

TESTIMONY

FOR

THE CHURCH.

No. 30.

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## TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH.

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### *THE SERVANTS OF GOD.*

GOD selected Abraham as his messenger, through whom to communicate light to the world. The word of God came to him, not with the presentation of flattering prospects in this life, of large salary, of great appreciation and worldly honor. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee," was the divine message to Abraham. The patriarch obeyed, and "went out, not knowing whither he went," as God's light-bearer, to keep his name alive in the earth. He forsook his country, his home, his relatives, and all pleasant associations connected with his early life, to become a pilgrim and a stranger.

It is frequently more essential than many realize, that early associations should be broken up, in order that those who are to speak "in Christ's stead" may stand in a position where God can educate and qualify them for his great work. Kindred and friends often have an influence which God sees will greatly interfere with the instructions he designs to give his servants. Suggestions will be made by those who are not in close connection with Heaven that will, if heeded, turn aside from their holy work those who should be light-bearers to the world.

Before God can use him, Abraham must be separated from his former associations, that he may not be controlled by human influence, or rely upon human aid. Now that he has become connected with God, this man must henceforth dwell among strangers. His character must be peculiar, differing from all the world. He could not even explain his course of action so as to be understood by his friends; for they were idolaters. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned; therefore his motives and his actions were beyond the comprehension of his kindred and friends.

Abraham's unquestioning obedience was one of the most striking instances of faith and reliance upon God to be found in the Sacred Record. With only the naked promise that his descendants should possess Canaan, without the least outward evidence, he followed on where God should lead, fully and sincerely complying with the conditions on his part, and confident that the Lord would faithfully perform his word. The patriarch went wherever God indicated his duty; he passed through wildernesses without terror; he went among idolatrous nations, with the one thought, "God has spoken; I am obeying his voice; he will guide, he will protect me."

Just such faith and confidence as Abraham had, the messengers of God need to-day. But many whom the Lord could use will not move onward, hearing and obeying the one Voice above all others. The connection with kindred and friends, the former habits and associations, too often have so great an influence upon God's

servants that he can give them but little instruction, can communicate to them but little knowledge of his purposes; and often after a time he sets them aside, and calls others in their place, whom he proves and tests in the same manner. The Lord would do much more for his servants, if they were wholly consecrated to him, esteeming his service above the ties of kindred, and all other earthly associations.

Ministers of the gospel have a sacred work. They have a solemn message of warning to bear to the world,—a message which will be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. They are God's messengers to man; and they should never lose sight of their mission or of their responsibilities. They are not like the world; they cannot be like them. If they would be true to God, they must maintain their separate, holy character. If they cease to connect with Heaven, they are in greater danger than others, and can exert a stronger influence in the wrong direction; for Satan has his eye constantly upon them, waiting for some weakness to be developed, whereby he may make a successful attack. And how he triumphs when he succeeds; for when one who is an ambassador for Christ is off his watch, through him the great adversary may secure many souls to himself.

Those who closely connect with God may not be prosperous in the things of this life; they may often be sorely tried and afflicted. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, that chosen messenger of God, was hunted like

a beast of prey by his wicked enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions, because he was true and unyielding in his allegiance to God. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions, and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends; yet he preserved his integrity and faithfulness to God. Jeremiah would speak the words which God had put into his mouth, and his plain testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned, because he would preach Christ and him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death, because he was a faithful messenger to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. The beloved John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, "for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ."

These examples of human steadfastness, in the might of divine power, are a witness to the world of the faithfulness of God's promises,—of his abiding presence and sustaining grace. As the world looks upon these humble men, it cannot discern their moral value with God. It is a work of faith to calmly repose in God in the darkest hour,—however severely tried and tempest-tossed, to feel that our Father is at the helm. The eye of faith alone can look beyond the things of time and sense to estimate the worth of eternal riches.

The great military commander conquers nations, and shakes the armies of half the world; but he dies of disappointment, and in exile. The philosopher who ranges through the universe, everywhere tracing the manifestations of

God's power, and delighting in their harmony, often fails to behold in these marvelous wonders the Hand that formed them all. "Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish." No hope of glorious immortality lights up the future of the enemies of God. But those heroes of faith have the promise of an inheritance of greater value than any earthly riches,—an inheritance that will satisfy the longings of the soul. They may be unknown and unacknowledged of the world, but they are enrolled as citizens in the record books of Heaven. An exalted greatness, an enduring, eternal weight of glory, will be the final reward of those whom God has made heirs of all things.

Ministers of the gospel should make the truth of God the theme of study, of meditation, and of conversation. The mind that dwells much on the revealed will of God to man will become strong in the truth. Those who read and study with an earnest desire for divine light, whether they are ministers or not, will soon discover in the Scriptures a beauty and harmony which will captivate their attention, elevate their thoughts, and give them an inspiration and an energy of argument that will be powerful to convict and convert souls.

There is danger that ministers who profess to believe present truth will rest satisfied with presenting the theory only, while their own souls do not feel its sanctifying power. Some have not the love of God in the heart, softening, molding, and ennobling their lives. The psalmist declares of the good man, "His de-

light is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." He refers to his own experience, and exclaims, "Oh, how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day." "Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word."

No man is qualified to stand in the sacred desk, unless he has felt the transforming influence of the truth of God upon his own soul. Then, and not till then, can he, by precept and example, rightly represent the life of Christ. But many in their labors, exalt themselves rather than their Master; and the people are converted to the minister, instead of to Jesus Christ.

I am pained to know that some who preach the present truth to-day are really unconverted men. They are not connected with God. They have a head religion, but no conversion of the heart; and these are the very ones who are the most self-confident and self-sufficient; and this self-sufficiency will stand in the way of their gaining that experience which is essential to make them effective workers in the Lord's vineyard. I wish I could arouse those who claim to be watchmen on the walls of Zion, to realize their responsibility. They should awake, and take a higher stand for God; for souls are perishing through their neglect. They must have that sincere devotion to God that will lead them to see as God sees, and take the words of warning from him and sound the alarm to those who are in peril. The Lord will not hide his truth from the faithful watchman. Those who do the will of God shall know of his doctrine.

“The wise shall understand ;” but “the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand.”

Said Jesus to his disciples, “Learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” I would plead with those who have accepted the position of teachers, to first become humble learners, and ever to remain as pupils in the school of Christ, to receive from the Master lessons of meekness and lowliness of heart. Humility of spirit, combined with earnest activity, will result in the salvation of souls so dearly purchased by the blood of Christ. The minister may understand and believe the theory of truth, and be able to present it to others ; but this is not all that is required of him. “Faith without works is dead.” He needs that faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. A living faith in Christ will bring every action of the life and every emotion of the soul into harmony with God’s truth and righteousness.

Fretfulness, self-exaltation, pride, passion, and every other trait of character unlike our holy Pattern, must be overcome ; and then humility, meekness, and sincere gratitude to Jesus for his great salvation, will continually flow out from the pure fountain of the heart. The voice of Jesus should be heard in the message coming from the lips of his ambassador.

We must have a converted ministry. The efficiency and power attending a truly converted minister would make the hypocrites in Zion tremble, and sinners afraid. The standard of truth and holiness is trailing in the dust. If those who sound the solemn notes of warning

for this time, could realize their accountability to God, they would see the necessity for fervent prayer. When the cities were hushed in midnight slumber, when every man had gone to his own house, Christ, our example, would repair to the Mount of Olives, and there, amid the overshadowing trees, would spend the entire night in prayer. He who was himself without the taint of sin,—a treasure-house of blessing; whose voice was heard in the fourth watch of the night by the terrified disciples upon the stormy sea, in heavenly benediction; and whose word could summon the dead from their graves,—He it was who made supplication with strong crying and tears. He prayed not for himself, but for those whom he came to save. As he became a supplicant, seeking at the hand of his Father fresh supplies of strength, and coming forth refreshed and invigorated as man's substitute, he identified himself with suffering humanity, and gave them an example of the necessity of prayer.

His nature was without the taint of sin. As the Son of man, he prayed to the Father, showing that human nature requires all the divine support which man can obtain that he may be braced for duty and prepared for trial. As the Prince of life, he had power with God, and prevailed for his people. This Saviour, who prayed for those that felt no need of prayer, and wept for those that felt no need of tears, is now before the throne, to receive and present to his Father the petitions of those for whom he prayed on earth. The example of Christ is for us to follow. Prayer is a necessity in our labor

for the salvation of souls. God alone can give the increase of the seed we sow.

We fail many times because we do not realize that Christ is with us by his Spirit as truly as when, in the days of his humiliation, he moved visibly upon the earth. The lapse of time has wrought no change in his parting promise to his apostles as he was taken up from them into heaven, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He has ordained that there should be a succession of men who derive authority from the first teachers of the faith for the continual preaching of Christ and him crucified. The great Teacher has delegated power to his servants, who "have this treasure in earthen vessels." Christ will superintend the work of his ambassadors, if they wait for his instruction and guidance.

Ministers who are truly Christ's representatives will be men of prayer. With an earnestness and faith that will not be denied, they will plead with God that they may be strengthened and fortified for duty and for trial, and that their lips may be sanctified by a touch of the living coal from off the altar, to speak the words of God to the people. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

Christ said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Who can estimate the

result of the prayers of the world's Redeemer? When Christ shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied, then will be seen and realized the value of his earnest prayers while his divinity was veiled with humanity.

Jesus pleaded, not for one only, but for all his disciples, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." His eye pierced the dark vail of the future, and read the life-history of every son and daughter of Adam. He felt the burdens and sorrows of every tempest-tossed soul; and that earnest prayer included with his living disciples all his followers, to the close of time. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Yes; that prayer of Christ embraces even us. We should be comforted by the thought that we have a great Intercessor in the Heavens, presenting our petitions before God. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." In the hour of greatest need, when discouragement would overwhelm the soul, it is then that the watchful eye of Jesus sees we need his help. The hour of man's necessity is the hour of God's opportunity. When all human support fails, then Jesus comes to our aid, and his presence scatters the darkness, and lifts the cloud of gloom.

In their little boat upon the Sea of Galilee, amid the storm and darkness, the disciples toiled hard to reach the shore, but found all their efforts unsuccessful. As despair seizes them, Jesus is seen walking upon the foam-capped billows. Even the presence of Christ

they did not at first discern, and their terror increased, until his voice, "It is I, be not afraid," dispelled their fears, and gave them hope and joy. Then how willingly the poor, wearied disciples ceased their efforts, and trusted all to the Master.

This striking incident illustrates the experience of the followers of Christ. How often do we tug at the oars, as though our own strength and wisdom were sufficient, until we find our efforts useless. Then, with trembling hands and failing strength, we give up the work to Jesus, and confess we are unable to perform it. Our compassionate Redeemer pities our weakness; and when, in answer to the cry of faith, he takes up the work we ask him to do, how easily he accomplishes that which seemed to us so difficult.

The history of God's ancient people furnishes us with many encouraging examples of prevailing prayer. When the Amalekites came to attack the camp of Israel in the wilderness, Moses knew that his people were not prepared for the encounter. He sent Joshua with a band of soldiers to meet the enemy, while he himself, with Aaron and Hur, took his position on a hill overlooking the battle-field. There the man of God laid the case before Him who was alone able to give them the victory. With hands outstretched toward heaven, Moses prayed earnestly for the success of the armies of Israel. It was observed that while his hands were reaching upward, Israel prevailed against the foe; at which time through fatigue they were allowed to fall, Amalek prevailed. Aaron and

Hur stayed up the hands of Moses, until victory, full and complete, turned upon the side of Israel, and their enemies were driven from the field.

This instance was to be a lesson to all Israel to the close of time, that God is the strength of his people. When Israel triumphed, Moses was reaching his hands toward heaven, and interceding in their behalf; so when all the Israel of God prevail, it is because the Mighty One undertakes their case, and fights their battles for them. Moses did not ask or believe that God would overcome their foes while Israel remained inactive. He marshals all his forces and sends them out as well prepared as their facilities can make them, and then he takes the whole matter to God in prayer. Moses on the mount was pleading with the Lord, while Joshua with his brave followers was below, doing his best to meet and repulse the enemies of Israel and of God.

That prayer which comes forth from an earnest, believing heart is the effectual, fervent prayer that availeth much. God does not always answer our prayers as we expect, for we may not ask what would be for our highest good; but in his infinite love and wisdom he will give us those things which we most need. Happy the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary, and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work, and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously.

After the transgression of Israel in making the golden calf, Moses again goes to plead with God in behalf of his people. He has some knowledge of those who have been placed under his care; he knows the perversity of the human heart, and realizes the difficulties with which he must contend. But he has learned from experience that in order to have an influence with the people, he must first have power with God. The Lord reads the sincerity and unselfish purpose of the heart of his servant, and condescends to commune with this feeble mortal, face to face, as a man speaketh with a friend. Moses casts himself and all his burdens fully upon God, and freely pours out his soul before him. The Lord does not reprove his servant, but stoops to listen to his supplications.

Moses has a deep sense of his unworthiness, and his unfitness for the great work to which God has called him. He pleads with intense earnestness that the Lord will go with him. The answer comes, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." But Moses does not feel that he can stop here. He has gained much, but he longs to come still nearer to God,—to obtain a stronger assurance of his abiding presence. He has carried the burden of Israel; he has borne an overwhelming weight of responsibility; when the people sinned, he suffered keen remorse, as though himself were guilty; and now there presses upon his soul a sense of the terrible results, should God leave Israel to hardness and impenitence of heart. They would not hesitate to kill Moses, and

through their own rashness and perversity they would soon fall a prey to their enemies, and thus dishonor the name of God before the heathen. Moses presses his petition with such earnestness and fervency that the answer comes, "I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name."

Now, indeed, we would expect the prophet to cease pleading; but no, emboldened by his success, he ventures to come still nearer to God, with a holy familiarity which is almost beyond our comprehension. He now makes a request which no human being has ever made before: "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." What a petition to come from finite, mortal man! But is he repulsed? does God reprove him for presumption? No; we hear the gracious words, "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee."

The unvailed glory of God no man could look upon and live; but Moses is assured that he shall behold as much of the divine glory as he can bear, in his present, mortal state. That Hand that made the world, that holds the mountains in their places, takes this man of dust,—this man of mighty faith,—and mercifully covers him in a cleft of the rock, while the glory of God and all his goodness pass before him. Can we marvel that the "excellent glory" reflected from Omnipotence shone in Moses' face, with such brightness that the people could not look upon it? The impress of God was upon him making him appear as one of the shining angels from the throne.

This experience,—above all else the assurance that God would hear his prayer, and that the divine presence would attend him,—was of more value to Moses as a leader than the learning of Egypt, or all his attainments in military science. No earthly power or skill or learning can supply the place of God's immediate presence. In the history of Moses we may see what intimate communion with God it is man's privilege to enjoy. To the transgressor it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But Moses was not afraid to be alone with the Author of that law which had been spoken with such awful grandeur from Mount Sinai; for his soul was in harmony with the will of his Maker.

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God, as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain a precious evidence of the divine love and care for him. But why is it that so many prayers are never answered? Says David, "I cried unto the Lord with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." By another prophet, the Lord gives us the promise, "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Again, he speaks of some who "have not cried unto me with their heart." Such petitions are prayers of form,—lip-service only, which the Lord does not accept.

The prayer which Nathaniel offered while he was under the fig-tree, came from a sincere heart, and it was heard and answered by the

Master. Christ said of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." The Lord reads the hearts of all, and understands their motives and purposes. "The prayer of the upright is his delight." He will not be slow to hear those who open their hearts to him, not exalting self, but sincerely feeling their great weakness and unworthiness.

There is need of prayer,—most earnest, fervent, agonizing prayer,—such prayer as David offered when he exclaimed, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." "I have longed after thy precepts;" "I have longed for thy salvation." "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments." This is the spirit of wrestling prayer, such as was possessed by the royal psalmist.

Daniel prayed to God, not exalting himself, or claiming any goodness: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thine own sake, O my God." This is what James calls the effectual, fervent prayer. Of Christ it is said, "And being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly." In what contrast to this intercession by the Majesty of Heaven are the feeble, heartless prayers that are offered to God. Many are content with lip-service, and but few have a sincere, earnest, affectionate longing after God.

Communion with God imparts to the soul an intimate knowledge of his will. But many

who profess the faith know not what true conversion is. They have no experience in communion with the Father through Jesus Christ, and have never felt the power of divine grace sanctify the heart. Praying and sinning, sinning and praying, their lives are full of malice, deceit, envy, jealousy, and self-love. The prayers of this class are an abomination to God. True prayer engages the energies of the soul, and affects the life. He who thus pours out his wants before God, feels the emptiness of everything else under heaven. "All my desires are before thee," said David, "and my groaning is not hid from thee. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" "When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me."

As our numbers are increasing, broader plans must be laid to meet the increasing demands of the times; but we see no special increase of fervent piety, of Christian simplicity, and earnest devotion. The church seems content to take only the first steps in conversion. They are more ready for active labor than for humble devotion,—more ready to engage in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show. Religion must begin with emptying and purifying the heart, and must be nurtured by daily prayer.

The steady progress of our work, and our increased facilities, are filling the hearts and minds of many of our people with satisfaction and pride, which we fear will take the place of the love of God in the soul. Busy activity in

the mechanical part of even the work of God may so occupy the mind that prayer shall be neglected, and self-importance and self-sufficiency, so ready to urge their way, shall take the place of true goodness, meekness, and lowliness of heart. The zealous cry may be heard, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these!" "Come and see my zeal for the Lord." But where are the burden-bearers? where are the fathers and mothers in Israel? Where are those who carry upon the heart the burden for souls, and who come in close sympathy with their fellow-men, ready to place themselves in any position to save them from eternal ruin?

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." What a responsibility! There is need of fasting, humiliation, and prayer over our decaying zeal and languishing spirituality. The love of many is waxing cold. The efforts of many of our preachers are not what they should be. When some who lack the Spirit and power of God enter a new field, they commence denouncing other denominations, thinking that they can convince the people of the truth by presenting the inconsistencies of the popular churches. It may seem necessary on some occasions to speak of these things, but in general it only creates prejudice against our work, and closes the ears of many who might otherwise have listened to the truth. If these teachers were connected closely with Christ, they would have divine wisdom to know how to approach the people. They would not so soon forget the

darkness and error, the passion and prejudice, which kept themselves from the truth.

Would these teachers work with the spirit of the Master, very different results would follow. With meekness and long-suffering, gentleness and love, yet with decided earnestness, they would seek to direct those erring souls to a crucified and risen Saviour. When this is done, we shall see God moving upon the hearts of men. Says the great apostle, "We are laborers together with God." What a work for poor mortals! We are provided with spiritual weapons to fight the "good fight of faith;" but some seem to have drawn from the armory of Heaven only its thunder-bolts. How long must these defects exist?

While in the midst of a religious interest, some neglect the most important part of the work. They fail to visit and become acquainted with those who have shown an interest to present themselves night after night to listen to the explanation of the Scriptures. Conversation upon religious subjects, and earnest prayer with such at the right time, might balance many souls in the right direction. Ministers who neglect their duty in this respect are not true shepherds of the flock. At the very time when they should be most active in visiting, conversing, and praying with those interested ones, some will be employed in writing unnecessarily long letters to persons at a distance. Oh, what are we doing for the Master! When probation shall end, how many will see the opportunities they have neglected to render service to their dear Lord who died for them.

And even those who were accounted most faithful will see much more that they might have done, had not their minds been diverted by worldly surroundings.

We entreat the heralds of the gospel of Christ never to become discouraged in the work, never to consider the most hardened sinner beyond the reach of the grace of God. Such may accept the truth in the love of it, and become the salt of the earth. He who turns the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned, can bring the most selfish, sin-hardened soul to surrender to Christ. Is aught too hard for God to do? "My word shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

God will never place his benediction upon those who are negligent, selfish, and ease-loving,—who will not lift burdens in his cause. The "Well done" will be pronounced upon those only who have done well. Every man is to be rewarded "according as his works shall be." We want an active ministry,—men of prayer, who will wrestle with God as did Jacob, saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." If we obtain the victor's crown, we must stretch every nerve, and exercise every power. We can never be saved in inactivity. To be an idler in the Lord's vineyard is to relinquish all title to the reward of the righteous.

**ADMONITIONS AND WARNINGS.**

NOVEMBER 23, 1879, some things were shown me in reference to the institutions among us, and the duties and dangers of those who occupy a leading position in connection with them. I saw that these men have been raised up to do a special work as God's instruments, to be led, guided, and controlled by his Spirit. They are to answer the claims of God, and never to feel that they are their own property, and that they can employ their powers as they shall deem most profitable to themselves. Although it is their purpose to be and to do right, yet they will most surely err, unless they are constant learners in the school of Christ. Their only safety is in humbly walking with God.

Dangers beset every path, and he who comes off conqueror, will indeed have a triumphant song to sing in the city of God. Some have strong traits of character that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. If those who are now riding upon the wave of popularity do not become giddy, it will be a miracle of mercy. If they lean to their own wisdom, as so many thus situated have done, their wisdom will prove to be foolishness. But while they shall give themselves unselfishly to the work of God, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about them the everlasting arms, and will prove to them a mighty helper. "Them that honor me, will honor."

This is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God ; for Satan is constantly plying his temptations upon such a person, ever trying to fill him with pride and ambition ; and when God would use him, it is too often the case that he becomes independent and self-sufficient, and feels capable of standing alone. This will be your danger, brethren, unless you live a life of constant faith and prayer. You may have a deep and abiding sense of eternal things, and that love for humanity which Christ has shown in his life. A close connection with Heaven will give the right tone to your fidelity, and will be the ground of your success. Your feeling of dependence will drive you to prayer, and your sense of duty summon you to effort. Prayer and effort, effort and prayer, will be the business of your life. You must pray as though the efficiency and praise were all due to God, and labor as though duty were all your own. If you want power, you may have it ; as it is awaiting your draft upon it. Only believe in God, take him at his word, act by faith, and blessings will come.

In this matter, genius, logic, and eloquence will not avail. Those who have a humble, trusting, contrite heart, God accepts, and hears their prayer ; and when God helps, all obstacles will be overcome. How many men of great natural abilities and high scholarship have failed when placed in positions of responsibility ; while those of feebler intellect, with less favorable surroundings, have been wonderfully successful. The secret was, the former trusted to

themselves, while the latter united with Him who is wonderful in counsel, and mighty in working to accomplish what he will.

Their work being always urgent, it is difficult for some to secure time for meditation and prayer; but this they should not fail to do. The blessing of Heaven, obtained by daily supplication, will be as the bread of life to the soul, and will cause them to increase in moral and spiritual strength, like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf will be always green, and whose fruit will appear in due time.

Some have made a serious mistake in neglecting to attend the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service will be as beneficial to them as to others, and are fully as essential. They may be unable to avail themselves of these privileges as often as do many others. Physicians will frequently be called, upon the Sabbath, to visit the sick, and may be obliged to make it a day of exhausting labor. Such labor to relieve the suffering, was pronounced by our Saviour a work of mercy, and no violation of the Sabbath. But those who regularly devote their Sabbaths to writing or labor, making no special change, harm their own souls, give to others an example that is not worthy of imitation, and do not honor God.

Some have failed to see the real importance, not only of attending religious meetings, but also of bearing testimony for Christ and the truth. If these brethren do not obtain spiritual strength by the faithful performance of every Christian duty, thus coming into a closer and more sacred relation to their Redeemer, they will

become weak in moral power. They will surely wither spiritually, unless they change their course in this respect.

The men who have been placed in charge of our institutions occupy important and responsible positions. They cannot well be spared from their post of duty, yet they should not feel that they are indispensable. God could do without them, but they cannot do without God. These men should endeavor to work in harmony. If he fills his position honorably, each must guard the financial interests of the institution committed to his care. But these men should be exceedingly cautious that they look not alone on their own branch of the work, and labor for their own department, to the injury of other branches of equal importance.

Brethren, you are in danger of making grave mistakes in your business transactions. God warns you to be on your guard, lest you indulge a spirit of crowding one another. Be careful not to cultivate the sharper's tact; for this will not stand the test of the day of God. Shrewdness and close calculation are needed, for you have all classes to deal with; you must guard the interests of our institutions, or thousands of dollars will go into the hands of dishonest men. But let not these traits become a ruling power. Under proper control, they are essential elements in the character; and if you keep the fear of God before you, and his love in the heart, you will be safe.

It is far better to yield some advantages that might be gained, than to cultivate an avaricious spirit, and thus make it a law of nature.

Petty sharpness is unworthy of a Christian. We have been separated from the world by the great cleaver of truth. Our wrong traits of character are not always visible to ourselves, although they may be very apparent to others. But time and circumstances will surely prove us, and bring to light the gold of character, or discover the baser metal. Not one of us is known or read of all men, till the crucible of God tests us. Every base thought, every wrong action, reveals some defect in the character. These rugged traits must be brought under the chisel and hammer in God's great workshop, and the grace of God must smooth and polish, before we can be fitted for a place in the glorious temple.

God can make these brethren more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir, if they will yield themselves to his transforming hand. They should be determined to make the noblest use of every faculty and every opportunity. The word of God should be their study and their guide in deciding what is the highest and best in all cases. The one faultless character, the perfect pattern set before them in the gospel, should be studied with deepest interest. The one lesson most essential for them to learn is, that goodness alone gives true greatness. May God deliver us from the philosophy of worldly-wise men. Their only hope is in becoming fools, that they may be wise indeed.

The weakest follower of Christ has entered into alliance with infinite power. In many cases, God can do little with men of learning, because

they feel no need of leaning upon Him who is the source of all wisdom ; therefore, after a trial, he sets them aside for men of inferior talent, who have learned to rely upon him, whose souls are fortified by goodness, truth, and unwavering fidelity, and who will not stoop to anything that will leave a stain upon the conscience.

Brethren, if you connect your souls with God by living faith, he will make you men of power. If you trust to your own strength and wisdom, you will surely fail. It is not pleasing to God that you take so little interest in religious service. You are representative men, and as such, you exert a wider influence than persons in less prominent positions. You should ever seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. You should be active, interested workers in the church, cultivating your religious faculties, and keeping your own souls in the love of God. The Lord has claims upon you in this matter that you cannot lightly disregard ; you must either grow in grace or be dwarfed and crippled in spiritual things. It is not only your privilege but your duty to bear testimony for Christ when and where you can ; and by exercising the mind in this way, you will cultivate a love for sacred things.

We are in danger of regarding Christ's ministers simply as men, not recognizing them as representatives of himself. All personal considerations should be laid aside ; we must listen for the word of God through his ambassadors. Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for his voice. On the night of our Saviour's agony in the garden of Gethsemane,

the sleeping disciples heard not the voice of Jesus; they had a dim sense of the angel's presence, but lost the power and glory of the scene by drowsiness and stupor, and thus failed to receive the evidence which would have strengthened their souls for the terrible scenes before them. Thus the very men who most need divine instruction often fail to receive it, because they do not place themselves in communication with Heaven. Satan is ever seeking to impress and control the mind, and none of us are safe, except as we have a constant connection with God. We must momentarily receive supplies from Heaven; and if we would be kept by the power of God, we must be obedient to all his requirements.

The condition of your bearing fruit is that you abide in the Living Vine. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

All your good purposes and good intentions will not enable you to withstand the test of temptation. You must be men of prayer. Your petitions must be, not faint, occasional, and fitful, but earnest, persevering, and constant. It is not necessary to be alone, or to bow upon your knees, to pray; but in the midst of

your labor, your souls may be often uplifted to God, taking hold upon his strength; then you will be men of high and holy purpose, of noble integrity,—who will not for any consideration be swerved from truth, right, and justice.

You are pressed with urgent cares, burdens, and duties; but the greater the pressure upon you, and the heavier the burdens you have to bear, the greater your need of divine aid. Jesus will be your helper. You need constantly the Light of life to lighten your own pathway, and then its divine rays will reflect upon others. The work of God is a perfect whole, because perfect in all its parts. It is the conscientious attention to what the world calls little things that makes the great beauty and success of life. Little deeds of charity, little words of kindness, little acts of self-denial, a wise improvement of little opportunities, a diligent cultivation of little talents, make great men in God's sight. If these little things be faithfully attended to, if these graces be in you and abound, they will make you perfect in every good work.

It is not enough to be willing to give liberally of your means to the cause of God. He calls for an unreserved consecration of all your powers. Withholding yourselves has been the mistake of your life. You may think it very difficult in your position to maintain a close connection with God; but your work will be tenfold harder if you fail to do this. Satan will beset your path with his temptations, and it is only through Christ that you can gain the victory. The same indomitable will that gives suc-

cess in intellectual pursuits is essential in the Christian course. You must be representatives of Jesus Christ. Your energy and perseverance in perfecting a Christian character should be as much greater than that displayed in any other pursuit, as the things of eternity are of more importance than temporal affairs.

If you ever achieve success in the Christian life, you must resolve that you will be men after God's own heart. The Lord wants your influence to be exerted in the church and in the world to elevate the standard of Christianity. True Christian character should be marked by a firmness of purpose, an indomitable determination, which cannot be molded or subdued by earth or hell. He who is not blind to the attraction of worldly honors, indifferent to threats, and unmoved by allurements, will be, all unexpectedly to himself, overthrown by Satan's devices.

God calls for complete and entire consecration; and anything short of this he will not accept. The more difficult your position, the more you need Jesus. The love and fear of God kept Joseph pure and untarnished in the king's court. He was exalted to great wealth, to the high honor of being next to the king; and this elevation was as sudden as it was great. It is impossible to stand upon a lofty height without danger. The tempest leaves unharmed the modest flower of the valley, while it wrestles with the lofty tree upon the mountain-top. There are many men whom God could have used with wonderful success when pressed with poverty,—he could have

made them useful here, and crowned them with glory hereafter,—but prosperity ruined them; they were dragged down to the pit, because they forgot to be humble, forgot that God was their strength, and became independent and self-sufficient.

Joseph bore the test of character in adversity, and the gold was undimmed by prosperity. He showed the same sacred regard for God's will when he stood next the throne as when in a prisoner's cell. Joseph carried his religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity. As representative men, you must have the all-pervading power of true godliness. I tell you, in the fear of God, your path is beset by dangers which you do not see and do not realize. You must hide in Jesus. You are unsafe, unless you hold the hand of Christ. You must guard against everything like presumption, and cherish that spirit that would suffer rather than sin. No victory you can gain will be so precious as that gained over self.

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#### *MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CULTURE.*

IN the view given me October 9, 1878, I was shown the position which our Sanitarium at Battle Creek should occupy, and the character and influence which should be maintained by all connected with it. This important institution has been established by the providence of God, and his blessing is indispensable to its success. The physicians are not

quacks nor infidels, but men who understand the human system and the best methods of treating diseases; men who fear God, and have an earnest interest for the moral and spiritual welfare of their patients. This interest for spiritual as well as physical good, the managers of the institution should make no effort to conceal. By a life of true Christian integrity they can give to the world an example worthy of imitation; and they should not hesitate to let it be seen that in addition to their skill in treating disease, they are continually gaining wisdom and knowledge from Christ, the greatest teacher the world has ever known. They must have this connection with the Source of all wisdom, to make their labor successful.

Truth has a power to elevate the receiver. If Bible truth exerts its sanctifying influence upon the heart and character, it will make believers more intelligent. A Christian will understand his responsibilities to God and to his fellow-men, if he is truly connected with the Lamb of God who gave his life for the world. Only by a continual improvement of the intellectual as well as the moral powers, can we hope to answer the purpose of our Creator.

God is displeased with those who are too careless or indolent to become efficient, well-informed workers. The Christian should possess more intelligence and keener discernment than the worldling. The study of God's word is continually expanding the mind and strengthening the intellect. There is nothing that will so refine and elevate the character, and give

vigor to every faculty, as the continual exercise of the mind to grasp and comprehend weighty and important truths.

The human mind becomes dwarfed and enfeebled when dealing with common-place matters only, never rising above the level of the things of time and sense to grasp the mysteries of the unseen. The understanding is gradually brought to the level of the subjects with which it is constantly familiar. The mind will contract its powers and lose its ability, if it is not exercised to acquire additional knowledge, and put to the stretch to comprehend the revelations of divine power in nature and in the Sacred Word.

But an acquaintance with facts and theories, however important they may be in themselves, is of little real value, unless put to a practical use. There is danger that those who have obtained their education principally from books will fail to realize that they are novices, so far as experimental knowledge is concerned. This is especially true of those connected with the Sanitarium. This institution needs men of thought and ability. The physicians, superintendent, matron, and helpers should be persons of culture and experience. But some fail to comprehend what is needed at such an establishment, and they plod on year after year, making no marked improvement. They seem to be stereotyped; each succeeding day is but a repetition of the past one.

The minds and hearts of these mechanical workers are impoverished. Opportunities are before them; if studious, they might obtain an education of the highest value; but they do

not appreciate their privileges. None should rest satisfied with their present education. All may be daily qualifying themselves to fill some office of trust.

It is of great importance that the one who is chosen to care for the spiritual interests of patients and helpers, be a man of sound judgment and undeviating principle,—a man who will have moral influence, who knows how to deal with minds. He should be a person of wisdom and culture, of affection as well as intelligence. He may not be thoroughly efficient in all respects at first, but he should, by earnest thought and the exercise of his abilities, qualify himself for this important work. The greatest wisdom and gentleness are needed, to serve in this position acceptably, yet with unbending integrity; for prejudice, bigotry, and error of every form and description must be met.

This place should not be filled by a man who has an irritable temper,—a sharp combativeness. Care must be taken that the religion of Christ be not made repulsive by harshness or impatience. The servant of God should seek, by meekness, gentleness, and love, rightly to represent our holy faith. While the cross must never be concealed, he should present also the Saviour's matchless love. The worker must be imbued with the spirit of Jesus, and then the treasures of the soul will be presented in words that will find their way to the hearts of those who hear. The religion of Christ, exemplified in the daily life of his followers, will exert a tenfold greater influence than the most eloquent sermons.

Intelligent, God-fearing workers can do a vast amount of good in the way of reforming those who come as invalids to be treated at the Sanitarium. Not only are these persons diseased physically, but mentally and morally. The education, the habits, and the entire life of many have been erroneous. They cannot make the great changes necessary for the adoption of correct habits, in a few days. They must have time to consider the matter, and to learn the right way. If all connected with the Sanitarium are correct representatives of the truths of health reform and of our holy faith, they are exerting an influence to mold the minds of their patients. The contrast of erroneous habits with those which are in harmony with the truth of God, has a convicting power.

Man is not what he might be, and what it is God's will that he should be. The strong power of Satan upon the human race keeps them upon a low level; but this need not be so, else Enoch could not have become so elevated and ennobled as to walk with God. Man need not cease to grow intellectually and spiritually during his lifetime. But the minds of many are so occupied with themselves and their own selfish interests as to leave no room for higher and nobler thoughts. And the standard of intellectual as well as spiritual attainments is far too low. With many, the more responsible the position they occupy, the better pleased are they with themselves; and they cherish the idea that the position gives character to the man. Few realize that they

have a constant work before them to develop forbearance, sympathy, charity, conscientiousness, and fidelity,—traits of character indispensable to those who occupy positions of responsibility. All connected with the Sanitarium should have a sacred regard for the rights of others, which is but obeying the principles of the law of God.

Some at this institution are sadly deficient in the qualities so essential to the happiness of all connected with them. The physicians, and the helpers in the various branches of the work, should carefully guard against a selfish coldness, a distant, unsocial disposition; for this will alienate the affection and confidence of the patients. Many who come to the Sanitarium are refined, sensitive people, of ready tact and keen discernment. These persons discover such defects at once, and comment upon them. Men cannot love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, and be as cold as icebergs. They not only rob God of the love due him, but they rob their neighbor as well. Love is a plant of heavenly birth, and it must be fostered and nourished. Affectionate hearts, truthful, loving words, will make happy families, and exert an elevating influence upon all who shall come within the sphere of their influence.

Those who make the most of their privileges and opportunities will be, in the Bible sense, talented and educated men; not learned merely, but educated, in mind, in manners, in deportment. They will be refined, tender, pitiful, affectionate. This, I was shown, is what

the God of Heaven requires in the institutions at Battle Creek. God has given us powers to be used, to be developed and strengthened by education. We should reason and reflect, carefully marking the relation between cause and effect. When this is practiced, there will be, on the part of many, greater thoughtfulness and care in regard to their words and actions, that they may fully answer the purpose of God in their creation.

We should ever bear in mind that we are not only learners, but teachers in this world, fitting ourselves and others for a higher sphere of action in the future life. The measure of man's usefulness is in knowing the will of God, and in doing it. It is within our power to so improve in mind and manners that God will not be ashamed to own us. There must be a high standard at the Sanitarium. If there are men of culture, of intellectual and moral power, to be found in our ranks, they must be called to the front, to fill places in our institutions.

The physicians should not be deficient in any respect. A wide field of usefulness is open before them, and if they do not become skillful in their profession, they have only themselves to blame. They must be diligent students; and, by close application and faithful attention to details, they should become care-takers. It should be necessary for no one to follow them, to see that their work is done without mistakes.

Those who occupy responsible positions should so educate and discipline themselves that all within the sphere of their influence