

TESTIMONY

FOR

THE CHURCH.

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THE JUDGMENT.

ON the morning of Oct. 23, 1879, about two o'clock, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I beheld scenes in the coming Judgment. Language fails me in which to give an adequate description of the things which passed before me, and of the effect they had upon my mind.

The great day of the execution of God's judgment seemed to have come. Ten thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which was seated a person of majestic appearance. Several books were before him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire, "Ledger of Heaven." One of these books containing the names of those who claimed to believe the truth was then opened. Immediately I lost sight of the countless millions about the throne, and only those who were professedly children of the light and of the truth engaged my attention. As these persons were named, one by one, and their good deeds mentioned, their countenances would light up with a holy joy that was reflected in every direction. But this did not seem to rest upon my mind with the greatest force.

Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the *sins* of those who professed the

truth. Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin. There were also headings over every column, and underneath these, opposite each name, were recorded in their respective columns the lesser sins. Under covetousness came falsehood, theft, robbery, fraud, and avariciousness; under ambition came pride and extravagance; jealousy stood at the head of malice, envy, hatred; and intemperance headed a long list of fearful crimes, such as lasciviousness, adultery, indulgence of animal passions, etc. As I beheld, I was filled with inexpressible anguish, and exclaimed, Who can be saved? who will stand justified before God? whose robes are spotless? who are faultless in the sight of a pure and holy God?

As the Holy One upon the throne slowly turned the leaves of the Ledger, and his eyes rested for a moment upon individuals, his glance seemed to burn into their very souls, and at the same moment every word and action of their lives passed before their minds as clearly as if traced before their vision in letters of fire. Trembling seized them, and their faces turned pale. Their first appearance when around the throne was that of careless indifference. But how changed their appearance now! The feeling of security is gone, and in its place is a nameless terror. A dread is upon every soul lest he shall be found among those who are wanting. Every eye is riveted upon the face of the One upon the throne; and as his solemn, searching eye sweeps over that company, there is a quaking of heart, for they are

self-condemned without one word being uttered. In anguish of soul each declares his own guilt, and with terrible vividness sees that by sinning he has thrown away the precious boon of eternal life.

One class were registered as cumberers of the ground. As the piercing eye of the Judge rested upon these, their sins of neglect were distinctly revealed. With pale and quivering lips they acknowledged that they had been traitors to their holy trust. They had had warnings and privileges, but they had not heeded nor improved them. They now see that they presumed too much upon the mercy of God. True, they had not such confessions to make as had the vile and basely corrupt; but like the fig-tree they were cursed because they bore no fruit, because they had not put to use the talents intrusted to them.

This class had made *themselves* supreme, laboring only for selfish interests. They were not rich toward God, not having responded to his claims upon them. Although professing to be servants of Jesus Christ, they brought no souls to him. Had the cause of God been dependent on their efforts, it would have languished; for they not only withheld the means lent them of God, but they withheld themselves. But these now see and feel that in occupying an irresponsible position in reference to the work and cause of God, they have placed themselves on the left hand. They had opportunity, but would not do the work that they could and should have done.

The names of all who professed the truth

were mentioned. Some were reprov'd for their unbelief, others for having been slothful servants. They allowed others to do the work in the Master's vineyard, and to bear the heaviest responsibilities, while they were selfishly serving their own temporal interests. By cultivating the abilities God had given them, they could have been reliable burden-bearers, working for the interest of the Master. Said the Judge, All will be justified by their faith, and judged by their works. How vividly then appeared their neglect, and how wise the arrangement of God in giving to every man a work to do to promote the cause and save his fellow-men. Each was to demonstrate a living faith in his family and in his neighborhood, by showing kindness to the poor, sympathizing with the afflicted, engaging in missionary labor, and by aiding the cause of God with his means. But like Meroz, the curse of God rested upon them for what they did not do. They loved that work which would bring the greatest profit in this life; and opposite their names in the Ledger devoted to good works there was a mournful blank.

The words spoken to these were most solemn: You are weigh'd in the balances, and found wanting. You have neglected spiritual responsibilities because of busy activity in temporal matters, while your very position of trust made it necessary that you should have more than human wisdom and greater than finite judgment. This you needed in order to perform even the mechanical part of your labor; and when you disconnected God and his glory from

your business, you turned from his blessing.

The question was then asked, Why have you not washed your robes of character, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that through him it might be saved. My love for you has been more self-denying than a mother's love. It was that I might blot out your dark record of iniquity, and put the cup of salvation to your lips, that I suffered the death of the cross, bearing the weight and curse of your guilt. The pangs of death, and the horrors of the darkness of the tomb, I endured that I might conquer him who had the power of death, unbar the prison-house, and open for you the gates of life. I submitted to shame and agony because I loved you with an infinite love, and would bring back my wayward, wandering sheep to the paradise of God, to the tree of life. That life of bliss which I purchased for you at such a cost, you have disregarded. Shame, reproach, and ignominy, such as your Master bore for you, you have shunned. The privileges he died to bring within your reach have not been appreciated. You would not be partaker of his sufferings, and you cannot now be partaker with him of his glory. Then were uttered these solemn words: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." The book then closed, and the mantle fell from the person on the throne, revealing the terrible glory of the Son of God.

The scene then passed away, and I found

myself still upon the earth, inexpressibly grateful that the day of God had not yet come, and that precious probationary time was still granted us in which to prepare for eternity.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

SOME things of grave importance have not been receiving due attention at our Offices of publication. Men in responsible positions should have worked up plans whereby our books could be circulated, and not lie on the shelves, falling dead from the press. Our people are behind the times, and are not following the opening providence of God.

Many of our publications have been thrown into the market at so low a figure that the profits are not sufficient to sustain the Office and keep good a fund for continual use. And those of our people who have no special burden of the various branches of the work⁷ at Battle Creek, and at Oakland, do not become informed in regard to the wants of the cause, and the capital required to keep the business moving. They do not understand the liability to losses, and the expense every day occurring to such institutions. They seem to think that everything moves off without much care or outlay of means, and therefore they will urge the necessity of the lowest figures on our publications, thus leaving scarcely any margin. And after the prices have been reduced to almost ruinous figures, they manifest but a feeble interest in increasing the sales of the very books

on which they have asked such low prices. The object gained, their burden ceases, when they ought to have an earnest interest and a real care to press the sale of the publications, thereby sowing the seeds of truth, and bringing means into the Offices to invest in other publications.

There has been, on the part of ministers, a very great neglect of duty in not interesting the churches in the localities where they labor, in regard to this matter. When once the prices of books are reduced, it is a very difficult matter to get them again upon a paying basis, as men of narrow minds will cry speculation, not discerning that no one man is benefited, and that God's instrumentalities must not be crippled for want of capital. Books that ought to be widely circulated are lying useless in our Offices of publication, because there is not interest enough manifested to get them circulated.

The press is a power; but if its products fall dead for want of men who will execute plans to widely circulate them, its power is lost. While there has been a quick foresight to discern the necessity of laying out means in facilities to multiply books and tracts, plans to bring back the means invested, so as to reproduce other publications, have been neglected. The power of the press with all its advantages is in their hands, and they can use it to the very best account, or they can be half asleep, and through inaction, lose the advantages which they might gain. They can extend the light, by judicious calculation, in the sale of books and pamphlets. They can send them into thousands of families who now sit in the darkness of error.

With other publishers, there are regular systems of introducing into the market books of no vital interest. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Golden opportunities occur almost daily where the silent messengers of truth might be introduced into families and to individuals; but no advantage is taken of these opportunities by the indolent, thoughtless ones. Living preachers are few. There is only one where there should be a hundred. Many are making a great mistake in not putting their talents to use in seeking to save the souls of their fellow-men. Hundreds of men should be engaged in carrying the light all through our cities, villages, and towns. The public mind must be agitated. God says, Let light be sent out into all parts of the field. He designs that men shall be channels of light, bearing it to those who are in darkness.

Missionaries are wanted everywhere. In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected, not from the floating element in society, not from men and women who are good for nothing else, and have made a success of nothing; but they should be persons of good address, of tact, keen foresight and ability. Such are needed to make a success as colporteurs, canvassers, and agents. Men suited to this work undertake it; but some injudicious minister will flatter them that their gift should be employed in the desk instead of simply working as colporteurs. Thus the work of the colporteur is belittled. They are influenced to get a license to preach, and the very ones who might

have been trained to make good missionaries to visit families at their homes, and talk and pray with them, are caught up to make poor ministers, and the field where so much labor is needed and where so much good might be accomplished for the cause, is neglected. The efficient colporteur, if his work is faithfully done, should have a sufficient remuneration for his services as well as the minister.

If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting before the public our publications which will lead men to search the Scriptures. Missionary work—introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them—is a good work, and one which will educate men and women to do pastoral labor.

Every one is not fitted for this work. Those of the best talent and ability, who will take hold of the work understandingly and systematically, and carry it forward with persevering energy, are the ones who should be selected. There should be a most thoroughly organized plan; and this should be faithfully carried out. Churches in every place should feel the deepest interest in the tract and missionary work.

The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbath-keeping family, and the brethren should know their value, and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family, and read again and again. Let them be kept where.

they can be read by many, and let them be worn out in being read by all the neighbors.

There should be evening readings, in which one should read aloud to those assembled at the winter fireside. There is but little interest manifested to make the most of the light given of God. Much of it is concerning family duties, and instruction is given to meet almost every case and circumstance. Money will be expended for tea, coffee, ribbons, ruffles, and trimmings, and much time and labor spent in preparing the apparel, while the inward work of the heart is neglected. God has caused precious light to be brought out in publications, and these should be owned and read by every family. Parents, your children are in danger of going contrary to the light given of Heaven, and you should both purchase and read the books, for they will be a blessing to you and yours.

You should lend Spirit of Prophecy to your neighbors, and prevail upon them to buy copies for themselves. Missionaries for God, you should be earnest, active, vigorous workers.

Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to his people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion, have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given, while books and periodicals containing error are traveling all over the country. Skepticism and infidelity are increasing everywhere. Light, so precious, com-

ing from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make his people responsible for this neglect. An account must be rendered to him for every ray of light he has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things, or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclination.

We now have great facilities for spreading the truth, but our people are not coming up to the privileges given them. They do not see and sense the necessity in every church of using their abilities in saving souls. They do not realize their duty to obtain subscribers for our periodicals, including our health journal, and to introduce our books and pamphlets. Men should be at work who are willing to be taught as to the best way of approaching individuals and families. Their dress should be neat, but not foppish, and their manners such as not to disgust the people. There is a great want of true politeness among us as a people. This should be cultivated by all those who take hold of the missionary work.

Our publishing houses should show marked prosperity. Our people can sustain them if they will show a decided interest to work our publications into the market. But, should as little interest be manifested in the year to come as has been shown in the year past, there will be but small margin to work upon.

The wider the circulation of our publications, the greater will be the demand for books that make plain the Scriptures of truth. Many are becoming disgusted with the incon-

sistencies, errors, and the apostasy of the churches, and with the festivals, fairs, lotteries, and numerous inventions to extort money for church purposes. There are many who are seeking for light in the darkness. If our papers, tracts, and books, expressing the truth in plain Bible language, could be widely circulated, many would find that they are just what they want. But many of our brethren act as if the people were to come to them or send to our Offices to obtain publications, when thousands do not know that they exist.

God calls upon his people to act like living men, and not to be indolent, sluggish, and indifferent. We must carry the publications to the people, and urge them to accept, showing them that they will receive much more than their money's worth. Exalt the value of the books you offer. You cannot regard them too highly.

My soul was agonized as I saw the indifference of our people who make so high a profession. I was shown that the blood of souls will be on the garments of very many who now feel at ease and irresponsible for souls that are perishing around them for want of light and knowledge. They have come in contact with them, but have never warned them, never prayed with or for them, and never made earnest efforts to present the truth to them. I was shown that there has been a wonderful negligence on this point. Ministers are not doing one-half what they might do to educate the people for whom they labor upon all points of truth and duty; and, as a consequence, the people are

spiritless and inactive. The stake and scaffold are not appointed for this time to test the people of God, and for this very reason the love of many has waxed cold. When trials arise, grace is proportioned for the emergency. We must individually consecrate ourselves on the very spot where God has said he would meet us.

CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS.

AMBASSADORS for Christ have a solemn and important work, which rests upon some altogether too lightly. While Christ is the minister in the sanctuary above, he is also, through his delegates, the minister of his church on earth. He speaks to the people through chosen men, and carries forward his work through them, as when, in the days of his humiliation, he moved visibly upon the earth. Although centuries have passed, the lapse of time has not changed his parting promise to his disciples, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." From Christ's ascension to the present day, men ordained of God, deriving their authority from him, have become teachers of the faith. Christ, the True Shepherd, superintends his work through the instrumentality of these under-shepherds. Thus the position of those who labor in word and doctrine becomes very important. In Christ's stead they beseech the people to be reconciled to God.

The people should not regard their ministers as mere public speakers and orators, but as Christ's ambassadors, receiving their wisdom

and power from the great Head of the church. To slight and disregard the word spoken by Christ's representative, is not only showing disrespect to the man, but also to the Master who has sent him. He is in Christ's stead. The voice of the Saviour should be heard in his representative.

Many of our ministers have made a great mistake in giving discourses which were wholly argumentative. There are souls who listen to the theory of truth and are impressed with the evidences brought out, and then if a portion of the discourse presents Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, the seed sown might spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. But in many discourses the cross of Christ is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear. And some will never again be situated where they can have the chain of truth brought before them and a practical application made of it to their hearts. That golden opportunity lost, is lost forever. Had Christ and his redeeming love been exalted in connection with the theory of truth, it might have balanced them on the side of Jesus Christ.

There are more souls longing to understand how they may come to Christ than we imagine. Many listen to popular sermons from the pulpit and know no better how to find Jesus and the peace and rest which their souls desire, than before they listened. Ministers who preach the last message of mercy to the world should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner's refuge. Many ministers

think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith, with a heart all subdued by the love of God; they take it for granted that their hearers are perfectly acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. If their hearers are interested, they take it as evidence of success. The people are more ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation, and need more instruction upon this all-important subject, than upon any other.

Those who assemble to listen to the truth should expect to be profited, as did Cornelius and his friends: "Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

Theoretical discourses are essential, that all may know the form of doctrine, and see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole. But no discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and him crucified as the foundation of the gospel, making a practical application of the truths set forth, and impressing upon the people the fact that the doctrine of Christ is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

After the theory of truth has been presented, then comes the laborious part of the work. The people should not be left without instruction in the practical truths which relate to their every-day life. They must see and feel that they are sinners, and need to be converted to God. What Christ said, what he did, and what he taught, should be brought before them in the most impressive manner.

The work of the minister is but commenced when the truth is opened to the understanding of the people. Christ is our mediator and officiating high priest in the presence of the Father. He was shown to John as a Lamb that had been slain,—as in the very act of pouring out his blood in the sinner's behalf. When the law of God is set before the sinner, showing him the depth of his sins, he should then be pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He should be taught repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus will the labor of Christ's representative be in harmony with his work in the heavenly sanctuary.

Ministers would reach many more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness. Frequently, when efforts are made to introduce the truth into new fields, the labor is almost entirely theoretical. The people are unsettled. They see the force of truth, and are anxious to obtain a sure foundation. As their feelings are softened, then is the time, above all others, to urge the religion of Christ home upon the conscience; but too often the course of lectures has been allowed to close without that work being done for the people which they needed. That effort was too much like the offering of Cain; it had not the sacrificial blood to make it acceptable to God. Cain was right in making an offering, but he left out all that made it of any value,—the blood of the atonement.

It is a sad fact that the reason why many dwell so much on theory, and so little on prac-

tical godliness, is because Christ is not abiding in their hearts. They do not have a living connection with God. Many souls decide in favor of the truth, from the weight of evidence, without being converted. Practical discourses were not given in connection with the doctrinal, that as the hearers should see the beautiful chain of truth they might fall in love with its Author, and be sanctified through obedience. The minister's work is not done until he has urged home upon his hearers the necessity of change of character in accordance with the pure principles of the truth which they have received.

A formal religion is to be dreaded; for in it is no Saviour. Plain, close, searching, practical discourses were given by Christ. His ambassadors should follow his example in every discourse. Christ and his Father were one; in all the Father's requirements Christ cheerfully acquiesced. He had the mind of God. The Redeemer was the perfect pattern. Jehovah was manifested in him. Heaven was enshrined in humanity, and humanity inclosed in the bosom of Infinite Love. If ministers will in meekness sit at the feet of Jesus, they will soon obtain right views of God's character, and will be able to teach others also. Some enter the ministry without deep love to God or to their fellow-men. Selfishness and self-indulgence will be manifested in the lives of such, and while these unconsecrated, unfaithful watchmen are serving themselves instead of feeding the flock and attending to their pastoral duties, the people perish for want of proper instruction.

In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ. The popular sins and indulgences of our day should be condemned, and practical godliness enforced. The minister should be deeply in earnest himself, feeling from the heart the words he utters, and unable to repress his feelings of concern for the souls of men and women for whom Christ died. Said the Master, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." The same earnestness should be felt by his representatives.

An infinite sacrifice has been made for man, and made in vain for every soul who will not accept of salvation. How important, then, that the one who presents the truth shall do so under a full sense of the responsibility resting upon him. How tender, pitiful, and courteous should be all his conduct in dealing with the souls of men, when the Redeemer of the world has evidenced that he valued them so highly. The question is asked by Christ, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household?" Jesus asks, Who? and every minister of the gospel should repeat the question to his own heart. As he views the solemn truths, and his mind beholds the picture drawn of the faithful and wise steward, his soul should be stirred to the very depths.

To every man is given his work; not one is excused. Each has a part to act, according to his capacity, and it devolves upon the one who presents the truth to carefully and prayerfully learn the ability of all who accept the truth,

and then to instruct them and lead them along, step by step, letting them realize the burden of responsibility resting upon them to do the work that God has for them to do. It should be urged upon them again and again that no one will be able to resist temptation, to answer the purpose of God, and live the life of a Christian, unless he shall take up his work, be it great or small, and do that work with conscientious fidelity. There is something for all to do besides going to church, and listening to the word of God. They must practice the truth heard, carrying its principles into their every-day life. They must be doing work for Christ constantly, not from selfish motives, but with an eye single to the glory of Him who made every sacrifice to save them from ruin.

Ministers should impress upon those who accept the truth that they must have Christ in their homes; that they need grace and wisdom from him in guiding and controlling their children. It is a part of the work which God has left for them to do, to educate and discipline these children, bringing them in subjection. Let the kindness and courtesy of the minister be seen in his treatment of children. He should ever bear in mind that they are miniature men and women, younger members of the Lord's family. These may be very near and dear to the Master, and, if properly instructed and disciplined, will do service for him, even in their youth. Christ is grieved with every harsh, severe, and inconsiderate word spoken to children. Their rights are not always respected, and they are frequently

treated as 'though they had not an individual character which needs to be properly developed, that it may not be warped, and the purpose of God in their lives prove a failure.

From a child, Timothy knew the Scriptures ; and this knowledge was a safeguard to him against the evil influence surrounding him, and the temptation to choose pleasure and selfish gratification before duty. Such a safeguard all our children need ; and it should be a part of the work of parents, and of Christ's ambassadors, to see that the children are properly instructed in the word of God.

If the minister would meet the approval of his Lord, he must labor with fidelity to present every man perfect in Christ. He should not, in his manner of labor, carry the impression that it is of little consequence whether men do or do not accept the truth, and practice true godliness ; but the faithfulness and self-sacrifice manifested in his life should be such as to convince the sinner that eternal interests are at stake, and his soul is in peril unless he responds to the earnest labor put forth in his behalf. Those who have been brought from error and darkness to truth and light have great changes to make, and unless the necessity of thorough reform is pressed home upon the conscience, they will be like the man who looked in the mirror, the law of God, and discovered the defects in his moral character, but went away and forgot what manner of man he was. The mind must be kept awake to a sense of responsibility, or it will settle back into a state of even more careless inattention than before it was aroused.

The work of the ambassadors for Christ is far greater and far more responsible than many dream of. They should not be at all satisfied with their success until they can, by their earnest labors and the blessing of God, present to him serviceable Christians, who have a true sense of their responsibility, and will do their appointed work. The proper labor and instruction will result in bringing into working order those men and women whose characters are strong, and their convictions so firm that nothing of a selfish character is permitted to hinder them in their work, to lessen their faith, or deter them from duty. If the minister has properly instructed those under his care, when he leaves for other fields of labor, the work left will not ravel out, for it is bound off so firmly that it is secure. Unless those who receive the truth are thoroughly converted, and there is a radical change in their life and character, the soul is not riveted to the eternal Rock; and after the labor of the minister ceases, and the novelty is gone, the impression soon wears away, the truth loses its power to charm, and they exert no holier influence, and are no better for their profession of the truth.

I am astonished, that with the examples before us of what man may be, and what he may do, we are not stimulated to greater exertion to emulate the good works of the righteous. All may not occupy a position of prominence, yet all may fill positions of usefulness and trust, and may, by their persevering fidelity, do far more good than they have any idea that they can do. Those who embrace the truth should

seek a clear understanding of the Scriptures, and an experimental knowledge of a living Saviour. The intellect should be cultivated, the memory taxed. All intellectual laziness is sin, and spiritual lethargy is death.

Oh, that I could command language of sufficient force to make the impression I wish to make upon my fellow-laborers in the gospel! My brethren, you are handling the words of life, and you are dealing with minds that are capable of the highest development, if directed in the right channel. But there is too much exhibition of self in the discourses given. Christ crucified, Christ ascended into the heavens, Christ coming again, should so soften, gladden, and fill the mind of the minister of the gospel that he will present these truths to the people in love and deep earnestness. The minister will then be lost sight of, and Jesus magnified. The people will be so impressed with these all-absorbing subjects that they will talk of them, and praise them, instead of praising the minister, the mere instrument. But if the people have little interest in the word preached, while they praise the minister, he may know that the truth is not sanctifying his own soul. He does not speak it out to the hearers in such a manner that Jesus is honored, and his love magnified.

Said Christ, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Let your light so shine that the glory will redound to God instead of to yourselves. If the praise comes to you, well may you tremble and be

ashamed, for the great object is defeated; God is not magnified, but the servant. Let your light so shine; be careful, minister of Christ, in what manner your light shines. If it flashes heavenward, revealing the excellence of Jesus Christ, it shines aright. If it is turned upon yourself, if you exhibit yourself, and attract the people to admire you, it would be better for you to hold your peace altogether; for your light shines in the wrong way.

Ministers of Christ, you may be connected with God, if you will watch and pray. Let your words be seasoned with salt, and let Christian courtesy and true elevation pervade your demeanor. If the peace of God is ruling within, its power will not only strengthen but soften your hearts, and you will be living representatives of Jesus Christ. The people who profess the truth are backsliding from God. Jesus is soon to come, and they are unready. The minister must reach a higher standard himself, a faith marked with greater firmness, an experience that is living and vivid, not dull and common-place like that of the nominal professors. The word of God sets a high mark before you. Will you, through fasting, and prayerful effort, attain to the completeness and consistency of Christian character? You should make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. A close connection with God will bring to you, in your labor, that vital power which arouses the conscience, and convicts the sinner of sin, leading him to cry, What shall I do to be saved?

The commission which Christ gave to the disciples, just prior to his ascension to Heaven, was, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on thee through their word." The commission reaches those who shall believe on his word through his disciples. And all who are called of God to stand as ambassadors for him, should take the lessons upon practical godliness given them by Christ in his word, and teach them to the people.

Christ opened the Scriptures to his disciples, beginning at Moses and the prophets, and instructed them in all things concerning himself, and also explained to them the prophecies. The apostles in their preaching, went back to Adam's day, and brought their hearers down through prophetic history, and ended with Christ and him crucified, calling upon sinners to repent and turn from their sins to God. The representatives of Christ in our day should follow their example, and in every discourse magnify Christ as the Exalted One, as all and in all.

Not only is formality taking possession of the nominal churches, but it is increasing to an alarming extent among those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God, and looking for the soon appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven. We should not be narrow

in our views, and limit our facilities for doing good; yet while we extend our influence, and enlarge our plans as Providence opens the way, we should be more earnest to avoid the idolatry of the world. While we make greater efforts to increase our usefulness, we must make corresponding efforts to obtain wisdom from God to carry on all the branches of the work after his own order, and not from a worldly standpoint. We should not pattern after the customs of the world, but make the most of the facilities which God has placed within our reach to get the truth before the people.

When we as a people have our works correspond with our profession, we shall see very much more accomplished than now. When we have men as devoted as Elijah, and possessing the faith which he possessed, we shall see that God will reveal himself to us as he did to holy men of old. When we have men, who, while they acknowledge their deficiencies, will plead with God in earnest faith, as did Jacob, we shall see the same results. Power will come from God to man in answer to the prayer of faith. There is but little faith in the world. There are but few who are living near to God. And how can we expect more power, and that God will reveal himself to men, when his word is handled negligently, and when hearts are not sanctified through the truth? Men who are not half converted, self-confident, and self-sufficient in character, preach the truth to others. But God does not work with them, for they are not holy in heart and life. They do not walk humbly with God. We must have

a converted ministry, and then we shall see the light of God, and his power aiding all our efforts.

The watchmen, anciently placed upon the walls of Jerusalem and other cities, occupied a most responsible position. Upon their faithfulness depended the safety of all within those cities. When danger was apprehended, they were not to keep silent day nor night. Every few moments they were required to call to one another, to see if all were awake, and no harm had come to any. Sentinels were stationed upon some eminence overlooking the important posts to be guarded, and the cry of warning or of good cheer was sounded from them. This was borne from one to another, each repeating the words till it went the entire rounds of the city.

These watchmen represent the ministry upon whose fidelity depends the salvation of souls. The stewards of the mysteries of God should stand as watchmen upon the walls of Zion; and if they see the sword coming they should sound the note of warning. If they are sleepy sentinels, and their spiritual senses are so benumbed that they see and realize no danger, and the people perish, God will require their blood at the watchmen's hands.

“O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.” The watchmen will need to live very near to God to hear his word and be impressed with his Spirit, that the people may not look to them in vain. “When I say unto

the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Ambassadors of Christ should take heed that they do not, through their unfaithfulness, lose their own souls and the souls of those who hear them.

I was shown the churches in different States who profess to be keeping the commandments of God, and looking for the second coming of Christ. There is an alarming amount of indifference, of pride, love of the world, and cold formality existing among them. And these are the people who are fast coming to resemble ancient Israel, as far as the want of piety is concerned. Many make high claims to godliness, and yet are destitute of self-control. Appetite and passion bear sway; self is made prominent. Many are arbitrary, dictatorial, overbearing, boastful, proud, and unconsecrated. Yet some of these persons are ministers, handling sacred truths. Unless they repent, the candlestick will be removed out of its place. The Saviour's curse pronounced upon the fruitless fig-tree is a sermon to all formalists and boasting hypocrites who stand forth to the world in pretentious leaves, but are devoid of fruit. What a rebuke to those who have a form of godliness, while in their unchristian lives they deny the power thereof! He who treated with tenderness the very chief of sin-

ners, he who never spurned true meekness and penitence, however great the guilt, came down with scathing denunciations upon those who made high professions of godliness, but in works denied their faith.

MANNER OF SPEAKING.

Some of our most talented ministers are doing themselves great injury by their defective manner of speaking. While teaching the people their duty to obey God's moral law, they should not be found violating the laws of God in regard to health and life. Ministers should stand erect, and speak slowly, firmly, and distinctly, taking a full inspiration of air at every sentence, and throwing out the words by exercising the abdominal muscles. If they will observe this simple rule, giving attention to the laws of health in other respects, they may preserve their life and usefulness much longer than men in any other profession.

The chest will become broader, and by educating the voice, the speaker need seldom become hoarse, even by constant speaking. Instead of our ministers becoming consumptives by speaking, they may, by care, overcome all tendency to consumption.

I would say to my ministering brethren, Unless you educate yourselves to speak according to physical law, you will sacrifice life, and many will mourn the loss of "those martyrs to the cause of truth," when the facts in the case are that by indulging in wrong habits, you did injustice to yourselves and to the truth which you represented, and robbed God and

the world of the services you might have rendered. God would have been pleased to have you live, but you slowly committed suicide.

The manner in which the truth is presented often has much to do in determining whether it will be accepted or rejected. All who labor in the great cause of reform should study to become efficient workmen, that they may accomplish the greatest possible amount of good, and not detract from the force of the truth by their own deficiencies.

Ministers and teachers should discipline themselves to clear and distinct articulation, giving the full sound to every word. Those who talk rapidly, from the throat, jumbling the words together and raising their voices to an unnatural, high pitch, soon become hoarse, and the words spoken lose half the force which they would have if spoken slowly, distinctly, and not so loud. The sympathies of the hearers are awakened for the speaker, for they know that he is doing violence to himself, and they fear that he will break down at any moment. It is no evidence that a man is having zeal for God because he works himself up into a frenzy of excitement and gesticulation. "Bodily exercise," says the apostle, "profiteth little."

The Saviour of the world would have his co-laborers represent him; and the more closely a man walks with God, the more faultless will be his manner of address, his deportment, his attitude, and his gestures. Coarse and uncouth manners were never seen in our Pattern, Christ Jesus. He was a representative of Heaven, and his followers must be like him.

Some reason that the Lord will qualify a man by his Spirit to speak as he would have him ; but the Lord does not propose to do the work which he has given man to do. He has given us reasoning powers, and opportunities to educate the mind and manners. And after we have done all we can for ourselves, making the best use of the advantages within our reach, then we may look to God with earnest prayer to do by his Spirit that which we cannot do for ourselves, and we will ever find in our Saviour power and efficiency.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MINISTRY.

A great injury is often done our young men by permitting them to commence to preach when they have not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures to present our faith in an intelligent manner. Some who enter the field are mere novices in the Scriptures. In other things they are also incompetent and inefficient. They cannot read the Scriptures without hesitating, miscalling words, and jumbling them together in such a manner that the word of God is abused. Those who are not qualified to present the truth in a proper manner need not be perplexed with regard to their duty. Their place is as learners, not as teachers. Young men who wish to prepare for the ministry are greatly benefited by attending our College ; but advantages are still needed that they may be qualified to become acceptable speakers. A teacher should be employed to educate the youth to speak without wearing the vocal organs. The manners, also, should receive attention.

Some young men who enter the field are not successful in teaching the truth to others, because they have not been educated themselves. Those who cannot read correctly should learn, and they should become apt to teach before they attempt to stand before the public. The teachers in our schools are obliged to apply themselves closely to study, that they may be prepared to instruct others. These teachers are not accepted until they have passed a critical examination, and their capabilities to teach have been tested by competent judges. No less caution should be used in the examination of ministers; those who are about to enter upon the sacred work of teaching Bible truth to the world should be carefully examined by faithful, experienced persons.

After these have had some experience, there is still another work to be done for them; they should be presented before the Lord in earnest prayer that he would indicate by his Holy Spirit if they are acceptable to him. The apostle says, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." In the days of the apostles, the ministers of God did not dare to rely upon their own judgment in selecting or accepting men to take the solemn and sacred position as mouth-piece for God. They selected the men whom their judgment would accept, and then they placed them before the Lord to see if he would accept them to go forth as his representatives. No less than this should be done now.

In many places we meet men who have been hurried into responsible positions as elders of the church, when they are not qualified for

such a position. They have not proper government over themselves. Their influence is not good. The church is in trouble continually in consequence of the defective character of the leader. Hands have been laid too suddenly upon these men.

Ministers of God should be of good repute, capable of discreetly managing an interest after they have aroused it. We stand in great need of competent men who will bring honor instead of disgrace upon the cause which they represent. Ministers should be examined especially to see if they have an intelligent understanding of the truth for this time, so they can give a connected discourse upon the prophecies, and also upon practical subjects. If they cannot clearly present Bible subjects, they need to be hearers and learners still. They should earnestly and prayerfully search the Scriptures, and become conversant with them, in order to be teachers of Bible truth to others. All these things should be carefully and prayerfully considered before men are hurried into the field of labor.

The plan that has been adopted, to have Eld. Smith hold Biblical Institutes in different States, is approved of God. Great good has been accomplished by these Institutes, but all the time is not devoted to this work that would be profitable to our young ministers and to the cause of God. The fruits of the efforts that have already been made can never be fully realized in this life, but will be seen in eternity.

Denison, Texas,

MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

BRO. — : I have been shown that you are not prepared to labor successfully in the ministry. At one time a measure of success attended your efforts ; but while this should have inspired you with greater earnestness and zeal, the effect was the opposite. A sense of the goodness of God should have led you to continue to labor in humility, distrustful of self. But especially after your ordination you began to feel that you were a full-grown minister, capable of presenting the truth in large places ; and you became indolent, feeling no burden for souls, since which time your labor has been of but little value to the cause of God. Possessing physical strength, you do not realize that you are as responsible for the use of it as the man of means is for the use of his money. You do not love manual labor ; yet you have a constitution which requires severe physical taxation for the preservation of health as well as for the quickening of the mental powers. As far as health is concerned, physical exercise would be of the greatest value to all our ministers ; and whenever they can be released from active service in the ministry, they should feel it a duty to engage in physical labor for the support of their families.

BRO. — , the time you have idled away in sleep, instead of being essential to your health, has been detrimental to it. The precious hours you have lost, doing no good to yourself or to any one else, stand against you in the Ledger