

## TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. NO. 19.

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### ADDRESS TO MINISTERS.

DEAR BRETHREN: God has shown me (Oct. 25, 1868) that not all who profess to be called to teach the truth, are qualified for this sacred work. Some are far from meeting the mind and will of God. Some indulge in slothfulness in temporal things, and their religious life is marked with spiritual sloth. Where there is a deficiency in persevering energy and close application in temporal matters and business transactions, there will be the same failure apparent in spiritual things.

Some of you are heads of families, and your example and influence give shape to the character of your children. Your example will be followed by them in a greater or less degree. Your lack of thoroughness is setting a bad example for others. But where your deficiencies are more sensibly felt, with more weighty results, is in the cause and work of God. Your families have felt this deficiency, and suffered on account of it. They have lacked many things which diligent industry and perseverance might have supplied. But this deficiency has been seen and felt in the cause and work of God in as much greater degree as the cause and work of God is of higher importance than the things pertaining to this life.

The influence of some ministers is not good. They have not set a good example to the people, in industry, carefully guarding their moments. They spend their moments and hours in indolence, which, when once passed into eternity with their record of results, can never be recalled.

Some are naturally indolent, which has made it difficult for them to make any enterprise they should undertake a success. This deficiency has been seen and felt all through their religious experience. Those at fault are not alone the losers. Others are made to suffer by their deficiencies. Many have at this late period lessons to learn which should have been learned at a much earlier date.

Some are not close Bible students. They are disinclined to apply themselves diligently to the study of the word of God. They have, in consequence of this neglect, labored at great disadvantage. They have not in their ministerial efforts accomplished one-tenth part of the work they might have done had they seen the necessity of closely applying their minds to the study of the word. They might have become so familiar with the Scriptures and with Bible arguments that they could be fortified to meet opponents, and so present the reasons of our faith as to make the truth triumph, and silence their opposition.

Those who minister in the word must have as thorough a knowledge of that word as it is possible for them to obtain. They must be continually searching, praying, and learning, or the people of God will advance in the knowledge of the word and will of God, and leave these professed teachers far behind. When the people are in advance of their

teachers, who will instruct them? All the efforts of such ministers are fruitless. The people need to teach them the word of God more perfectly before they are capable of instructing others.

Some might now have been thorough workmen had they made a good use of their time, and had they felt that they would have to give an account to God for their misspent moments. They have displeased God because they have not been industrious men. Self-gratification, self-love, and selfish love of ease, have kept some from good, and withheld them from obtaining a knowledge of the Scriptures, that they might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Time, by some, is not appreciated. Hours have been idled away by them in their beds, that might have been employed in the study of their Bibles. There are a few subjects that they have dwelt upon the most, that they are familiar with, and can speak upon with acceptance; but they have in a great degree rested the matter here. They have not felt altogether satisfied themselves. They have realized their deficiencies at times, but have not been sufficiently awakened to the crime of their negligence, in not becoming acquainted with the word of God, when they profess to be teachers of that word. The people are deprived of the intelligence they might obtain from them, and which they expect to obtain from ministers of Jesus Christ, but on account of their ignorance of the word of God, they do not receive it, and are disappointed. By rising early and economizing their moments, they can find time for a close investigation of the Scriptures. They must have a perseverance, not to be thwarted in their object, per-

sistently employing their time in a study of the word, bringing to their aid the truths which other minds, through wearing labor, have brought out for them, and with diligent and persevering effort, prepared to their hand.

There are ministers who have been laboring for years, teaching the truth to others, who are not themselves familiar with the strong points of our position. I beg of such to have done with their idleness. It is a continual curse to them. God requires of them to make every moment fruitful of some good to themselves or to others. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster." I have been shown that there is a decided lack with some who preach the word. It is important for ministers of Jesus Christ to see the necessity of self-culture. This is necessary in order to adorn their profession, and maintain a becoming dignity. Without mental training they will certainly fail in everything they may undertake. God is not pleased with the ways, manners, and ideas, of some who profess to be ministers. Their haphazard manner of quoting texts of Scripture is a disgrace to their profession. They profess to be teachers of the word, and yet fail to repeat Scripture correctly. Those who give themselves wholly to the preaching of the word should not be guilty of quoting one text incorrectly. God requires thoroughness of all his servants.

The religion of Jesus Christ will be exemplified by its possessor in the life, in the conversation, in the works. Its strong principles will prove an anchor. Those who are teachers of the word

should be patterns of piety, ensamples to the flock. Their example should rebuke idleness, slothfulness, lack of industry and economy.

The principles of religion exact diligence, industry, economy, and honesty. "Give an account of thy stewardship," will soon be heard by all. What an account, brethren, would you *have* to render if the Master should now appear? You are unready. You would as surely be reckoned with the slothful servants as that they exist. You have precious moments left you. Redeem the time, I entreat of you.

Paul exhorted Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

In order to accomplish the work God requires of ministers, they need to be qualified for the position. The apostle Paul writing to the Collossians, in speaking of his ministry, says: "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the

Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."

No less devotion to, and sacred appreciation of, the work of the ministry does God require of his ministers who are living so near the end of all things. God cannot accept the work of laborers unless they realize the life and power of the truth they present to others in their own hearts. God will not accept of anything short of earnest, active, zealous heart-labor. Vigilance and fruitfulness are required for this great work. God wants unselfish workmen who will labor with disinterested benevolence, and who will give their undivided interest to the work.

Brethren, you lack self-devotion and consecration to the work. Your hearts are selfish. The deficiencies in you must be supplied, or you will meet with a fatal disappointment ere long—you will lose Heaven. God does not lightly regard a neglect of the faithful performance of the work he has left his servants to do. Enduring energy, and a constant reliance upon God, are lacking in many of those who are laboring in the ministry. The result of this lack brings upon the few who possess these qualities, great burdens, and they are necessitated to make up the deficiencies so apparent in those who might be able workmen if they would become so. There are a few who are working day and night, depriving themselves of rest and social enjoyments, taxing their brain to the utmost, performing the labor of three men,

wearing away their valuable lives to do the work that others might do, but neglect. They are too lazy to perform their part; therefore those who feel the sacredness of the work, and realize the worth of souls, feel that it must move forward, and are doing extra labor, making superhuman efforts, and using up their brain-power, to keep the work moving, while many ministers are carefully preserving themselves, by shunning burdens and remaining in a state of inefficiency, and accomplishing next to nothing. Were the interest, and devotion to the work, equally divided, and were all diligent who profess to be ministers, devoting their interest wholly to the work, and not saving themselves, the few earnest, God-fearing workmen, who are fast wearing away their lives, would be relieved of this high pressure upon them, and their strength might be preserved, that, when actually required, would tell with double power, and accomplish far greater results than can now be seen, while under so great a pressure of overwhelming care and anxiety.

God is not pleased with this inequality. Men who profess to be called of God to minister in word and doctrine do not feel, many of them, that they have no right to claim to be teachers unless they are thoroughly furnished by earnest, diligent study of the word of God. There are some who have neglected to obtain a knowledge of the simple branches of education. Some cannot even read correctly; some misquote the Scriptures; and some, by their apparent lack of being qualified for the work they are trying to do, injure the work of God, and bring the truth into disrepute. These do not see the necessity of cultivating the

intellect, and especially encouraging refinement without affectation, and seeking to attain to the true elevation of Christian character. The certain and effectual means of attaining this is the surrendering of the soul to God. He will direct the intellect and affections, that they will center upon the divine and eternal, and then will they possess energy without rashness; for all the powers of the mind and the being will be elevated, refined, and directed in the loftiest, holiest channel. From the lips of the heavenly Teacher was heard, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." When this submission is made to God, true humility will grace every action, while at the same time, those who are thus allied to God and his heavenly angels will possess a becoming dignity savoring of Heaven.

The Lord requires his servants to be energetic. It is not pleasing to him to see them listless and indolent. They profess to have the evidence that God has especially selected them to teach the people the way to life; yet frequently their conversation is not profitable, and they give evidence that they have not the burden of the work upon them. Their own souls are not energized by the mighty truths they present to others. Some preach these truths of such weighty importance in so listless a manner that they cannot affect the people. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Men whom God has called must be trained to put forth efforts and work earnestly and with untiring zeal for him, and pull souls out of the fire. When ministers



feel the power of the truth in their own souls, thrilling their own being, then can they possess a power which will affect hearts, and show that they firmly believe the truths they preach to others. They should keep before the mind the worth of souls, and the matchless depths of a Saviour's love, which will awaken the soul, that with David they may say, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned."

Paul exhorted Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." What a weight of importance is here attached to the Christian life of the minister of God! What a necessity for his faithful study of the word, that he may be sanctified by the truth himself, and may be qualified to teach others.

Brethren, you are required to exemplify the truth in your life. Men who think that they have a work to do to teach others the truth are not all converted, and sanctified by the truth, themselves. Some have erroneous ideas of what constitutes a Christian, and the means through which a firm religious experience is obtained; much less do they understand the qualifications that God requires his ministers to possess. These men are unsanctified. They have occasionally a flight of feeling, which gives them the impression

that they are indeed children of God. Depending thus upon impressions is one of the special deceptions of Satan. Those who are thus exercised make their religion a matter of circumstance. The firm principle is wanting. None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God, and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances daily toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until perfection of Christian character is attained, and a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality. God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditating upon him, and pleading with him, elevates the soul, and quickens the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness.

Religion is not emotion of feeling merely. It is a principle which is interwoven with all the daily duties and transactions of life. Nothing will be entertained, no business engaged in, which will prevent the accompaniment of this principle. To retain pure and undefiled religion, it is necessary to be workers, persevering in effort. We must do something ourselves. None can do our work. None can work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but ourselves. This is the very work the Lord has left for us to do. Some ministers who profess to be called of God, have the blood of souls in their garments. They are surrounded with backsliders and sinners, and yet

let no burden rest upon them for their souls, and manifest an indifference in regard to their salvation. Some ministers are so far asleep that they do not seem to have any sense of the work of a gospel minister. They do not consider that they are required to have skill as spiritual physicians, to administer to souls diseased with sin. The work of warning sinners, of weeping over them, and pleading with them, has been neglected until many souls are past all cure. Some have died in their sins, and will in the Judgment confront those with reproaches of their guilt who might have saved them, but who did not. Unfaithful ministers, what a retribution awaits you!

The ministers of Christ need a new anointing, that they may the more clearly discern sacred things, and have clear conceptions of the holy, blameless character they must form themselves in order to be ensamples to the flock. Nothing that we can do, of ourselves, will bring us up to the high standard where God can accept us as his ambassadors. Only a firm reliance upon God, and a strong and active faith, will accomplish the work that God requires to be wrought in us. Working men God calls for. It is a continuance in well-doing that will form characters for Heaven. In plainness, in faithfulness and love, they must appeal to men and women to prepare for the day of God. Some will need to be entreated with earnestness before they will be moved. Let the labor be characterized by humility and meekness, yet with earnestness that will make them understand that these things are a reality, and that life and death are before them for them to choose. The salvation of the soul is not a matter to be

trifled with. The deportment of the laborer for God should be serious, and characterized with simplicity, and with true Christian politeness; and yet he should be fearfully in earnest in the work the Master has left him to do. A decided perseverance in a course of righteousness, disciplining the mind by religious exercises to love devotion and heavenly things, will bring the greatest amount of happiness while thus exercised.

We have it in our power to control the mind in these things, if we make God our trust. Through continued exercise the mind will become strong to battle with internal foes, and to subdue self, until there is a transformation of the mind. The passions, appetites, and will, are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be a daily piety at home and abroad. When engaged in labor for souls, there will be a power which will attend the efforts that are made. There will be, with the humble Christian, seasons of devotion, which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is a perfect surrender to God.

Why the ministers of Christ are no more successful in their labors is because they are not unselfishly devoted to the work. The interest of some is divided. They are double-minded. The cares of this life engage the interest. They do not realize the sacred work of a minister. Such may complain of darkness, of great unbelief, of infidelity. The reason of this is, the men are not right with God. They do not see the importance of making a full and entire consecration

to him. They serve God a little, but themselves more. They pray but little. The Majesty of Heaven, while engaged in his ministry, prayed much to his Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirits were often sorrowful as he felt the powers of the darkness of this world. He sought retirement to make his intercessions. He often left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place for prayer. The Mount of Olives was the favorite resort of the Son of God for his devotions. Frequently after the multitude had left him for the retirement of the night, he rested not, although he was weary with the labors of the day. In St. John we read, "And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives."

While the city was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to his Father from the Mount of Olives for his disciples, that they might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that his own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while his followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. The dew and frost of night fell upon his head bowed in prayer. His example is left for his followers.

The Majesty of Heaven, while engaged in his earthly mission, was often in earnest prayer. He did not always visit Olivet, for his disciples had learned his favorite retreat, and often followed him. Therefore he chose the stillness of night,

when there would be no interruption. Jesus could heal the sick and raise the dead. He was himself a source of blessing and strength. He commanded even the tempests, and they obeyed him. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet he prays, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for his disciples, and for himself, thus identifying himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, possessing, not the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from his Father. Christ is our example.

Are the ministers of Christ tempted and fiercely buffeted by Satan? so also was He who knew no sin. Christ turned to his Father in these hours of distress. He came to this earth that he might provide a way whereby we could find grace and strength to help in every time of need, by following his example in frequent, earnest prayer. If the ministers of Christ will imitate this pattern, they will be imbued with his spirit, and angels will minister unto them.

Angels ministered to Jesus Christ, yet the presence of these angels did not make his life one of ease and freedom from severe conflict and fierce temptations. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. If the ministers, while engaged in the work the Master has appointed them to do, have trials and perplexities and temptations, should they be discouraged, when they know that there is One who has en-

dured all these before them? Shall they cast away their confidence because they do not realize all that they expect from their labors? Christ labored earnestly for his own nation; but his efforts were despised by the very ones he came to save, and they put Him to death who came to give them life.

There are a sufficient number of ministers, but a great lack of laborers. Laborers, co-workers with God, have a sense of the sacredness of the work, and the severe conflicts they must meet in order to carry it forward successfully. Laborers will not faint and despond in view of the labor, arduous although it may be. In the epistle of Paul to the Romans, he says: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We are without excuse if we fail to avail ourselves of the ample provisions made for us that we might be wanting in nothing. The shrinking from hardships, the complaints while suffering under tribulation, make the servants of God weak, and inefficient in bearing responsibilities and burdens.

All those who unshrinkingly stand in the forefront of the battle, must feel the especial warfare of Satan against them. As they realize his spe-

cial attacks, they will flee to the stronghold; for they feel their need of special strength from God. They labor in his strength; therefore every victory they gain does not exalt them, but leads them in faith to lean more securely upon the Mighty One. Deep and fervent gratitude to God is awakened in their hearts, and a joyfulness in tribulation, which they experience while pressed by the enemy. An experience is being gained by these willing servants. A character is being formed which will do honor to the cause of God.

It is a season of solemn privilege and sacred trust to the servants of God. If these trusts are faithfully kept, great will be the reward of the faithful servant when the Master shall say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." The earnest toil endured, the unselfish work of patient, persevering effort, will be rewarded abundantly; while Jesus will say, Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends, guests. The approval of the Master was not given because of the greatness of the work performed, because of having gained many things, but the fidelity in even a few things. It is not because of the great results that the reward is given; but the motives weigh with God. Goodness and faithfulness God prizes more than the greatness of the work accomplished.

I have been shown that there is the greatest danger of many failing of perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. Ministers are in danger of losing their own souls. Some ministers, after they have preached to others, will themselves be cast away, for they have not perfected Christian characters. In their labor they do not save



souls, and fail even to save their own souls. They do not see the importance of self-knowledge, and self-control. They do not watch, they do not pray, lest they enter into temptation. If they would watch, they would become acquainted with their weak points, where they are most susceptible of being assailed by temptations. With watchfulness and prayer, their weakest points can be so guarded as to be their strongest points, and they can encounter temptation without being overcome. Every follower of Christ should daily examine himself, that he may become perfectly acquainted with his own conduct. There is a negligence here of self-examination with nearly all. But this neglect is positively dangerous in one who professes to be a mouthpiece for God, occupying the fearful, responsible position of receiving the words from God to give to his people. The life and conduct of such have great influence upon others. If they have any success in labor, they bring their converts to their own low standard, and it is seldom that these converts rise higher than their minister. His ways, his words, his gestures and manners, his faith, and his piety, are considered a sample of all Sabbath-keeping Adventists; and therefore, if they pattern after him who has taught the truth, they think they are doing all their duty.

There is much in the conduct of a minister that he can improve. Many see and feel the lack, while they seem to be ignorant of the influence they exert. They are conscious of their actions as they perform them, but suffer them to pass from their memory, and therefore do not reform.

If ministers would make the actions of the day a subject of careful thought and deliberate review, with the object to become acquainted with their own habits of life, they would better know themselves. By a close scrutiny of their daily life under all circumstances, they would know their own motives and the principles which actuate them. This viewing daily your acts, to see whether conscience approves or condemns, is necessary for all who wish to arrive at the perfection of Christian character. Many actions which pass for good works, including deeds of benevolence, when closely investigated, will be found to be prompted by wrong motives. Many receive applause for virtues they do not possess. The Searcher of hearts inspects motives, and records deeds, as frequently springing from selfish motives and base hypocrisy, while they are highly applauded by men. Every act of our lives, whether praiseworthy and excellent, or deserving of censure, is judged by the Searcher of hearts, according to the motives which actuated it. Even some of the ministers of Jesus Christ, who are advocating the law of God, have but little knowledge of themselves. They do not meditate, and investigate their motives. They do not see their errors and sins, because they do not in sincerity and earnestness take a view of their life, their acts, and their character, separate and as a whole, and compare them with the sacred and holy law of God. The claims of God's law are not really understood by them, and they are daily living in transgression of the spirit of that law which they profess to revere. "By the law," says Paul, "is the knowledge of sin." "I had not known sin

but by the law ; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." A practical understanding of the law of God and its holy claims, and also of the atonement of Christ, is not obtained by all who labor in word and doctrine. They need to be converted themselves, before they can convert sinners.

The faithful mirror which would discover the defects in the character is neglected, therefore deformity and sin exist, and are apparent to others, if not understood by those who are in fault themselves. The hateful sin of selfishness exists to a great extent, even in some of those who profess to be devoted to the work of God. Comparing their character with his requirements, especially the great standard, his holy, just, and good, law, they would ascertain, if earnest, honest searchers, that they were fearfully wanting. But some are not willing to look far enough, or deep enough, to see the depravity of their own hearts. They are wanting in very many respects, yet they remain in willing ignorance of their guilt, and are especially caring for their own interest, so much that God has no care for them.

Some are not naturally devotional, therefore should be ever encouraging and cultivating a close examination of their own lives and motives, and should especially cherish a love for religious exercises, and for secret prayer. They are often heard talking doubts, talking unbelief, dwelling upon the wonderful struggles they have had with infidel feelings. They dwell upon discouraging influences as so affecting their faith, hope, and courage, in the truth, and the ultimate success of the work and cause in which they are engaged,

as to make it a special virtue to be found on the side of the doubting.

They do at times seem to really enjoy having a regular time hovering about the infidel's position, and strengthening their unbelief with every circumstance they can gather, as an excuse for their being in darkness and unbelief. To such we would say, You had better come down at once, and leave the walls of Zion, until you are converted men, and become good Christians. Before you take the responsibility of becoming ministers, you are required of God to separate yourselves from the love of this world. The reward those who continue in this doubting position will receive, will be that given to the fearful and unbelieving.

But what is the reason of this darkness, these doubts, and this unbelief? I answer, It is because these men are not right with God. They are not dealing honestly and truly with their own souls. They have neglected to cultivate personal piety. They have not separated themselves from all selfishness, and from sin and sinners. They have failed to study the life of self-denial and of self-sacrifice of our Lord. They have failed to imitate his life of purity, devotion, and self-sacrifice, having no selfish interest. The sin which easily besets has been strengthened by being cultivated. They have separated themselves, by their own negligence and sin, from the company of the divine Teacher, and he is a day's journey in advance of them. They have for their company, the indolent, slothful, backslider, unbeliever, irreverent, unthankful, unholy, and their attendants, the evil angels. What marvel, then, if such are in dark-

ness, or if they do have doubts of doctrine? "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Ye shall know of a certainty in regard to this matter. This should put to flight all doubts and questionings. It is a separation from Christ that brings these doubts. He is followed by the earnest, honest, true, faithful, humble, meek, and pure, while the heavenly angels, clothed with the panoply of Heaven, are sanctifying, enlightening, purifying, and guarding, the whole; for they are Heaven-bound.

No greater evidence need be asked that a person is at a great distance from Jesus, and living in neglect of secret prayer, neglecting personal piety, who thus talks doubts and unbelief because his surroundings are not favorable. Such possess not the pure, true, undefiled religion of Jesus Christ. They have a spurious article which the refining process will utterly consume like dross. As soon as their faith is put to the test, as soon as God by his ways and means proves them, they waver, they stand feebly, swaying, first one way, then the other. They have not the genuine article that Paul possessed, that could glory in tribulation, because "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart." They have a religion of circumstance. If all around them are strong in faith and courage in the ultimate success of the third angel's message, and there is no special influence brought to bear against them, they then have apparently some faith. But as soon as adversity seems to come upon the cause, and the work drags heavily, and the help of every

one is needed to press things ahead, these poor souls, although they may be professed ministers of the gospel, expect everything will come to naught. These hinder, instead of helping.

If apostasy arises, and rebellion is manifested, you do not hear them say, in words of encouragement and lofty cheer, Brethren, faint not; be of good courage. "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

These men, thus affected by circumstances, should remain at their homes, and employ their physical and mental strength in a less-responsible position, where they will not be liable to meet such strong opposition. If everything moves smoothly, they may pass for apparently very good, devotional men. But these are not the ones whom the Master will send to do his work; for his work is opposed by those who are emissaries of Satan. Satan, also, and his host of evil angels will be arrayed against them. God has made provision for the men whom he has called to do his work, that they may come off conquerors in every contest. If his directions are followed, they will never meet with defeat.

The Lord, speaking through Paul, Eph. 6: 10-18, tells them how to fortify themselves against Satan and his emissaries: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take

unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

We are engaged in an exalted, sacred work. All who profess to be called to the work of teaching the truth to those who sit in darkness, should not be bodies of unbelief and darkness themselves. They should live near to God, where they can be all light in the Lord. Why they are not so is because they are not obeying the word of God themselves; therefore, you hear doubts and discouragements expressed, where should be heard only words of faith and holy cheer.

It is religion that the ministers need; a daily conversion to God, an undivided, unselfish interest in his cause and work. There should be self-abasement and a putting away of all jealousy, evil surmising, envy, hatred, malice, and unbelief. A transformation of the entire man is needed. Some have lost sight of the suffering Man of Calvary. He is our pattern. In his service we need not expect ease, honor, and greatness, in this life. The Majesty of Heaven did not receive it. "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "He was

wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." With this example before us, will we choose to shun the cross, and be swayed by circumstances? Shall our zeal, our fervor, be kindled only when we are surrounded by those who are awake and zealous in the work and cause of God?

Can we not stand in God, let our surroundings be ever so unpleasant and discouraging? "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Many ministers have not an undivided interest in the work. They have invested but little in the



cause of God. - They have taken so little stock in the work and the advancement of the truth, that they are easily tempted in regard to it, and moved from it. They are not stablished, strengthened, settled.

He who understands well his own character, who is acquainted with the sin which most easily besets him, and the temptations that will be the most sure to overcome him, should not expose himself needlessly, and invite temptation by placing himself upon the enemy's ground. If duty calls him to place himself where circumstances are not favorable, he will have special help from God, and thus go fully girded for a conflict with the enemy. Self-knowledge will save many from falling into grievous temptations, and prevent an inglorious defeat. In order to become acquainted with ourselves, it is essential that we faithfully investigate the motives and principles of our conduct, comparing our actions with the standard of duty revealed in his word. Ministers should encourage and cultivate benevolence.

I was shown men who have been engaged in our Office of Publication, in our Health Institute, and in the ministry, who have labored simply for wages. Not all are guilty in this respect. There are exceptions. But few have seemed to realize that they must give an account of their stewardship. Means that have been consecrated to God, to advance his cause, have been squandered. Families in poverty, who prized the truth, and had experienced its sanctifying influence, and have felt grateful to God for the truth, have thought that they could, and should, deprive themselves of even the necessaries of life, in order to bring

in their offerings to the treasury of the Lord. Some have deprived themselves of articles of clothing which they really needed to make them comfortable, to give to the cause of God. Others have sold their only cow, and the means thus received they have dedicated to God. They have bowed before the Lord with their offerings, and, in the sincerity of their souls, with many tears of gratitude because it was their privilege to do this for the cause of God, have invoked his blessing upon their offerings as they sent them forth, praying that they might be the means of bringing the knowledge of the truth to souls who were in darkness. The means thus dedicated have not always been appropriated as the self-sacrificing donors designed. Covetous, selfish men have handled means unfaithfully thus brought into the treasury. They had no spirit of self-denial or self-sacrifice themselves, and have robbed the treasury of God in receiving means they have not justly earned. Their unconsecrated, reckless management squandered and scattered means that had been consecrated to God with prayers and tears. I was shown that a faithful record has been made, by the recording angel, of every offering dedicated to God, and put into the treasury, and the final result of the means thus bestowed is recorded. The eye of God has taken cognizance of every farthing devoted to his cause, and the willingness of mind, or the reluctance, of the giver. The motive in giving is also chronicled. The self-sacrificing, consecrated men and women, who render back to God the things that are God's, as he requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. If the means thus consecrated to

God are misapplied, that it does not accomplish the object the donor had in view—the glory of God, and the salvation of souls—those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward.

Those who have made a wrong use of the means dedicated to God, will be required to give an account of their stewardship. Some have selfishly grasped means, because of their love of gain. Others have not a tender conscience. Through long-cherished selfishness, their consciences are seared. They view sacred and eternal things from a low standpoint. Their moral sensibilities seem paralyzed through their long continuance in a course of wrong. It seems an impossibility to elevate their views and feelings to the high and exalted standard clearly brought to view in the word of God. This class will find no place in Heaven, unless there is a thorough transformation by the renewing of the mind. Those who have pursued a course of selfishness and wrong, that even the treasury of God has not been regarded sacred by them, could not appreciate the purity and holiness of the sanctified in the kingdom of Heaven, or the value of the rich glory and the eternal reward reserved for the faithful overcomers. Their minds have so long run in a selfish, low channel, that they cannot appreciate eternal things. They do not value salvation. It seems impossible to elevate their minds to rightly estimate the plan of salvation, or the value of the atonement. Selfish interests have engrossed the entire being. Like a loadstone they hold the mind and affections, binding them down

to a low level. Some of these will never attain the perfection of Christian character, because they do not see the value and the necessity of such a character. You cannot elevate their minds so that they will be charmed with holiness. Self-love and selfish interests have so warped their characters that they cannot be made to see and distinguish the sacred and eternal from the common. God's cause and his treasury are no more sacred to them than the handling of common means for worldly purposes or common business.

Duties in this direction are binding upon all who profess to be followers of Christ. God's law specifies their duty to their fellow-men: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." A disregard of justice, mercy, and benevolence, to their neighbor, has so hardened the heart that they can go still further without compunctions of conscience, and even rob God. Do such close their eyes and their understanding to the fact that God knows, that God reads, their every action, and the motive which impelled them to it? His reward is with him, and his work before him, to give to every man according as his work shall be. Every good, and every wrong, act, and their influence upon others, is traced out by the Searcher of hearts, to whom every secret is revealed. And the reward will be according to the motives which prompted the action.

Those who have occupied responsible positions, and, notwithstanding the repeated warnings the Lord has sent them, have, in the face of these warnings and reproofs, followed their own ways, and been guided by their own unsanctified judg-

ment, and, in consequence, the cause of God has suffered, and souls have been turned from the truth, will have a fearful record to meet in the day of final retribution. If souls thus guilty are ever saved, it will be by no common effort on their part. Their past life must be seen by them, and redeemed, which work, if entered into with sincerity, and persistently followed with perseverance and untiring earnestness, will be wholly successful.

But many will not succeed, because the work which they commence with earnestness dies down to listlessness and carelessness. Their efforts are right at first, as they have some sense of their condition; but they seek to forget the past, and pass over it without taking up the stumbling-blocks, and making thorough work. Their repentance is not genuine sorrow because God has been dishonored, and souls for whom Christ died have been lost, through their influence. They make spasmodic efforts. They show great feeling; but the fact that this feeling soon passes off, and is succeeded by no effort, but only a listless indifference, evidences that God was not fully in the work. The feelings were for a time operated upon; but the work did not reach down deep enough to change the principles which governed their actions. They are as liable to be led into the same course of wrong again, as at first; for they have not strength to withstand the wiles of Satan, but are subject to his devices.

The life of a true Christian is onward. There is no standing still, nor going back. It is their privilege to be "filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all

pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

I would entreat all, but especially those who minister in word and doctrine, to make an unreserved surrender to God. Consecrate your lives to God, and be indeed ensamples to the flock. Be no longer content to remain dwarfs in spiritual things. Let your aim be nothing short of perfection of Christian character. Let your lives be unselfish and blameless, that they may ever be a living rebuke to those whose lives are selfish, and whose affections seem to be upon their earthly treasure. May God grant that you may be strengthened according to the riches of his glory, "with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and hight; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

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### EXERCISE AND AIR.

THE Lord designed in the creation of man that he should be active and useful. Many live in this world as useless machines; as though they hardly existed. So far as their influence is concerned,

they brighten the path of none, and they are a blessing to none. They live to have others burdened by their lives. So far as their influence on the side of right is concerned, they are only cyphers; but they tell with weight upon the wrong side. To search the lives of such closely, scarcely an act of disinterested benevolence can be found. When they die, their memory dies with them. Their names soon perish; for they cannot live even in the affections of their friends by means of true goodness and virtuous acts.

Life with such has been a mistake. They have not been faithful stewards. They have forgotten that their Creator has claims upon them, and that he designs that they should be active in doing good, and in blessing others with their influence. But selfish interests attract the mind, and lead to the forgetting of God and the purpose of their Creator.

All who profess to be followers of Jesus should feel that a duty is resting upon them to preserve their bodies in the best condition of health, that the mind may be clear to comprehend heavenly things. The mind needs to be controlled. The imagination often misleads, and by being indulged, brings severe forms of disease upon the afflicted. Many die whose diseases are mostly imaginary. The mind has a most powerful influence upon the health. I am acquainted with several who have brought upon themselves actual disease by the influence of the imagination. )

One sister was carried from chair to bed, and from room to room, by her husband, because she thought that she was too feeble to walk. But, as the case was afterward presented to me, she could

have walked as well as myself if she had thought so. Had an accident occurred—the house taken fire, or one of her children been in imminent danger of losing life by a fall, this woman would have been aroused by the force of circumstances, and would have walked quite readily and briskly. This woman could walk, so far as physical strength was concerned; but, from a diseased imagination, she concluded that she could not walk, and she did not arouse the power of the will to resist this deception. The imagination said, You cannot walk, and you had better not try. Sit still; your limbs are so weak that you cannot stand, but will fall.

If this sister had aroused her benumbed and dormant energies, and her will-power, this deception would have been exposed. In yielding to the imagination, she probably thinks, to this day, that, at that time when she was so helpless, she was so of necessity; but this was purely a freak of the imagination. The imagination sometimes plays strange tricks upon diseased mortals.

Some are so fearful of air that they will muffle up their heads and bodies until they look like mummies. They sit in the house, generally inactive, fearing they shall weary themselves and get sick if they exercise in doors, or out in the open air. They can take habitual exercise in the open air, every pleasant day, if they only think so. Continued inactivity is one of the greatest causes of debility of body, and feebleness of mind. Many are sick who ought to be in a very good condition of health, and thus be in possession of one of the richest blessings that men and women can enjoy.