

TESTIMONY
FOR
THE CHURCH.

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Importance of the Work.

I WAS shown, Jan. 3, 1875, many things relative to the great and important interests at Battle Creek, in the work of the Publishing Association, the School, and the Health Institute. If these institutions were properly conducted they would greatly advance the cause of God in the spread of the truth, and in the salvation of souls. We are living amid the perils of the last days. Consecration to God can alone fit any of us to act a part in the solemn and important closing work for this time. There are but few wholly unselfish men to fill responsible positions who have given themselves unreservedly to God, to hear his voice and study his glory. There are but few who would, if required, give their lives to advance the cause of God. Just such devotion as this God claims.

Men are deceived in thinking they are serving God when they are serving themselves and making the interest of the cause and work of God a secondary matter. Their hearts are not consecrated. God

takes no pleasure in the services of this class.

From time to time, as the cause has progressed, he has, in his providence, designated men to fill positions at Battle Creek. These men could fill important positions if they would be consecrated to God, and devote their energies to his work. These men of God's selection needed the very discipline that a devotion to the work of God would give them. He would honor these men by connecting them with himself, and giving them his Holy Spirit to qualify them for the responsibilities they were called to bear. They could not gain that breadth of experience and knowledge of the divine will without they were in positions to bear burdens and responsibilities. None should be deceived in thinking that, in connecting themselves with the work of God in Battle Creek, they will have less care, less hard labor, and less trials. Satan is more active where there is the most being done to advance the truth and to save souls.

He understands human nature, and he will not let these men alone if there is any prospect of their becoming more like Christ and more useful workers in the cause of God. Satan lays his plans to press his temptations upon the very men whom God has signified he would accept to act a part

in connection with his work. It is Satan's study how he can best war against and defeat the purposes of God. He is acquainted with the weak points as well as the strong points in the characters of men. And in a subtle manner he works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness to thwart the purposes of God by assailing the weak points in the character. And when this is done he has the way prepared to attack and overcome the stronger points of character. He gains control of the mind and blinds the understanding. He leads men who are bewildered and overcome by his devices to self-confidence and self-sufficiency at the very time when they are the weakest in moral power. They become self-deceived, and think they are in good spiritual condition.

The enemy will seize everything possible to use in his favor and to destroy souls. Testimonies have been borne in favor of individuals occupying important positions. They commenced well to lift the burdens and act their part in connection with the work of God. But Satan was pursuing them with his temptations, and they were finally overcome.

As others look upon their course of wrong, Satan suggests to their minds that there must be a mistake in the testimonies given for these persons, else these men

would not have proved themselves unworthy to bear a part in the work of God. This is just as Satan designed it should be. He would throw doubt in regard to the light God had given. These men might have withstood the temptations of Satan had they been watchful and guarded, feeling their own insufficiency, and trusting in the name and strength of Jesus to stand faithful to duty. But it should be borne in mind that conditions have ever been connected with the encouragement given these men, that if they would maintain an unselfish spirit and feel their weakness, and rely upon God, trusting not in their own wisdom and judgment, but making him their strength, they could be a great blessing in his cause and work.

But Satan has come in with his temptations, and has triumphed, almost without an exception. He has so arranged circumstances as to assail the weak points in the characters of these men, and they have been overcome. How shamefully they have injured the cause of God! How fully they have separated themselves from him by following their own corrupt hearts, their own souls may answer! But the day of God will reveal the true cause for all our disappointments in man. God is not at fault. Upon conditions he gave them encouraging promises, but they did

not comply with these conditions. They trusted to their own strength, and fell under temptations.

That which under certain circumstances could be said of men, could not be said of them under other circumstances. Men are weak in moral power, and so supremely selfish, so self-sufficient, and easily puffed up with vain conceit, that God cannot work in connection with them, and they are left to move like blind men, and reveal so great weakness, and their folly is so manifest that many are astonished that such individuals should ever have been accepted, and acknowledged as worthy of having any connection with God's work.

This is just what Satan designed. This was his object from the time he first especially tempted these men to reproach the cause of God, and to cast reflections upon the testimonies. Had they remained where their influence would not have especially been felt upon the cause of God, Satan would not have beset them so fiercely, for he could not accomplish his purpose by using them as his instruments to do a special work.

In the advancement of the work of God, that which may be said in truth of individuals at one time may not correctly be said of them at another time. The reason of this is that one month they may have

stood in innocency, living up to the best light they had, while the month following was none too short for them to be overcome by Satan's devices, and through self-confidence, fall into grievous sins, and become unfitted for the work of God.

Minds are so subject to change through the subtle temptations of Satan that it is not the best policy for my husband or myself to take the responsibility of even stating our opinions or judgment of the qualifications of persons to fill different positions, because we are made responsible for the course such individuals pursue. Notwithstanding they may have been the very persons for the place, if they had maintained the humility and firm trust in God which they had when recommended to take responsibilities. These persons change, yet are not sensible of the change in themselves. They fall under temptation, are led away from their steadfastness, and separate their connection from God. They then are controlled by the enemy, and do and say things which dishonor God and reproach his cause. Then Satan exults to see our brethren and sisters looking upon us with doubt, because we have given them encouragement and influence.

State of the World.

The state of the world was shown me as fast filling up the cup of iniquity. Violence and crime of every description are filling our world; and Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular.

The youth who walk the streets are surrounded with handbills and notices of crime and sin, presented in some novel, or to be acted at a theater. Their minds are educated into familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before them in the periodicals of the day. Everything which can excite curiosity and arouse the animal passions is brought before the young in thrilling and exciting stories.

The literature that proceeds from corrupted intellect poisons the minds of thousands in our world. Sin does not appear exceedingly sinful. They hear and read so much of debasing crime and vileness that the once tender mind, which would have recoiled with horror, becomes blunted, so that it can dwell upon the low and vile sayings and actions of men with greedy interest.

“As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.”

God will have a people zealous of good

works, standing firm amid the pollutions of this degenerate age. There ~~will~~ be a people who hold so fast to the divine strength that they will be proof against every temptation. Evil communications, in flaming handbills, may seek to speak to their senses and corrupt their minds, yet they are so united to God and angels that they are as those who see not, and those who hear not. They have a work to do which no one can do for them, which is to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. They will not be self-confident and self-sufficient. They know their weakness, and unite their ignorance to Christ's wisdom—their weakness to his strength.

Youth may have firm principle that the most powerful temptations of Satan will not draw them away from their allegiance. Samuel was a child surrounded with the most corrupting influences. He saw and heard things that grieved his soul. The Sons of Eli, who ministered in holy office, were controlled by Satan. These men polluted the whole atmosphere which surrounded them. Men and women were daily fascinated with sin and wrong; yet Samuel walked untainted. His robes of character were spotless. He did not fellowship or have the least delight in the sins which filled all Israel with fearful

reports. Samuel loved God, and kept his soul in such close connection with Heaven that an angel was sent to talk with him in reference to the sins of Eli's sons, which were corrupting Israel.

Appetite and passion are overcoming thousands of Christ's professed followers. The senses become so blunted on account of familiarity with sin that they do not abhor it, but view sin as attractive. The end of all things is at hand. Not much longer will God bear with the crimes and debasing iniquity of the children of men. Their crimes have indeed reached unto the heavens, and will soon be answered by the fearful plagues of God upon the earth. They will drink the cup of God's wrath, unmixed with mercy.

I have seen the danger of even the professed children of God being corrupted. Licentiousness is binding men and women as captives. They seem to be infatuated, powerless to resist and overcome upon the point of appetite and passion. In God there is power; in him there is strength. If they will take hold upon it, Jesus will stimulate every one who has named the name of Christ with his life-giving power. Dangers and peril surround us. And we are only safe when we feel our weakness and cling with the grasp of faith to our mighty Deliverer. It is a fearful time in.

which we live. We cannot cease watchfulness and prayer for a moment. Our helpless souls must rely on Jesus our compassionate Redeemer.

I was shown the greatness and importance of the work before us. But few feel and sense the true state of things. All will be overcome who are asleep, and who cannot realize any necessity for vigilance and alarm. Young men are arising to engage in the work of God, some of whom have scarcely any sense of the sacredness and the responsibility of the work. They have but little experience in exercising faith, and in earnest soul-hunger for the Spirit of God, which ever brings returns. Some men of good capabilities who might fill important positions do not know what spirit they are of. They can run in a jovial mood as naturally as the water flows down hill. They will talk nonsense and sport with young girls while almost daily listening to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths. These men have a head religion, but their hearts are not sanctified by the truths they hear. Such can never lead others to the fountain of living waters until they have drank of the stream themselves.

It is no time now for lightness, for vanity, or trifling. The scenes of this earth's history are soon to close. Minds that have

been left to loose thought need change. Says the apostle Peter, "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."

These loose thoughts must be gathered up and centered on God. The very thoughts should be in obedience to the will of God. Praise should not be given or expected, for this will have a tendency to foster self-confidence rather than to increase humility, to corrupt rather than purify. Men who are really qualified, and feel that they have a part to act in connection with the work of God will feel pressed beneath the sense of the sacredness of the work as a cart beneath sheaves. Now is the time for the most earnest efforts to overcome the natural feeling of the carnal heart.

Reformation Needed.

There is great necessity for a reformation among the people of God. The present state of the church leads to the inqui-

ry, Is this the correct representation of Him who gave his life for us? Are these the followers of Christ, and thus brethren of those who counted not their lives dear unto themselves? The Bible standard and the Bible description of Christ's followers will be found rare indeed. Having forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, they have hewn them out cisterns, "broken cisterns that can hold no water." Said the angel, "Lack of love and faith are the great sins of which God's people are now guilty." Lack of faith leads to carelessness, and to love of self and the world. Those who separate themselves from God and fall under temptation indulge in gross vices, and the carnal heart leads to great wickedness. And this state of things is found among many of God's professed people. They are professedly serving God while they are to all intents and purposes corrupting their ways before him. Appetite and passion will be indulged by many notwithstanding the clear light of truth points out the danger, and lifts its warning voice, Beware, restrain, deny. The wages of sin is death. Notwithstanding there are those who have made shipwreck of faith, and their example stands as a beacon to warn others from pursuing the same course, yet many will rush madly on. Satan has control of their

minds and seems to have power over their bodies.

Oh! how many flatter themselves that they have goodness and righteousness when the true light of God reveals that all their lives they have only lived to please themselves. Their whole conduct is abhorred of God. And how many are alive without the law. In their gross darkness they view themselves with complacency, but let the law of God be revealed to their consciences, as it was to Paul, and they would see that they were sold under sin, and must die to the carnal mind. Self must be slain.

How sad and fearful the mistakes many are making. They are building on the sand, and flatter themselves that they are riveted to the eternal Rock. Many who profess godliness are rushing on recklessly and are insensible of their danger, as though there was no future Judgment. A fearful retribution awaits them, and yet they are controlled by impulse and gross passion, and are filling out the dark life record for the Judgment. I lift my voice of warning to all who name the name of Christ to depart from all iniquity. Purify your souls by obeying the truth. Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. You to whom this applies know what I mean. Even you who have corrupted your ways

before the Lord, partaken of the iniquity that abounds, and blackened your souls with sin, Jesus still invites you to turn from your course of sin, and take hold of his strength, and find in him that peace, power, and grace, that will make you more than conquerors in his name.

The corruptions of this degenerate age have stained many souls who have been professedly serving God. But even now it is not too late for wrongs to be righted, and for the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour to atone in your behalf, if you repent and feel your need of pardon.

We need now to watch and pray as never before, lest we fall under the power of temptation and leave our example as a miserable wreck. We must not, as a people, become careless and look upon sin indifferently. The camp needs purging. All who name the name of Christ need to watch and pray, and guard the avenues of the soul; for Satan is at work to corrupt and destroy if he has the least advantage given him.

My brethren, God calls upon you as his followers to walk in the light. You need to be alarmed. Sin is among us, and it is not seen to be exceedingly sinful. The senses of many are benumbed by the indulgence of appetite and the familiarity with sin. We need to advance nearer

Heaven. We may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Walking in the light, and running in the way of God's commandments, do not give us the idea that we can stand still and do nothing. We must be advancing.

In self-love and self-exaltation and pride, there is great weakness, while in humility there is great strength. Our true dignity is not maintained when we think most of ourselves, but when God is in all our thoughts, and our hearts are all aglow with love to our Redeemer and love to our fellow-men. Simplicity of character and lowliness of heart will give happiness, while self-conceit will bring discontent, repining, and continual disappointment. It is learning to think less of ourselves and more of making others happy that will bring to us divine strength.

In our separation from God, in our pride and darkness, we are constantly seeking to elevate ourselves, and we forget that lowliness of mind is power. Our Saviour's power was not in a strong array of sharp words that would pierce the very soul through, but it was his gentleness and plain, unassuming manners that made him a conqueror of hearts. Pride and self-importance, when compared with lowliness and humbleness of mind, are indeed weakness. We are invited to learn of Him who was

mEEK and lowly of heart ; then we shall experience that rest and peace so much to be desired.

Love of the World.

The temptation presented by Satan to our Saviour upon the exceeding high mountain is one of the leading temptations which humanity must meet. The kingdoms of the world in their glory were presented to Christ by Satan as a gift upon condition that he would yield to him honor as to a superior. Our Saviour felt the strength of this temptation. He met it in our behalf, and conquered. He would not have been tested on this point if man were not to be tried with the same temptation. In his example of resistance, he gave us a copy of the course we should pursue when Satan should come to us individually, to lead us from our integrity.

No man can be a follower of Christ and yet place his affections upon the things of the world. John in his epistle writes, "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." Our Redeemer, who met this temptation of Satan in its fullest power, is acquainted with man's danger of yielding to temptation to love the world.

Christ identifies himself with humanity by bearing the test upon this point and overcoming in man's behalf. He has guarded with warnings those very points where Satan would best succeed in his temptations to man. He knew that Satan would gain the victory over man unless he was especially guarded upon the points of appetite and the love of worldly riches and worldly honor. He says:—

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

Here Christ has brought before us two masters, God and the world, and has plainly presented the fact that it was simply impossible for us to serve both. If our interest in, and love for, this world predominate, we shall not appreciate the things above all others worthy of our attention. The love of the world excludes the love of God, and makes our highest considerations

subordinate to our worldly interests. Thus God does not hold so exalted a place in our affections and devotions as do the things of the world.

Earthly treasures have our supreme affections, exactly as our works show. The greatest care, anxiety, and labor, are devoted to worldly interests, while eternal considerations are made secondary. Here Satan receives the homage of man, which he claimed of Christ, and failed to obtain. It is the selfish love of the world which corrupts the faith of the professed followers of Christ, and makes them weak in moral power. The more they love their earthly riches the farther they depart from God, and the less do they partake of his divine nature that would give them a sense of the corrupting influences in the world, and the dangers to which they are exposed.

In Satan's temptations, it is his purpose to make the world very attractive. He has a bewitching power to gain the affections of even the professed Christian world through love of riches and worldly honor. Any sacrifice is made by a large class of professedly Christian men to gain riches, and the better they succeed in their object, the less love they have for precious truth and the less interest for its advancement. They lose their love for God, and act like insane men. The more they are prospered