

God approves of the work which has been done in behalf of suffering humanity. Those who have stood opposed to the principles of health reform have stood where the Lord could not work for them or through them. God says, "That servant, which knew his lord's will, **and prepared not himself**, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47). It is intemperance in eating that causes so much invalidism and robs the Lord of the glory due to Him. Because of a failure to deny self many of God's people are **unable to reach the high standard of spirituality He has set for them**, and though they repent and are converted, all eternity will testify to the loss they have sustained by yielding to selfishness. {20MR 329.2}

The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are **holding fast** to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they **may not be** clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition and worship they know not what. {5T 707.1}

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth **know not what they believe**. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the work for the present time. When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that **there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe; but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth.** Certain it is that there has been among us **a departure from the living God** and a turning to men, putting human in place of divine wisdom. {5T 707.2}

God will arouse His people; if other means fail, **heresies will come in among them, which will sift them**, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light **has come**, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in **suppositions and ill-defined ideas** of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear. {5T 707.3}

Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound.

These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. With those who have educated themselves as debaters there is great danger that they will not handle the word of God with fairness. In meeting an opponent it should be our earnest effort to present subjects in such a manner as to awaken conviction in his mind, instead of seeking merely to give confidence to the believer. {5T 708.1}

Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others. {5T 708.2}

***When God's people are at ease and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that He will not favor them.*** It is His will that they should be ever moving forward to receive the increased and ever-increasing light which is ***shining*** for them. The present attitude of the church is not pleasing to God. There has come in a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for ***more truth and greater*** light. We are living at a time when Satan is at work on the right hand and on the left, before and behind us; and yet as a people we are asleep. **God wills that a voice shall be heard arousing His people to action.** {5T 708.3}

Instead of opening the soul to receive rays of light from heaven, some have been working in an opposite direction. Both through the press and from the pulpit have been presented views in regard to the inspiration of the Bible which have not the sanction of the Spirit or the word of God. Certain it is that no man or set of men should undertake to advance theories upon a subject of so great importance, without a plain "Thus saith the Lord" to sustain them. And when men, compassed with human infirmities, affected in a greater or less degree by surrounding influences, and having hereditary and cultivated tendencies which are far from making them wise or heavenly-minded, undertake to arraign the word of God, and to pass judgment upon what is divine and what is human, they are working without the counsel of God. The Lord will not prosper such a work. The effect will be disastrous, both upon the one engaged in it and upon those who accept it as a work from God. Skepticism has been aroused in many minds by the theories presented as to the nature of inspiration. Finite beings, with their narrow, short-sighted views, feel themselves competent to criticize the Scriptures, saying: "This passage is needful, and that passage is not needful, and is not inspired." {5T 709.1}

The doctrine of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ is a mystery ***to a large share*** of those whose names are upon the church books. If Christ were upon the earth speaking to His people, ***He would reproach them for their slowness of comprehension.*** He would say to the slow and uncomprehending, "I have left in your possession truths which concern your salvation, of which you do not suspect the value." {8MR 275.4}

God holds us responsible ***for all that we might be*** if we would ***improve*** our talents. We shall

be judged according to *what we ought to have been*, but were not; *what we might have done*, but did not *accomplish* because we did not use our powers to glorify God. For all *knowledge* that *we might have gained but did not*, there will be an eternal loss, even if we do not lose our souls. All our influence belongs to God. All that we acquire is to be used to His glory. All the property that the Lord has entrusted to us is to be held on the altar of God, to be returned to Him again. We are working out our own destiny. May God help us all to be wise for eternity. {TM 146.2}

Now read the claims of God upon every man and woman: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." *He will not release one atom of His claim; He will not accept half worship while half the heart is given to some idol.* All the heart, God requires, all the mind. TM 439

There is an astonishing backsliding with God's people, to whom has been entrusted sacred, holy truth. Her faith, her service, her works, must be compared *to what they would have been if her course had been continually onward and upward*, according to grace and holy truth given her.

In this balance of the sanctuary, the individual members of the Christian church will be weighed; and *if her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond to the benefits and blessings conferred upon her, she will be found wanting.* If the fruit does not appear, then God is not glorified. TM 450.

Every sin, every unrighteous action, every transgression of the law of God, tells with a thousandfold more force upon the actor than the sufferer. Every time one of the glorious faculties with which God has enriched man is abused or misused, that faculty loses forever a portion of its vigor and will never be as it was before the abuse it suffered. Every abuse inflicted upon our moral nature in this life is felt not only for time but for eternity. Though God may forgive the sinner, yet eternity will not make up that voluntary loss sustained in this life. {TDG 350.2}

To go forth into the next, the future life, deprived of half the power which might be carried there is a terrible thought. The days of probation lost here in acquiring a fitness for heaven, is a loss which will never be recovered. The capacities of enjoyment will be less in the future life for the misdemeanors and abuse of moral powers in this life. However high we might attain in the future life, we might soar higher and still higher, if we had made the most of our God-given privileges and golden opportunities to improve our faculties here in this probationary existence. . . . {TDG 350.3}

We are all under one or the other of two great captains. One, the Creator of man and of the world, is the greatest of all. All owe Him the allegiance of their whole being, the devotion of their entire affection. If the mind is given to His control, and if God has the molding and developing of the powers of the mind, new moral power will be received daily from the Source of all wisdom and all strength. Moral blessings and divine beauties will reward the efforts of everyone whose mind is heaven bent. We may grasp revelations--heavenly

beauties--that lie beyond the short vision of the worldling, that outshine the imagination of the greatest mind and the most learned philosopher who has not connected himself with infinite power. . . . {TDG 350.4}

Justice, honor, love, and truth are the attributes of God's throne. They are the principles of His government which is to be established on the earth, made pure by the fire of His retributive justice. These are the jewels to be sought after and cherished for time and for eternity. In view of these things, . . . build your character not after the worldly standard, but for eternity.--Letter 41, Dec. 7, 1877, to F. E. Belden, a 19-year-old nephew. {TDG 350.5}

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God will not condemn any at the judgment because they honestly believed a lie, or conscientiously cherished error; but ***it will be because they neglected the opportunities of making themselves acquainted with truth.*** The infidel will be condemned, not because he was an infidel, but because he did not take advantage of the means God has placed within his reach to enable him to become a Christian. TM 437

Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet ***take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected.*** There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but ***there is no provision made for willful blindness.*** . . . {5BC 1145.2}

We shall not be held accountable for the light that has not reached our perception, ***but for that which we have resisted and refused.*** A man could not apprehend the truth which had never been presented to him, and therefore could not be condemned for light he had never had. But if he had ***opportunity*** to hear the message, and to become acquainted with the truth, and yet refused to improve his opportunity, he will be among the number of whom Christ said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." ***Those who deliberately place themselves where they will not have an opportunity of hearing the truth, will be reckoned among those who have heard the truth, and persistently resisted its evidences*** (RH April 25, 1893). {5BC 1145.3}

Light That Has Shone, Will Condemn.--None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they ***could not obtain. But many refuse to obey the truth that is presented to them by Christ's ambassadors, because they wish to conform to the world's standard; and the truth that has reached their understanding, the light that has shone in the soul, will condemn them in the judgment*** (RH Nov. 25, 1884). {5BC 1145.4}

The **truth** and the glory of God are inseparable; ***it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by erroneous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light.*** {GC 597.2}

There is no nook or corner of the world, however secluded, where error and sin have not found their way. Error is often presented in a specious garb, so that it requires more than human wisdom to detect the falsehood under the pretension of truth. If error was never mingled with truth, it would not be so subtle in its influence upon the mind. If error stood forth alone in its true, hideous form, souls would not be deceived. But there are many who see attractions in error, and will eagerly feast upon it, although it poisons the mind. Error always injures the soul and deforms the character. Error may, at first sight, appear plausible, but its tendency is to corrupt the heart, and to ensnare its victims. *We often hear it stated that it matters not what one believes if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth, are within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing the truth, we virtually reject it, and choose darkness rather than light. Said Christ to the Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."* {RH, December 2, 1875 par. 3}

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Those who have too little courage to reprove wrong, or who through indolence or lack of interest make *no earnest effort to purify* the family or the church of God, *are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty.* We are just as responsible for evils that we might have checked in others by exercise of parental or pastoral authority, *as if the acts had been our own.* {CG 235.4} {CE 218.2} {CC 141.7} {GW92 83.2} {PaM 209.1 whole section} {PP 578.2 whole paragraph} {Te 257.2} {4T 516.3}

The names of those who sin and refuse to repent should not be retained on the church books, *lest the saints be held accountable for their evil deeds.* Those who pursue a course of transgression should be visited and labored with, and if they then refuse to repent, they should be *separated* from church fellowship, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Word of God. . . . {SBC 1096.5}

Those who refuse to hear the *admonitions and warnings given by God's faithful messengers* are not to be retained in the church. They are to be *disfellowshipped*; for they will be as Achan in the camp of Israel--deceived and deceiving. {SBC 1096.6}

Who, after reading the record of Achan's sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an insult to the God of heaven (Letter 215, 1902). {SBC 1096.7}

Those who are thus misrepresenting Christ are placing a wrong mold upon the work, for they encourage all who are connected with them to do as they do. For their soul's sake, for the sake of those who are in danger from their influence, they should resign their positions; for the record will appear in heaven that the wrongdoer has the blood of many souls upon his garments. He has caused some to become exasperated, so that they have given up the faith; others have been imbued with his own satanic attributes, and the evil done it is impossible to estimate. *Those only* who make it manifest that their hearts are being sanctified through the truth should be retained in positions of trust in the Lord's work. {TM 262.1}

Eze. 18, and 33. Did John the Baptist follow this principle? Why, he was to prepare the way for the Lord.