated feelings. Some dwell upon what they shall eat and drink, and where-withal they shall be clothed. Their hearts are

filled with these thoughts, and they flow out from the abundance of the heart, as though these things were their grand aim in life, their highest attainment. They forget the words of Christ, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The youth have their hearts filled with their own love of self, which is manifested in their desire to see their faces daguerretyped by the artist; and they will not be satisfied with being once represented, but they will sit again and again for their picture, hoping they will appear a little better, and excel all their previous efforts, and appear really more beautiful than the original. Their Lord's money is squandered in this way, and what is gained? Merely their poor shadow upon paper. The hours that ought to have been devoted to prayer, are occupied upon their own poor selves,—precious hours of probation are thus wasted. Satan is gratified to have the attention of youth attracted by anything to divert their minds from God, so that the deceiver can steal a march upon them, and they, unprepared for his attacks, be ensnared. They are not aware that the great Heavenly Artist is taking cognizance of every act, every word, and their deportment; and that even the thoughts and intents of the heart stand faithfully delineated. Every defect in the moral character stands forth revealed to the gaze of angels, and they will have the faithful picture presented to them in all its deformity at the execution of the judgment. Those vain, frivolous words are all written in the book.

Those false words are written. Those deceptive acts, with the motives concealed from human eyes, but discerned by the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, are all written in living characters. Every selfish act is exposed. The young generally conduct themselves as though the precious hours of probation, while mercy lingers, are one grand holiday, and that they are placed in this world merely for their own amusement, to be gratified with a continued round of excitement. Satan has been making special efforts to lead the youth to find happiness in worldly amusements, and to justify themselves in thus doing, by endeavoring to show that these amusements are harmless, innocent, and even important for health. The impression has been given by some physicians that spirituality and devotion to God are detrimental to health. This suits the adversary of souls well. There are persons with diseased imaginations who do not rightly represent the religion of Christ; such have not the pure religion of the Bible. Some are scourging themselves all through their life because of their sins; all they can see is an offended God of justice. Christ and his redeeming power, through the merits of his blood, they fail to see. Such have not faith. This class are generally those who have not well-balanced minds. Through disease transmitted to them from their parents, and an erroneous education in youth, they have imbibed wrong habits, injuring the constitution, affecting the brain, causing the moral organs to be diseased, and making it impossible for them

upon all points to think and act rationally. They have not well-balanced minds. Godliness and righteousness is not destructive to health, but is health to the body and strength to the soul. Says Peter: "He that will love life, and see good days, let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it: for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled."

The consciousness of right-doing is the best medicine for diseased bodies and minds. The special blessing of God resting upon the receiver is health and strength. A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health. To have a consciousness that the eyes of the Lord are upon us, and his ears open to hear our prayers, is a satisfaction indeed. To know that we have a never-failing Friend in whom we can confide all the secrets of the soul, is a privilege which words can never express. Those whose moral faculties are beclouded by disease are not the ones to rightly represent the Christian life, or the beauties of holiness. They are too often in the fire of fanaticism, or the water of cold indifference or stolid gloom.

The words of Christ are of more worth than the opinions of all the physicians in the universe. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This is the first great

object,—the kingdom of Heaven, the righteousness of Christ. Other objects to be attained should be secondary to these. Satan will present the path of holiness as difficult, while those of worldly pleasures will be strewn with flowers.

In false and flattering colors will the tempter array the world with its pleasures before you. Vanity is one of the strongest traits of our depraved natures, and Satan knows that he can successfully appeal to it. He will flatter you through his agents. You may receive praise of men and women. It may gratify your vanity, foster in you pride and self-esteem, and you may think that it really is a great pity for you, with such advantages, such attractions, to come out from the world and be separate, and become a Christian, to forsake your companions, and be alike dead to their praise or censure. Satan tells you that with the advantages you possess you could to a high degree enjoy the pleasures of the world. Let such consider that the pleasures of earth will have an end, and that which they sow they shall also reap. Are personal attractions, ability, or talents, too valuable to devote to God, the author of your being? he who watches over you every moment? Are your qualifications too precious to devote to God?

The young will urge that they need something to enliven and divert the mind. I saw that there was pleasure in industry, a satisfaction in pursuing a life of usefulness. Some still urge that they must have something to interest the mind, when business ceases,—

some mental occupation or amusement to which the mind can turn for relief and refreshment amid cares and wearing labor. The Christian's hope is just what is needed. Religion will prove to the believer a comforter and a sure guide to the fountain of true happiness. I saw that the young should study the word of God, and give themselves to meditation and prayer, and they will find that their spare moments cannot be better employed. Young friends, you should take time to prove your own selves, whether you are in the love of God. Be diligent to make your calling and election sure. All depends upon your course of action, whether you secure to yourselves the better life. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." For the young to contemplate the future abode of the righteous, the everlasting reward, is a high and ennobling theme. Dwell upon the marvelous plan of salvation, the great sacrifice made by the King of glory to prepare the way that you might be elevated through the merits of his blood, and by obedience finally be exalted to the throne of Christ. This subject should engage the noblest contemplation of the mind. To be brought into favor with God,—what a privilege! To commune with Him,—what can more elevate, refine, and exalt us above the frivolous pleasures of earth? To have our corrupt natures renovated by grace, our lustful appetites and animal propensities in subjection, and we standing forth with noble, moral independence, achieving victories

every day, will give peace of conscience which can arise alone from right doing.

I saw, young friends, that with such employment and diversion as this, you might be happy. But the reason you are restless is, you do not seek to the only true source for happiness. You are ever trying to find *out* of Christ that enjoyment which is found alone *in* him. In him are no disappointed hopes. Prayer! Oh, how is this precious privilege neglected. The reading of the word of God prepares the mind for prayer. One of the greatest reasons why you have so little disposition to draw nearer to God by prayer is, you have unfitted yourselves for this sacred work by reading fascinating stories, which have excited the imagination and aroused unholy passions. The word of God becomes distasteful, the hour of prayer is not thought of. Prayer is the strength of the Christian. When alone, he is not alone; he feels the presence of One who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway."

The young want just what they have not, namely, RELIGION. Nothing can take the place of it. Profession alone is nothing. Names are registered upon the church-books upon earth, but not in the book of life.

I saw that there is not one of the youth in twenty who knows what experimental religion is. They serve themselves, and yet profess to be servants of Christ; but unless the spell which is upon the youth is broken, they will soon realize that the portion of the transgressor is theirs. As for self-denial or sacri-

fice for the truth's sake, they have found an easier way above it all. As for the earnest pleadings with tears and strong cries to God for his pardoning grace, and strength from him to resist the temptations of Satan, they have found it unnecessary to be so earnest and zealous; they can get along well without. Christ, the King of glory, went often alone in the mountains and desert places to pour out his soul's request to his Father, but sinful man, in whom is no strength, thinks he can live without so much prayer.

Christ is their pattern, his life was an example of good works. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He wept over Jerusalem, because they would not be saved by accepting the redemption he offered them. They would not come to him that they might have life. Compare your course of life with that of your Master, who made so great a sacrifice that you might be saved. He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, frequently spending whole nights upon the damp ground in agonizing prayer. You are seeking your own pleasure. Listen to the frivolous, light and vain conversation, hear the laugh, the jesting, the joking. Is this imitating the pattern? Still listen,—is Jesus mentioned? Is the truth the theme of conversation? Are they glorying in the cross of Christ? It is this fashion, that bonnet, that dress, what that young man said, or that young lady said, or the amusements they are planning. What glee! Are angels attracted and pressing close around them to ward off the weight of darkness Satan is

pressing in upon and around them? Oh, no. See, they turn away in sorrow. I see even a tear upon the faces of these angels. Can it be that angels of God are made to weep? It is even so.

High and eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words, the acts, the doings of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around that dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are here assembled, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather the light which enshrouds them closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon the countenance. Behold angels weeping. This I saw acted over a number of times, all through the ranks of Sabbath-keepers, and especially in Battle Creek. Music has occupied the hours which should be devoted to prayer. Music is the idol which many professed Sabbath-keeping Christians worship. The Devil has no objection to music, if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God, and engage the time which should be devoted to his service, and which will exert the strongest influence in holding the largest numbers, paralyzed by his power, with a pleasing infatuation. Music is made one of Satan's most attractive agencies

to ensnare souls ; but, when turned to a good account, it is a blessing. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly. When music is allowed to take the place of devotion and prayer, it is a terrible curse. Young people assemble together to sing, and, although professed Christians, frequently dishonor God and their faith by their frivolous conversation and their choice of music. It is not congenial to their taste to make sacred music their choice. I was directed to the plain teachings of God's word, which have been passed by unnoticed. All these words of inspiration will condemn in the judgment those who have not heeded them.

The apostle Paul exhorts Timothy "by the commandment of God our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ:" "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety ; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array ; but, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works."

Peter exhorts: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance ; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ; because it is written, Be ye holy ; for I am holy." -

The inspired Paul exhorts Titus to give special instructions to the church of Christ, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." He says: "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Peter exhorts the churches to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

Again he says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing."

Are the youth in that position where they can give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of their hope with meekness and fear? The youth, I saw, fail greatly to understand our position. Terrible scenes are just before them, a time of trouble which will test the value of character. Those who have the truth

abiding in them will then be developed. Those who have shunned the cross, neglected the word of life, and pay adoration to their own poor selves, will be found wanting. They are ensnared by Satan, and will then learn too late that they have made a terrible mistake. The pleasures they have sought after prove bitter in the end. Said the angel, "Sacrifice all for God. Self must die. The natural desires and propensities of the unrenewed heart must be subdued." Flee to the neglected Bible; the words of inspiration are spoken to you, pass them not lightly by, for you will meet every word again, to render an account whether you have been a doer of the work, shaping your life according to the holy teachings of God's word. Holiness of heart and life are necessary.

As servants of Jesus Christ, every one who has taken his name and has enlisted in his service, must be a good soldier of the cross. They should manifest in their lives that they are dead to the world, and that their lives are hid with Christ in God.

Paul writes to his Colossian brethren as follows: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above; not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond