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ALL MANNER OF SPEECH

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. (1Tim. 6:3-5).

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by they words thou shalt be condemned. (Matt. 12:37).

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. (Ps. 15:1-3).

For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the work of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. (1Cor. 2:15-17).

Our words, our actions, and our dress are daily, living preachers, gathering with Christ or scattering abroad. This is no trivial matter, to be passed off with a jest. (CH 600:1).

Every word you speak, every action you perform, has an influence for good or evil upon those who associate with you; and, oh! how necessary it is that you have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith, that your words may be words of life, and your works, the works of love. The words and deeds of the Christian are ordained to form a part of the great plan that God has devised for the salvation of lost man. The Lord has directed the world to his professed followers, and He has declared, "By their fruits ye shall know them." If we would work from the high standard of pleasing our Heavenly Father, we would express to the world the love of Jesus in our lives and characters. (RH 6/12/88).

You and I, as professing Christians, represent Christ to all the men, women, and children of the world, and they judge **all** Christianity by the clothes **we** wear, the things **we** do, and the words **we** speak. Our words, our conversation, our speech, even the tone of our voice, betray to others the things in our hearts and minds, "for out the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12:24). If we are abiding in Christ, and He is living in us, we will rightly represent before men and angels, in our words, that we are indeed Christians. We will speak of Him with such joy and gladness, with such enthusiasm as someone possesses who has just been plucked as a brand out of the fire. "And, I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." (1Cor. 2:1-2). The theme of Paul's words, of his conversation, should also be ours. Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and about to return for His children to gather them and take them home.

So often, though, our words tend more to death than to life. We moan, groan, and complain. We gossip, criticize, and speak evil of others. We express our lack of faith, our doubts and discouragements. Our conversation often consists of light and trifling subject matter punctuated with jokes and witty remarks. And if we have gained victories over these things, then we may still be unaware of when and where and how we should speak of the matters of everyday life. How do we conduct business in a Christlike manner? How do we handle the verbal abuse which is heaped upon us? What saith the Lord about how and when we should speak and when to keep silence? How important, really, are our words? Can they truly be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death?

That our influence should be a savor of death unto death is a fearful thought, yet it is possible. One soul misled, forfeiting eternal bliss – who can estimate the loss! And yet one rash act, one thoughtless word, on our part may exert so deep an influence on the life of another that it will prove the ruin of his soul. One blemish on the character may turn many away from Christ. (PK 96:1).

Those who have received light are to let the light shine forth in clear rays. Their words, fragrant with

the life of Christ, are to be a savor of life unto life. (AH 37:4).

With such a weight as this attached to our words, let us search out the ways and means where they can honor and glorify God, and also the ways in which they bring dishonor upon His holy name, perhaps causing eternal loss to some soul, for of these things we must beware.

It behooves us, at this point, to look to our Example, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. He was tempted on every point that we are tempted on, and He left us an example in His sinless life that we can imitate. Then how did Jesus speak? Even when He was verbally abused, how did He react? When He had to reprove and rebuke, how were His words delivered? How did Jesus converse with men and women?

Christ Himself did not suppress one word of truth, but He spoke it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind, attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. (DA 353:1).

The Saviour's voice was as music to the ears of those who had been accustomed to the monotonous, spiritless preaching of the scribes and Pharisees. He spoke slowly and impressively, emphasizing those words to which He wished His hearers to give special heed. Old and young, ignorant and learned, could catch the full meaning of His words. This would have been impossible had He spoken in a hurried way and rushed sentence upon sentence without pause. The people were very attentive to Him, and it was said of Him that He spoke not as the scribes and Pharisees, for His word was as one who had authority.

Christ's manner of teaching was beautiful and attractive, and it was ever characterized by simplicity. He unfolded the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven through the use of figures and symbols with which His hearers were familiar; and the common people heard Him gladly, for they could comprehend His words. There were no high-sounding words used, to understand which it was necessary to consult a dictionary. (CT 240:1,2).

Wherever He was, in the synagogue, by the wayside, in the boat thrust out a little from the land, at the Pharisee's feast, or the table of the publican, He spoke to men of the things pertaining to the higher life. The things of nature, the events of daily life, were bound up by Him with the words of truth. The hearts of His hearers were drawn to Him; for He had healed their sick, had comforted their sorrowing ones, and had taken their children in His arms and blessed them. When He opened His lips to speak, their attention was riveted upon Him, and every word was to some soul a savor of life unto life. (COL 338:2).

Christ came into the world to bring all resistance and authority into subjection to Himself, but He did not claim obedience through the strength of argument or the voice of command; He went about doing good and teaching His followers the things which belonged to their peace. He stirred up no strife, He resented no personal injuries, but met with meek submission the insults, the false accusations, and the cruel scourging of those who hated Him and condemned His to death. Christ is our example. His life is a practical illustration of His divine teachings. His character is a living exhibition of the way to do good and overcome evil. (4T 139:0).

Christ's way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon...The words of life were presented in such simplicity that a child could understand them. Men, women, and children were so impressed with his manner of explaining the Scriptures that they would catch the very intonation of His voice, place the same emphasis on their words, and imitate His gestures. Youth caught His spirit of ministry and sought to pattern after His gracious ways by seeking to assist those whom they saw needing help. (CH 498-9).

Our Saviour's power was not in a strong array of sharp words that would pierce through the very soul; it was His gentleness and His plain unassuming manners that made Him a conqueror of hearts. Pride and self-importance, when compared with lowliness and humility, are indeed weakness. We are invited to learn of Him who was meek and lowly of heart; then we shall experience that rest and peace so much to be desired. (3T 477:1).

Christ never flattered anyone. He never deceived or defrauded, never changed His course of uprightness

to obtain favor or applause. He ever expressed the truth. The law of kindness was in His lips, and there was no guile in His mouth. Let the human agent compare his life with the life of Christ, and through the grace which Jesus imparts to those who make Him their personal Saviour, reach the standard of righteousness. (TMK 156:3).

With such an example to follow, if we stay true to the Pattern, our words, too, will be a savor of life unto life. We will act and react as Jesus did in every situation. We will speak as He spoke, in love, when we teach others of Christ. But that love must first live in our hearts; we must be enriched by this gold, that, combined with faith, makes us invincible through the power of God. We are then enabled to pass it to others in words and tones modeled after Jesus, and Jesus alone. We may not have heard the Masters's voice, but by faith through the teaching of the Holy Spirit we can obtain a working knowledge of Jesus' speech; then we will speak as He spoke.

This is the way in which He would have us present His truth to others. The power of speech is of great value, and the voice should be cultivated for the blessing of those with whom we come in contact. (CT 240:4).

The right culture and use of the power of speech has to do with every line of Christian work; it enters into the home life, and into all our intercourse with one another. We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant tones, to use pure and correct language, and words that are kind and courteous. Sweet, kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul. The Scripture says of Christ that grace was poured into His lips that He might "know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Ps.45:2; Isa. 50:4. And the Lord bids us, "Let your speech be alway with grace" Col. 4:6 "that it may minister grace unto the hearers" Eph. 4:29." (COL 336:4).

By our words and deeds we may reveal the power of the truth to transform the character. We may each reveal that we depend on Christ's righteousness, not upon our own manufactured righteousness. We may abide in Christ as the branch abides in the vine, having such a living connection with Him that it is a pleasure to work as He worked, to be a help and blessing to our brethren. We can work the works of Christ, doing those things that are pleasing in His sight. (1888 Ma. 137-8).

THOUGHTS BEFORE WORDS

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matt. 12:34).

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9).

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. (Prov. 4:23,24).

Words and acts testify plainly what is in the heart. If vanity and pride, love of self and love of dress, fill the heart, the conversation will be upon the fashions, the dress, and the appearance, but not on Christ or the kingdom of heaven. If envious feelings dwell in the heart, they will be manifested in words and acts. Those who measure themselves by others, do as others do, and make no higher attainments, excusing themselves because of the faults and wrongs of others, are feeding on husks and will remain spiritual dwarfs as long as they gratify Satan by thus indulging their own unconsecrated feelings. Some dwell upon what they shall eat and drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. these thoughts flow out from the abundance of the heart, as though temporal things were the grand aim in life, the highest attainment. These persons forget the words of Christ: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (1T 500:0).

The first evil is in thinking wrong; then come the words which are wrong. (4T 242:0). The sin of evil speaking begins with the cherishing of evil thoughts. (5T 177:1).

For our words to be Christlike, our thoughts must become Christlike. If we want to stop murmuring and complaining, we must lay aside our self-pitying thoughts. If we want to be more cheerful and kind in our speech, then we must cease dwelling upon our problems and turn our thoughts toward heaven. "That which is in the heart will flow from the lips. It cannot be repressed. The things that God has prepared for those that love Him will be the theme of conversation." (CT 342:2). It must be the theme on which our minds dwell, then it will be the theme of our conversation. "When the mind is pure and the thoughts ennobled by the truth of God, the words will be of the same character, 'like apples of gold in baskets of silver.' Prov. 25:11, R.V." (CT 443:1).

"It is a law of nature that our thoughts and feelings are encouraged and strengthened as we give them utterance." (MH 251:4). Stated another way, we would say: Expression deepens impression. As we express our thoughts and feelings in words, the impression of that thought or feeling is deepened on our mind by the very act of expressing it vocally. Our characters are made up of our thoughts and feelings so the thoughts we think and the feelings we experience are more deeply imprinted in our brain as we give them utterance in speech. This, says the Lord, is a law of nature! By the words which we utter, we are displaying the nature of our characters to all who are watching. "You cannot be too careful of what you say; for the words you utter show what power is controlling the heart. If Christ rules there, your words will echo His sentiments." (HP 174:4). It is a solemn thought to consider. Jesus told us "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgement." (Matt. 12:36). Every word which we speak was preceded at some point in the past by a thought and a feeling. Now we begin to understand why Peter tells us to "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1Pet. 1:13-16).

While words express thoughts, it is also true that thoughts follow words. If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessings what we know we have – the great mercy and love of God – we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of god. (MH 252-3).

Men are greatly under the influence of their own words. You are not conscious how much you are affected by your words. You accustom yourself to speak in a certain way, and your thoughts and actions

follow your words. One accustoms himself to assert certain things in regard to himself, and at last he comes to believe them. **Our thoughts produce our words and our words react upon our thoughts.** If a man forms the habit of using sacred words reverently, he will form the custom of carefulness of speech, knowing that there is a Witness to every word uttered. When the feelings become excited and the speech is exaggerated, the mode of speaking is always extreme. It acts and reacts upon ourselves. (TMK 137:1).

There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. There must be steadfast resistance of temptation to sin in thought or act. The soul must be kept from every stain, through faith in Him who is able to keep you from falling. We should meditate upon the scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. (3BC 1145).

This will require us to educate and re-educate our minds and train them to contemplate the things of God. It will require a most diligent effort, but we have God's promise that tells us that every thought can be brought into subjection and obedience to Christ. This work is a necessity for all to attend to, because our words, along with our dress and deportment, are an index to our characters; we cannot neglect to educate our thoughts and thereby educate our tongues also.

There are those who do not feel that it is a religious duty to discipline the mind to dwell upon cheerful subjects, that they may reflect light rather than darkness and gloom. This class of minds will either be engaged in seeking their own pleasure, in frivolous conversation, laughing, and joking, keeping the mind continually elated with a round of amusements; or they will be depressed, having great trials and mental conflicts, which they think but few have ever experienced or understand. These persons may profess Christianity, but they deceive their own souls. They have not the genuine article. The religion of Jesus Christ is first pure, then peaceable, full of righteousness and good fruits. (RH 3/12/72).

Often the word has come to the youth, "Be sober-minded." It is upon this point that they most often fail. They do not show themselves men and women of common sense. They do not realize the peril they are in when not connected with God. The Lord calls upon them to deal honestly with themselves, to deal honestly with God. There must be no mingling of the sacred and the common in our conversation. Cheap, earthly, unchristian words may be represented as "strange fire," and with this God can have nothing to do. The loud, boisterous laugh is a denial of God in the soul; for it reveals that the truth is not ruling in the heart. All such professors have yet to be converted. They are stumbling-blocks in the way which God has prepared at infinite cost. He would keep the path clear and plain, that no sinner may mistake it, or err because of the stumbling-blocks which unconverted professors place in the way by their unconsecrated, unholy lives. Let all lightness and trifling, all cheap conversation, be put away. By our vain words and unchristian example, we dishonor God, and imperil not only our own souls, but also the souls of those with whom we associate. (YI 7-14-98).

By our fruits we are known and the Lord must be able to say of each of us, "I create the fruit of the lips." (Isa. 57:9).

Either God or Satan controls the mind; and the life shows so clearly that none need mistake to which power you yield allegiance. Everyone has an influence either for good or for evil. Is your influence on the side of Christ or on the side of Satan? Those who turn away from iniquity enlist the power of Omnipotence in their favor. The atmosphere that surrounds them is not of earth. By the silent power of a well-ordered life and a godly conversation, they may present Jesus to the world. They may reflect Heaven's light, and win souls to Christ. (FE 89:1).

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. (Ps. 19:14).

THE LITTLE MEMBER

The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. (Isa. 50:4).

The voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The tongue is a world of blessing, or a world of iniquity. (3BC 1159).

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. (Prov. 21:23). A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. (Prov. 15:4). Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. (Prov. 18:21).

From the mind out to the tongue flows all manner of great good or evil. Anatomically, the tongue is a very small muscle inside the mouth, but a very necessary organ nonetheless. Without it we would be unable to talk, and the ability to swallow would be greatly hampered. Without a tongue, the sense of taste is gone, for the tongue contains the taste buds. We've reviewed various parts of the body in our discussion of dress reform, and how we tend to neglect some of our less comely members. We considered ways by which we can overcome this neglect and treat these parts with the same healthy respect we reserve for our more comely members. But the tongue is not in need of dress reform, for it wears no clothes. Neglect of the tongue isn't likely to give us health problems unless its unbridled actions brings a physical reaction from an unhappy recipient of our passionate words. No, this "little member" is, instead, a barometer of our spiritual and mental health. It reveals the state of our minds.

The tongue's effects are far-reaching and touch all who come within range of our voices.

It is with the tongue that we offer prayer and praise to God. With the tongue we convince and persuade. With the tongue we comfort and bless, soothing the bruised, wounded soul. With the tongue we make known the wonders of the grace of God. With the tongue also we may utter perverse things, speaking words that sting like an adder. (HP 174:20).

The tongue, says James, "is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature: and it is set on fire of hell." (James 3:5,6). Just what is this "fire of hell" which starts a great forrest fire?

The tongue that delights in mischief, the babbling tongue that says, Report, and I will report it, is declared by the apostle James to be set on fire of hell. It scatters firebrands on every side. What cares the vendor of gossip that he defames the innocent? He will not stay his evil work, though he destroy hope and courage in those who are already sinking under their burdens. He cares only to indulge his scandal-loving propensity. Even professed Christians close their eyes to all that is pure, honest, noble, and lovely, and treasure up whatever is objectional and disagreeable, and publish it to the world. (5T 57:2).

Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. (Ps. 52:2).

Gossip is one of the fires of hell set by the tongue. Are there others? Oh, yes, there are quite a few others. A lack of regard for exact truth is one; also harsh, impatient words; jesting and joking along with low, vulgar, coarse conversation and cheap talk, are another. Along with backbiting and evilspeaking, we also find that talking gloom, doubt, darkness and unbelief are fires, as are bitterness, censure, and reproach. (see SD 64; MYP 136; 6T 173; 4T 236-7, 139). All these fires are started by just one little member. All start as a little seed in the mind, dropped there by Satan, and left where we will water and nurture it until it grows and finally comes out on the tongue and begins a great fire.

His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity. (Ps. 10:7).

For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty. (Job 15:5). The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things: (Ps. 12:3). A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin. (Prov. 26:28). For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. (Isa. 59:3).

And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. (Jer. 9:5).

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man....Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out in the draught? But those things which precede out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man, for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man. (Matt. 15:11,17-20).

Speech is one of the great gifts of God to man. The tongue is a little member, but the words it frames, made vocal by the voice, have great power. The Lord declares, "The tongue can no man tame." It has set nation against nation, and has caused battle and bloodshed. Words have kindled fires that have been hard to quench. They have also brought joy and gladness to many souls. And when words are spoken because God says, "Speak unto them my word," they often cause sorrow unto repentance.

The talent of speech carries with it great responsibility. It needs to be carefully guarded; for it is a mighty power for evil as well as for good. (3BC 1142).

James continues, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. (James 3:8-10). Our tongues must be sanctified, purified and cleansed of all deceit. We can pray as David prayed, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; and keep the door of my lips. (Ps. 141:3).

When tempted to give loose rein to the unruly member, oh! bear in mind that the recording angel is noting every word. All are written in the book, and, unless washed away by the blood of Christ, you must meet them again. You now have a spotted record in heaven. Sincere repentance before God will be accepted. When about to speak passionately, close your mouth. Don't utter a word. Pray before you speak, and heavenly angels will come to your assistance and drive back the evil angels, who would lead you to dishonor God, reproach His cause, and weaken your own soul. (2T 82:1).

The tongue, which is kept so little under the control of the human agent, is to be ruled by strong conscientious principles, by the law of love toward God and man. (SD 64:1).

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. (Zeph. 3:13). If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. (James 1:26). My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. (Job 27:4). And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long. (Ps. 35:28). Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. (Prov. 21:23). I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. (Ps. 39:1). For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: (1Pet. 3:10).

GOSSIP AND EVILSPEAKING

The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost part of the belly. (Prov. 18:8; 26:22). And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought no. (1Tim. 5:13). Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better. (Ecc. 10:11). It is honor for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling. (Prov. 20:3).

Whether we are called talebearers, tattlers, busybodies, babblers, or meddlers, or perhaps a blabbermouth or chatterbox, we are guilty of gossip when we repeat rumors and stories we have heard about others or are simply talking idly about someone else. Among Christians, gossip is a serious problem. "Gossipers and news carriers are a terrible curse to neighborhoods and churches. Two thirds of all church trials arise from this source." (2T 466). If fully two thirds of all church trials are caused by gossip, by this sin of talebearing, then we need a clear understanding of what it is, that we might remove it from our lives.

Christians should be careful in regard to their words. They should never carry unfavorable reports from one of their friends to another, especially if they are aware that there is a lack of union between them. It is cruel to hint and insinuate, as though you knew a great deal in regard to this friend or that acquaintance of which others are ignorant. Such hints go further, and create more unfavorable impressions, than to frankly relate the facts in an unexaggerated manner. What harm has not the church of Christ suffered from these things! The inconsistent, unguarded course of her members has made her weak as water. (2T 196:1).

This inconsistent, unguarded course has been largely brought about by the neglect of duty. Most of us are familiar with the adage that says "idle hands are the devil's workshop." Unless church members are busy doing the Lord's work, Satan will use every opportunity to make sure they are doing his work, and the church becomes as weak as water.

Whenever a church is established, all the members should engage actively in missionary work. They should visit every family in the neighborhood and know their spiritual condition. If professed Christians had engaged in this work from the time when their names were first placed on the church books, there would not now be such widespread unbelief, such depths of iniquity, such unparalleled wickedness, as is seen in the world at the present time. If every church member had sought to enlighten others, thousands upon thousands would today stand with God's commandment-keeping people.

And not only in the world do we see the result of the church's neglect to work in Christ's lines. By this neglect a condition of things has been brought into the church that has eclipsed the high and holy interests of the work of God. A spirit of criticism and bitterness has come into the church, and the spiritual discernment of many has been dimmed. Because of this the cause of Christ has suffered great loss. Heavenly intelligences have been waiting to co-operate with human agencies, but we have not discerned their presence. (6T 296:2,3).

The sin of these last days is upon the professed people of God. Through selfishness, love of pleasure, and love of dress, they deny the Christ that their church membership says that they follow. I thank God that Jesus Christ knows every impulse in the heart of the believer. Many profess to be children of God, who do not follow Christ. Their frivolity, their cheap conversation, their want of high-toned piety, their low aim, mislead others, who would pursue a different course were it not for the example of these deceptive characters, who do not love Christ or do His will, but simply follow their own imaginations.

Jesus is acquainted with every heart that is humble, meek, and lowly. These have trials, and make mistakes, but they are brokenhearted because they grieve the Saviour, who loved them and died for them. They come humbly to His feet; they fight His battles. In meekness and lowliness of heart, they seek to do good to others. They seek to advance the cause of truth in good and earnest endeavor. (5MR 330-1).

Those who listen to gossip and floating rumors are partakers with gossipers in their sin, for those who listen have a morbid curiosity which wants to know what is the latest dirt being dished out about others. Then, as they pass on

what they have heard, they become gossipers and talebearers. Quite simply, listeners become talkers.

Difficulties are often caused by the vendors of gossip, whose whispered hints and suggestion poison unsuspecting minds and separate the closest friends. Mischief-makers are seconded in their evil work by the many who stand with open ears and evil heart, saying: "Report, . . . and we will report it." This sin should not be tolerated among the followers of Christ. No Christian parent should permit gossip to be repeated in the family circle or remarks to be made disparaging the members of the church. (5T 241-2).

Someone not so mindful as he should have been of Christ's words, "Take heed how ye hear," allowed his unsanctified ears to hear wrong, his perverted senses to imagine wrong, and his evil tongue to report wrong. Many a man will not come openly to talk with the one he thinks in error, but will go to others, and under the mask of friendship and sympathy for the erring, he will cast reflections. Sometimes he openly agrees with the one whom he covertly seeks to injure. Suppositions are stated as facts, without giving the person charged with wrong a clear, definite statement of his supposed errors, and without giving him a chance to answer the charges. This is all contrary to the teaching of Christ. It is the subtle way in which Satan always works. (15MR 174:2).

We are living in the most momentous times of this earth's history; we have a work to do to prepare a people to meet their God.

O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry! But many of those who should be proclaiming the truth are accusing and condemning their brethren. When the converting power of God comes upon minds, there will be a decided change. Men will have no inclination to criticize and tear down. They will not stand in a position that hinders the light from shining to the world. Their criticism, their accusing, will cease. (RH 9/10/03).

But the church has been made "weak as water; and must spend precious time attempting to resolve unnecessary church difficulties brought about by gossip, which as we shall soon see, springs often from a spirit of criticism and bitterness. Millions are left in darkness; and may perish before they can hear the good news of salvation, the saving truth of the three angels' messages. And upon whose hands shall their blood be?

So thou, 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. 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. (Eze. 33:7,8).

We are set as watchmen to warn souls of their danger in persisting in evil, not as watchmen to spy on our brothers and sisters, then condemn, criticize, and report what we see and hear to any willing listener.

Our words and actions should be serious and earnest, especially before those who are neglecting their soul's salvation. If we profess to be sons and daughters of God, we should pursue such a course toward the unbelieving that our souls will be clear of their blood when we meet them in the great day of final reckoning. (RH 1/8/84).

There is a lot of gossip that is not entered into with any malicious intent. We humans dearly love to talk, to have a tongue wagging good time with seldom a thought that our talk is generating evil. The carnal heart lusts after a juicy tale of the misdeeds and misfortunes of others.

I saw that when sisters who are given to talk get together, Satan is generally present; for he finds employment. He stands by to excite the mind and make the most of the advantage he has gained. He knows that all this gossip, and talebearing, and revealing of secrets, and dissecting of character, separate the soul from God. It is death to spirituality and a calm religious influence. (2T 185:3).

Confidence has been betrayed by members of the same church, and yet the guilty did not design to do mischief. Lack of wisdom in the selection of subjects of conversation has done much harm. The conversation should be upon spiritual and divine things; but it has been otherwise. If the association with Christian friends is chiefly devoted to the improvement of the mind and heart, there will be no after regrets, and they can look back on the interview with a pleasant satisfaction. But if the hours are spent in levity and vain

talking, and the precious time is employed in dissecting the lives and character of others, the friendly intercourse will prove a source of evil, and your influence will be a savor of death unto death. (2T 186:1).

Gossip is one of the primary fires of hell that inflame an unsanctified tongue, and often the spark which lights the fire is malicious in intent. Even among those who call themselves Seventh-day Adventists there has been exhibited a bitter and condemnatory spirit leading to malicious gossip.

It pains me to say that there are unruly tongues among church members. There are false tongues that feed on mischief. There are sly, whispering tongues. There is tattling, impertinent meddling, adroit quizzing. Among the lovers of gossip some are actuated by curiosity, others by jealousy, many by hatred against those through whom God has spoken to reprove them. All these discordant elements are at work. Some conceal their real sentiments, while others are eager to publish all they know, or suspect, of evil against another. (5T 94:2).

Envy, evil surmising, backbiting, and faultfinding— let these not be named amongst Christ's disciples. These things are the cause of the present feebleness of the church. We have a perfect pattern, even the life of Christ. It is to be our eager desire to do as He has done, to live as He lived, that others, seeing our good works, may be led to glorify God. The Lord's blessing will rest upon us as we seek to bless others by doing the work that Christ came to this world to teach us how to do. (UL 117:2).

There is much deception carried on under the cover of religion. Passion controls the minds of many who have become depraved through perversion of thought and feeling. These deceived souls flatter themselves that they are spiritually minded, and especially consecrated, when their religious experience is composed of a lovesick sentimentalism, rather than of purity, true goodness, and humiliation of self. The mind should be drawn away from self, and exercised in blessing others, and being elevated by good works. (RH 3/12/72).

God has assigned us our duties; to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, to lift up the downtrodden, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Too many of those who call themselves Christians are embracing the world through their love of the sins of the world and neglecting these duties.

While many are neglecting their own souls, they eagerly watch for an opportunity to criticize and condemn others. All have defects of character, and it is not hard to find something that jealousy can interpret to their injury. "Now," say these self-constituted judges, "we have *facts*. We will fasten upon them an accusation from which they cannot clear themselves." They wait for a fitting opportunity and then produce their bundle of gossip and bring forth their tidbits. (5T 95:0).

We are exhorted, warned, and rebuked "with all longsuffering and doctrine" to avoid the sins of "bitterness and, wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking...with all malice," and to "let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." (2Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:31,29).

The word "corrupt" means here any word that would make an impression detrimental to holy principle and undefiled religion, any communication that would eclipse the view of Christ, and blot from the mind true sympathy and love. It includes impure hints, which, unless instantly resisted, lead to great sin. Upon everyone is laid the duty of barring the way against corrupt communications. (HP 175:1).

The story is told that Alice Roosevelt owned a pillow emblazoned with a motto which read on this order: If you can't say something good about someone, sit right here by me. How many of God's professed people have taken a similar attitude and eagerly turn their ears to catch the latest rumors going the rounds?

Floating rumors are frequently the destroyers of unity among brethren. There are some who watch with open mind and ears to catch flying scandal. They gather up little incidents which may be trifling in themselves, but which are repeated and exaggerated until a man is made an offender for a word. Their motto seems to be, "Report, and we will report it." These tale-bearers are doing the devil's work with surprising fidelity, little knowing how offensive their course is to God. If they would spend half the energy and zeal that is given to this unholy work in examining their own hearts, they would find so much to do to cleanse their souls from impurity that they would have no time or disposition to criticize their brethren, and they would not fall under the power of this temptation. The door of the mind should be closed against "they say" or "I have heard." Why should we not, instead of allowing jealousy or evil-surmising to come into our

hearts, go to our brethren, and, after frankly but kindly setting before them the things we have heard detrimental to their character and influence, pray with and for them? While we cannot love and fellowship those who are the bitter enemies of Christ, we should cultivate that spirit of meekness and love that characterized our Master, – a love that thinketh no evil and is not easily provoked. (3BC 1163).

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.... Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1John 4:7,8,11).

The love that characterizes Jesus is that love which “suffereth long and is kind,” “doth not behave itself unseemly,” “is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; doth not rejoice in iniquity,” and it “never faileth.” (1Cor. 13:4-8). This is the love of God which gives us the peace that passes understanding.

Mildness, gentleness, forbearance, long-suffering, being not easily provoked, bearing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things– these are the fruit growing upon the precious tree of love, which is of heavenly growth. This tree, if nourished, will prove to be an evergreen. Its branches will not decay, its leaves will not wither. It is immortal, eternal, watered continually by the dews of heaven. (2T 134:2).

How very Christ-like our words are when we are nurturing this evergreen in our souls. We are blessed and a blessing. And we have power.

Love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated from it. The power of wealth has a tendency to corrupt and destroy; the power of force is strong to do hurt; but the excellence and value of pure love consist in its efficiency to do good, and to do nothing but good. Whatsoever is done out of pure love, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God regards more with how much love one worketh than the amount he doeth. Love is of God. The unconverted heart cannot originate nor produce this plant of heavenly growth, which lives and flourishes only where Christ reigns. (2T 135:2).

The sin of evilspeaking begins with the cherishing of evil thoughts. Guile includes impurity in all its forms. An impure thought tolerated, an unholy desire cherished, and the soul is contaminated, its integrity compromised. “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth death.” If we would not commit sin, we must be held in subjection to reason and conscience. Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices. (5T 177:1).

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Rom. 13:10).

We must surrender our thought and feelings to our Saviour. We must come and lay down at His feet all our unholy desires to cherish all the hurts and slights and offenses which we tend to store up in our minds; for when we finally get so full, we begin recounting them to any willing listener. If we will surrender to Him the control of our tongues, He will extinguish the hell fire which has burned the unwitting victims of our venomous hatred, for hatred is the wellspring of all evilspeaking. No matter how sweet and gracious, how soft and smooth the words may sound, the heart of him who “dissembleth with his lips” is polluted with seven abominations. (Prov. 26:24,25). According to Solomon:

These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among the brethren. (Prov. 6:16-19).

At first glance, it may seem far reaching to connect all these abominations with the sin of gossip and evilspeaking, but closer examination reveals just how kindred they are to this sin. It is fairly easy to connect the pride in the proud heart to evilspeaking for pride can lead to jealousy and to self-promotion, to esteeming oneself better than others. A false witness telling lies does considerable harm wherever he spreads his untruths. The lies and the jealousy and pride cause people to talk and their words cause friction between the brothers and sisters in families and churches. This is discord sown among the brethren. But what of the feet that are swift in running to mischief. People are attracted to a juicy tale like moths are to a light. They come running to discover what all the excitement is about. Today's

technology allows us to go even farther. Our feet can stay still while our fingers do the running and we reach out and touch someone after someone with that which should never be repeated in another person's ear. Telephones, fax machines, television, allow us to run swiftly into mischief.

The last of these seven abominations are hands that shed innocent blood. Remember, these abominations are found in hearts that, knowingly or unknowingly, harbor hatred. That hatred lies at the root of the gossiping tongue, may seem difficult to understand, but love is the fulfilling of the law; therefore hatred is the undoing or breaking of the law. Peter admonishes us:

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. (1Pet. 2:10).

From James comes this caution:

Speak no evil one of another brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. (James 4:11).

How can we love our brethren and yet speak evil of them, telling tales about them to others, impugning their characters, and refuse to go to him alone as Jesus told us to do?

The apostle Paul exhorts, "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." What harm has been wrought through neglect to heed this admonition! Suppose that one brother misjudges another. He might have had an opportunity to learn whether his suspicions were well founded; but instead of waiting to do this, he repeats to others his surmisings. Thus evil thoughts are stirred in them, and the evil becomes wide-spread. And all the time the one pronounced guilty is not told of the matter; there is no investigation, no inquiry is made directly of him, so that he may have an opportunity either to acknowledge his fault or to clear himself from unjust suspicion. A serious wrong has been done him because his brethren had no the moral courage to go directly to him and talk with him freely in the spirit of Christian love. (RH 12/16/90).

The work of gossip is not the work of love but of hate. "If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1John 4:20). John further tells us, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1John 3:15).

Christ treats anger as murder...Passionate words are a savor of death unto death. He who utters them is not cooperating with God to save his fellow man. In heaven this wicked railing is placed in the same list as common swearing. While hatred is cherished in the soul there is not one iota of the love of God there. (OHC 235:3).

Ellen White has used even plainer terms to describe this hatred, a hatred that is so potent, the Lord classes it with cannibalism.

We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character? Let the children, and the youth as well, learn what God says about these things:

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Prov. 18:21.

In scripture, backbiters are classed with "haters of God," "with inventors of evil things," with those who are "without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful," "full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity." It is "the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." Rom. 1:30,31,29,32. He whom God accounts a citizen of Zion is he that "speaketh the truth in his heart;" "that backbiteth not with his tongue," "nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." Ps. 15:2,3. (Ed 235:4,5,6).

Partaking of the juicy dish of gossip is a form of cannibalism in the eyes of God, therefore we must refuse this dish, for there is "death in the pot."

If as newborn babes you desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, you will have

no appetite to partake of a dish of evil speaking, but all such food will be at once rejected, because those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, cannot partake of the dish of nonsense, and folly, and backbiting. They will say decidedly, "Take this dish away. I do not want to eat such food. It is not the bread from heaven. It is eating and drinking the very same spirit of the devil; for it is his business to be an accuser of the brethren." (FE 458:0).

To partake of this dish is to shed innocent blood and by so doing, we bring upon ourselves and our hearers the curse of God. To slander the character, the motives, the live, of another through gossip, faultfinding, and evil speaking brings the charge of murder upon our heads. Without turning a gun or a knife or any other physical weapon upon another person, we can still be guilty of taking their life. How?

All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer");... all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment. (PP 308:5).

The spirit of hate and revenge originated with Satan, and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit, and its fruit will be unto death. (MB 56:2).

The seeds of envy, of evil thinking and evil speaking germinate and produce a harvest of their kind to be garnered by the one who planted the seed. (1BC 1106).

God gives us a choice – do we continue to gossip and backbite, partaking of our victims in verbal cannibalism and coming under God's curse? Or will we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God that was broken and spilled for us? This is the bread of heaven and the water of life, the true savor of life unto life. If we eat this bread and drink this water, the fruit of our lips will be the peace and love of God.

Much evil speaking and gossip are motivated by a cause which we cannot afford to overlook in this study – envy and jealousy. The Bible writers exhort us to give these two no room in our lives.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. (1Pet. 2:1,2).

If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. (1Tim. 6:3-5).

Envy is one of the most despicable traits of Satanic character. It is constantly seeking the lifting up of self, by casting slurs upon others. A man who is envious will belittle his neighbor, thinking to exalt himself. The sound of praise is grateful to him who has approbateness highly developed, and he hates to hear the praises of another. Oh, what untold mischief has this evil trait of character worked in our world! The same enmity existed in the heart of Saul that stirred the heart of Cain against his brother Abel, because Abel's works were righteous, and God honored him, and his own words were evil, and the Lord could not bless him.

Envy is the offspring of pride, and, if it is entertained in the heart, it will lead to cruel deeds, to hatred, revenge, and murder. The great controversy between Christ and the prince of darkness, is carried on in everyday, practical life. (3BC 1159:5,6).

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob, and a favorite because he was the son of Jacob's beloved Rachel. Joseph knew firsthand the evil result of envy. His older brothers hated him because of the favoritism he was shown by his father. They were jealous of the special attention he received. Their passions were especially stirred after Joseph's dreams of his brothers' subservience to him. "And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying." (Gen. 37:11). So great was their envy that they plotted to kill him; because of Reuben's entreaties on his behalf, he was, instead, sold into slavery. Envy "if it is entertained... will lead to cruel deeds, to hatred, revenge, and murder."

God's hand was over Joseph and his life was spared, but another One greater than Joseph was not spared. The priests, rulers, scribes, and pharisees had sought for years to kill Jesus in large part because of their envy of His popularity with the people. They were finally able to sway the public fervor and government policy to carry out their wicked desires. As Jesus stood beside Barabbas in Pilot's judgement hall, Pilot ask the crowd who they wanted released to them, for "He knew that for envy they had delivered Him." (Matt. 27:18). Jesus died at the hands of evil men who were led to murder by the envy in their hearts.

A council of the priests and Pharisees was called. Since the raising of Lazarus the sympathies of the people were so fully with Christ that it would be dangerous to seize Him openly. So the authorities determined to take Him secretly, and carry on the trial as quietly as possible. They hoped that when His condemnation became known, the fickle tide of public opinion would set in their favor.

Thus they proposed to destroy Jesus. But so long as Lazarus lived, the priests and rabbis knew that they were not secure. The very existence of a man who had been four days in the grave, and who had been restored by a word from Jesus, would sooner or later cause a reaction. The people would be avenged on their leaders for taking the life of One who could perform such a miracle. The Sanhedrin therefore decided that Lazarus also must die. To such lengths do envy and prejudice lead their slaves. The hatred and unbelief of the Jewish leaders had increased until they would even take the life of one whom infinite power had rescued from the grave. (DA 558:2,3).

We have already established that we need not lift a weapon against someone and shed their blood to be guilty of murder. All we must do is harbor feelings of hatred in some form against that person. "Envy is the offspring of pride" and "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18). When we are proud, we are conceited. We esteem ourselves better than others; we begin to compare ourselves with others. When we see another person receiving something which we want for ourselves, we become jealous and envy the other person. Envy leads to hatred, and soon we are talking, gossiping, backbiting, evil speaking, and surmising evil.

A writer has said that "envy's memory is nothing but a row of hooks to hang up grudges on." There are many in the world who consider it an evidence of superiority to recount the things and persons that they "cannot bear," rather than the things and persons that they are attracted to. Not so did the great apostle. He exhorts his brethren: "Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Envy is not merely a perverseness of temper, but a distemper, which disorders all the faculties, It began with Satan. He desired to be first in Heaven, and because he could not have all the power and glory he sought, he rebelled against the government of God. He envied our first parents and tempted them to sin and thus ruined them and all the human race.

The envious man shuts his eyes to the good qualities and noble deeds of others. He is always ready to disparage and misrepresent that which is excellent. Men often confess and forsake other faults, but there is little to be hoped for from the envious man. since to envy a person is to admit that he is a superior, pride will not permit any concession. If an attempt be made to convince the envious person of his sin, he becomes even more bitter against the object of his passion, and too often remains incurable. (5T 55-56).

The words of an envious person are like poison and desolating hail. They leave a trail of destruction wherever they touch.

The spirit of gossip and talebearing is one of Satan's special agencies to sow discord and strife, to separate friends, and to undermine the faith of many in the truthfulness of our positions. Brethren and sisters are too ready to talk of the faults and errors that they think exist in others, and especially in those who have borne unflinchingly the messages of reproof and warning given them of God. (4T 195:0).

Pride and ambition are widespread; and when these are cherished, they open the door to envy, and a striving for supremacy; the soul is alienated from God, and unconsciously drawn into the ranks of Satan. Like Korah and his companions, many, even of the professed followers of Christ, are thinking, planning, and working so eagerly for self-exaltation that in order to gain the sympathy and support of the people they

are ready to pervert the truth, falsifying and misrepresenting the Lord's servants, and even charging them with the base and selfish motives that inspire their own hearts. By persistently reiterating falsehood, and that against all evidence, they at last come to believe it to be truth. While endeavoring to destroy the confidence of the people in the men of God's appointment, they really believe that they are engaged in a good work, verily doing God service. (PP 403:4).

Envy, jealousy, and evil surmising is a hellish shadow by which Satan seeks to intercept your views of the character of Christ, so that by beholding the evil you may be full changed into its likeness. (3BC 1163:5).

Satan wants to change us into his image. That is why he "is working to crowd himself in everywhere. He would put asunder very friends. There are men who are ever talking and gossiping and bearing false witness, who sow the seeds of discord and engender strife. Heaven looks upon this class as Satan's most efficient servants." (4T 607:2).

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and evil work. (James 3:14-16).

Satan employs professed believers to act as his spies and become accusers of the brethren. These agents of Satan "eagerly watch for an opportunity to criticize and condemn others." (5T 95:0). Their influence causes great weakness in the church. "Satan exults when he can defame or wound a follower of Christ. He is the 'accuser of the brethren.' Shall Christians aid him in his work?" (5T 95:2). "To lose one's own soul is a terrible thing; but to cause the loss of other souls is still more terrible." (COL 340:3).

Christians should regard it as a religious duty to repress a spirit of envy or emulation. They should rejoice in the superior reputation or prosperity of their brethren, even when their own character or achievements seem to be cast in the shade. It was the pride and ambition cherished in the heart of Satan that banished him from heaven. These evils are deeply rooted in our fallen nature, and if not removed they will overshadow every good and noble quality and bring forth envy and strife as their baleful fruits. (5T 242:1).

Through the practice of temperance, we can repress the thoughts and emotions which Satan seeks to stir up in our hearts. The indulgence in stimulating foods, and particularly beverages, loosens the tongue.

When these tea and coffee users meet together for social entertainment, the effects of their pernicious habit are manifest. All partake freely of the favorite beverages, and they begin the wicked work of talking against others. Their words are not few or well chosen. The tidbits of gossip are passed around, too often the poison of scandal as well. These thoughtless gossipers forget that they have a witness. An unseen Watcher is writing their words in the books of heaven. All these unkind criticisms, these exaggerated reports, these envious feelings, expressed under the excitement of the cup of tea, Jesus registers as against Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (Te 79:1).

We tend to forget, stimulating beverages or not, that there are always Watchers with us continuously from the moment of birth to the moment of death recording our thoughts, our words, and even our motives in heaven's ledgers.

I was astonished as I saw the jealousy indulged and listened to the words of envy, the reckless talk, which made the angels of God ashamed. Words and actions and motives were recorded. And how little did these light, superficial heads and hard hearts realize that an angel of God stood at the door writing down the manner in which these precious moments were employed. God will bring to light every word and every action. He is in every place. These messengers, although unseen, are visitors in the bedchamber. The hidden works of darkness will be brought to light. The thoughts, the intents, and purposes of the heart, will stand revealed. All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (CH 412:2).

Heaven's ledgers have recorded even those things which we think and talk about doing but never actually do, and records us as guilty as though we had carried out our desires and committed the sin.

You are responsible to God for your thoughts. If you indulge in vain imaginations, permitting your mind to dwell upon impure subjects, you are, in a degree, as guilty before God as if your thoughts were carried

into action. All that prevents the action is the lack of opportunity. (2T 561:1).

The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action, because opportunity, not the will, has been wanting. And these sinful emotions will be brought into the account in the day when “God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing.” (SD 61:4).

What a fearsome responsibility this places on each of us to control our emotions through the power God gives us, that we stand guiltless of sins that, technically, are never committed, but, mentally and spiritually, are committed in the thoughts.

We must turn away from evil speaking. If jealousy has taken foothold in our hearts, if we are fostering pride and envy, we must “resist unto blood” if need be, and gain the victory.

Those who love God cannot harbor hatred or envy. When the heavenly principle of eternal love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not merely because favors are received of them, but because love is the principle of action and modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and elevates and ennobles the affections. This love is not contracted so as merely to include “me and mine,” but is as broad as the world and as high as heaven and is in harmony with that of the angel workers. This love cherished in the soul sweetens the entire life and sheds a refining influence on all around. Possessing it, we cannot but be happy, let fortune smile or frown. If we love God with all the heart, we must love His children also. This love is the spirit of God. It is the heavenly adorning that gives true nobility and dignity to the soul and assimilates our lives to that of the Master. No matter how many good qualities we may have, however honorable and refined we may consider ourselves, if the soul is not baptized with the heavenly grace of love to God and one another, we are deficient in true goodness and unfit for heaven, where all is love and unity. (4T 223:2).

Our words and actions constitute the fruit we bear. A consecrated life is a daily living sermon....Satan has much more power over some who profess the truth than many realize. Self reigns in the heart, instead of Christ. Self-will, self-interest, envy, and pride shut out the presence of God. (4T 609:4).

The religion of Christ in the heart will gain for its possessor a complete victory over those passions that are seeking for the mastery. (4T 610:1).

God expects those who bear the name of Christ to represent Him in thought, word, and deed. Their thoughts are to be pure and their words and deeds noble and uplifting, drawing those around them nearer the Saviour.

In the life of the true Christian there is nothing of self. Self is dead. There was no selfishness in the life that Christ lived while on this earth. Bearing our nature, He lived a life wholly devoted to the service of others. (HP 166:1,2).

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from the hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. (Isa. 33:14,15).

When we listen to a reproach against our brother, we take up that reproach. To the question, “Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?” the psalmist answered, “He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.”

What a world of gossip would be prevented if every man would remember that those who tell him the faults of others will as freely publish his faults at a favorable opportunity. We should endeavor to think well of all men, especially our brethren, until compelled to think otherwise. We should not hastily credit evil reports. These are often the result of envy or misunderstanding, or they may proceed from exaggeration or a partial disclosure of facts. Jealousy and suspicion, once allowed a place, will sow themselves broadcast, like thistledown. Should a brother go astray, then is the time to show your real interest in him. Go to him

kindly, pray with and for him, remembering the infinite price which Christ has paid for his redemption. In this way you may save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. (5T 58:1,2).

Speak evil of no man. Hear evil of no man. If there be no hearers, there will be no speakers of evil. If anyone speaks evil in your presence, check him. Refuse to hear him, though his manner be ever so soft and his accents mild. He may profess attachment, and yet throw out covert hints and stab the character in the dark.

Resolutely refuse to hear, though the whisperer complains of being burdened till he speak. Burdened indeed! with a cursed secret which separateth very friends. Go, burdened ones, and free yourselves from your burden in God's appointed way. First go tell your brother his fault between you and him alone. If this fail, next take with you one or two friends, and tell him in their presence. If these steps fail, then tell it to the church. Not an unbeliever is to be made acquainted with the slightest particular of the matter. Telling it to the church is the last step to be taken. Publish it not to the enemies of our faith. They have no right to the knowledge of church matters, lest the weakness and errors of Christ's followers be exposed.

Those who are preparing for the coming of Christ should be sober and watch unto prayer, for our adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; whom we are to resist steadfast in the faith. "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers." (2T 54:1-3).

The sin of much talking is not small in its result. Words bitter as gall may be spoken in the heat of satanic passion; but when these poor, deluded souls come to their senses, and are as ashamed as they ought to be of their words, why do they not acknowledge their sin, and thus disappoint the enemy? It may be that they have cultivated a spirit of evil-surmising, and communicate their suppositions to others. But those whose hearts are right with God will say, "I cannot hear these evil reports." If you know evil of your brother or your sister, go in the spirit of Christ, and talk it over with them. Get it out of the way. Kill the dragon, and hurry him out of sight, where he will never have a resurrection. Let no flaw in your speech, no defection in your spirit, break the friendship and love which Christ has enjoined upon you to cultivate. Then the golden oil will be emptied into the tubes and conducted into the bowl, that the lamp may burn brightly. (HM 7/1/97).

The great truths of the Word of God are so clearly stated that none need make a mistake in understanding them. When as individual members of the church, you love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself, there will be no need of labored efforts to be in unity, for there will be oneness in Christ as a natural result. The ears will no longer be open to reports that will injure your neighbor, and no one will take up a reproach against his neighbor. The members of the church will cherish love and unity, and be as one great family. Then we shall bear the divine credentials to the world, that will testify that God has sent His Son into the world. Christ has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another" (John 13:35). The divinity of Christ is acknowledged in the unity of the children of God. (1888 Ma 1092:2).

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. (Prov. 15:4). Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; for where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. (Prov. 26:20).

HARSH, IMPATIENT WORDS

Seeest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him....An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression. (Prov. 29:20,22).

In your patience possess ye your souls. (Luke 21:19). Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. (Ecc. 5:2).

The Lord is soon to work in greater power among us, but there is danger of allowing our impulses to carry us where the Lord would not want us to go. We must not make one step that we will have to retrace. We must move solemnly, prudently, and not make use of extravagant expressions or allow our feelings to become overwrought. We must think calmly and work without excitement; for there will be those who become easily wrought up, who will catch up unguarded expressions and make use of extreme utterances to create excitement, and thus counteract the very work that God would do. There is a class of people who are always ready to go off on some tangent, who want to catch up something strange and wonderful and new; but God would have all move calmly, considerately, choosing our words in harmony with the solid truth for this time, which requires to be presented to the mind as free from that which is emotional as possible, while still bearing the intensity and solemnity that is proper it should bear. We must guard against creating extremes, guard against encouraging those who would either be in the fire or in the water. (TM 227:1).

Many people in the world and in the church possess an excitable nature. We often think of these folks as those who are easily worked up over the smallest things, who speak before they think and who often have a foot in their mouth as the saying goes. They have the tendency to shoot straight from the lip before the brain has fully engaged. On hearing or reading or seeing something that provokes their sensitive emotions, they become overwrought, highly vocal, hasty, and impatient in their speech.

One class have come up without self-control; they have not bridled the temper or the tongue; and some of these claim to be Christ's followers, but they are not. Jesus has set them no such example. When they have the meekness and lowliness of the Saviour, they will not act out the promptings of the natural heart, for this is of Satan. Some are nervous, and if they begin to lose self-control in word or spirit under provocation, they are as much intoxicated with wrath as the inebriate is with liquor. They are unreasonable, and not easily persuaded or convinced. They are not sane; Satan for the time has full control. Every one of these exhibitions of wrath weakens the nervous system and the moral powers, and makes it difficult to restrain anger on another provocation. With this class there is only one remedy, – positive self-control under all circumstances. (YI 11/10/86).

These poor souls do not usually see themselves as they really are. They find many excuses for their behavior.

Some persons speak in a harsh, uncourteous manner, that wounds the feeling of others, and then they justify themselves by saying, “It is my way; I always tell just what I think”; and they exalt this wicked trait of character as a virtue. (OHC 229:4).

Some don't just excuse themselves, they “pride themselves on being outspoken, blunt, and rough, and they call this frankness; but it is not rightly named, it is selfishness of the deepest dye.” (MLT 196:2). “Their uncourteous deportment should be firmly rebuked.” (OHC 229:4).

In the early days of the Seventh-day Adventist church, Sister F, a woman given to a hasty, outspoken tongue, received a testimony from Sister White who addressed her problem thus:

Sister F wants to be a Christian, but she has not cultivated discretion and true courtesy. She is of a very sanguine turn of mind, ardent and self-confident. She shows the rough part of her character, and has not appeared to advantage. She has moved from impulse, acting just as she felt, and sometimes her feelings have been much excited and strong. She has strong likes and dislikes, and has permitted this unfortunate

trait in her character to develop itself, greatly to the detriment of her own spiritual advancement and to the injury of the church. (2T 50:2).

This lady brought much grief upon herself and the church by her uncontrolled tongue and emotions. she was influenced in causing her husband to move from impulse rather than from principle, and she was fast losing friends who had become victims of her tongue. Her unbridled emotions were costing her her own happiness. Many others have the same problems with the same results.

In the use of language, there is, perhaps, no error that old and young are more ready to pass over lightly in themselves than hasty, impatient speech. They think it is a sufficient excuse to plead, "I was off my guard, and did not really mean what I said." But God's word does not treat it lightly. The Scripture says: "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him." "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." The largest share of life's annoyances, its heartaches, its irritations, is due to uncontrolled temper. In one moment, by hasty, passionate, careless words, may be wrought evil that a whole lifetime's repentance cannot undo. Oh, the hearts that are broken, the friends estranged, the lives wrecked, by the harsh, hasty words of those who might have brought help and healing! (MYP 134-5).

Any one of us can become angry and emotional at anytime and use hasty, passionate speech, not because we are necessarily of the class who have never learned self-control.

Overwork sometimes causes a loss of self-control. But the Lord never compels hurried, complicated movements. Many gather to themselves burdens that the merciful Heavenly Father did not place on them. Duties He never designed them to perform chase one another wildly. God desires us to realize that we do not glorify His name when we take so many burdens that we are overtaxed, and, becoming heart-weary and brain-weary, chafe and fret and scold. We are to bear only the responsibilities that the Lord gives us, trusting in Him, and thus keeping our hearts pure and sweet and sympathetic. (MYP 134-5).

Another cause for an unbridled tongue can be found in the diet.

Eating has much to do with religion. The spiritual experience is greatly affected by the way in which the stomach is treated. Eating and drinking in accordance with the laws of health promote virtuous actions. But if the stomach is abused by habits that have no foundation in nature, Satan takes advantage of the wrong that has been done, and uses the stomach as an enemy of righteousness, creating a disturbance which affects the entire being. Sacred things are not appreciated. Spiritual zeal diminishes. Peace of mind is lost. There is dissension, strife, and discord. Impatient words are spoken, and unkind deeds are done; dishonest practices are followed, and anger is manifested, – and all because the nerves of the brain are disturbed by the abuse heaped on the stomach. (RH 5/27/02).

Gluttonous feasts, and food taken into the stomach at untimely seasons, leave an influence upon every fiber of the system; and the mind also is seriously affected by what we eat and drink. (HR 6/78).

Those who eat and work intemperately and irrationally, talk and act irrationally. It is not necessary to drink alcoholic liquors in order to be intemperate. The sin of intemperate eating – eating too frequently, too much, and of rich, unwholesome food – destroys the healthy action of the digestive organs, affects the brain, and perverts the judgement, preventing rational, calm, healthy thinking and acting. (CG 398:4).

The use of flesh food "tends to irritate the nerves and to excite the passions, thus giving the balance of power to the lower propensities." (CDF 397:1). Pickles and related condiments cause nervousness and irritability of temper. (Ibid. 345:2). Coffee, tea, and other stimulating beverages cause the whole system to suffer. Not only is the body affected:

The mind, too, is injured. The immediate influence of these stimulants is to excite the brain to undue activity, only to leave it weaker and less capable of exertion. The aftereffect is prostration, not only mental and physical, but moral. As a result we see nervous men and women, of unsound judgement and unbalanced mind. They often manifest a hasty, impatient, accusing spirit, and utterly unable to discern their own defects. (CDF 423:0).

If we want to be in control of our emotions, and have victory over our hasty spirits and angry tempers, we must first surrender to Jesus, then we must learn and practice temperance. Peter's ladder has us climbing from faith to virtue to knowledge to temperance to patience and on to charity which is the highest rung. We must first be temperate if we would be patient. Because of the close connection between the body and the mind, whatever stimulates the nerves of the body, also stimulates the nerve centers of the brain. "An intemperate man cannot be a patient man." (CDF 50:1).

It was impatience which brought about one of the saddest stories in all the Bible; impatience caused by weariness. For forty years Moses had been the earthly, visible leader of a stubborn and stiff-necked people as they trekked through their wilderness wanderings. During those forty years, Moses had listened to their continuous murmurings and it had wearied him. On the very border of the promised land, he lost his patience, and, in a moment of pique, he smote the rock twice, rather than speaking to it as he had been commanded. At the same time, he uttered the hasty, impatient words, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" (Num. 20:10). Moses' sin brought a bitter punishment. Though he sincerely repented of his great wrong, he was forbidden to enter the promised land. He would die before crossing Jordan. (see PP 417-418).

Were self kept under control, serious errors in home and business life would be avoided. Among the members of many families there is practised the habit of saying loose, careless things, and the habit of tantalizing, of speaking harsh words, becomes stronger and stronger as it is indulged, and thus many objectionable words are spoken that are after Satan's order, and not after the order of God. Should those who indulge in speaking words of passion, study the Guide Book, and with a serious mind seek to know its requirements, and to do them, – should they make practical its injunctions, – what a transformation would there be in the conduct and conversation! Burning words of passion should never be spoken; for in the sight of God and holy angels they are as a species of swearing. The directions of God's word are to be implicitly obeyed. (YI 9/20/94).

As modern Israel stands poised on the borders of the Promised Land, we too, will have trials that will wring our hearts with anguish, we will be weary from bearing heavy burdens, but we must be in subjection to our Master. We dare not become impatient and hasty and harsh now. Will we allow these things to keep us out of the Kingdom? For us there will be no second chance. We must become victorious now or we never shall.

All who profess godliness are under the most sacred obligation to guard the spirit, and to exercise self-control under the greatest provocation. The burdens placed upon Moses were very great; few men will ever be so severely tried as he was; yet this was not allowed to excuse his sin. God has made ample provision for His people; and if they rely upon His strength, they will never become the sport of circumstances. The strongest temptation cannot excuse sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer. (PP 421:2).

I beg of you for Christ's sake, let no hasty, rash expressions fall from your lips, let no extravagant language be used, let nothing be uttered that will savor of railing, for all this is human. Christ has no part in it. (TM 219:1).

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. (Jude 9).

Our workers should use the greatest wisdom, so that nothing shall be said to provoke the armies of Satan and to stir up his united confederacy of evil. Christ did not dare to bring a railing accusation against the prince of evil, and is it proper that we should bring such accusation as will set in operation the agencies of evil, the confederacies of men that are leagued with evil spirits? Christ was the only-begotten Son of the infinite God. He was the Commander in the heavenly courts, yet He refrained from bringing accusation against Satan. (TM 222:1).

Avoid anything in look or gesture, word or tone, that savors of pride or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt yourself, or place your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, overbearing, or contempt. With care avoid

every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of warmth but that of earnest love. Above all, let there be no shadow of hate or ill will, no bitterness or sourness of expression. Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. (2T 52:1).

Brethren and sisters, do not let every one know your thoughts and emotions. Do not manifest impatience; keep yourself under control, master yourself. Satan will take advantage if you give him the least chance. You must fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. You may gain one victory, but this is not enough; you must gain victory after victory, going from strength to strength. We are to occupy some place in the Lord's spiritual temple, and the important question is not as to whether you are a large or small stone, but whether you have submitted yourself to God that he may polish you, and make you emit light for his glory. If we are in the Lord's temple, we must emit light. Are we permitting the heavenly Builder to hew, square, and polish us? Have we faith to rest in him? (RH 2/27/13).

It matters not how much it might be "natural" for us to be emotional in our speech. The natural heart is at enmity with God, and only submission to Him will bring us victory.

I beseech you to weed out of your teachings every extravagant expression, everything that unbalanced minds and those who are inexperienced will catch up, and from which they will make wild, immature movements. It is necessary for you to cultivate caution in every statement you make, lest you start some on a wrong track, and make confusion that will require much sorrowful labor to set in order, thus diverting the strength and work of the laborers into lines which God does not design shall be entered. One fanatical streak exhibited among us will close many doors against the soundest principles of truth. (TM 228:1).

My brethren and sisters, will you bear in mind that in dealing with God's heritage you are not to act out your natural characteristics? The people of God are Christ's purchased possession, and what a price He has paid for them! Shall any of us be found aiding the enemy of God and man in discouraging and destroying souls? What will be the retribution brought up on us if we do this class of work? Every one of us should weed out of our conversation everything that is harsh and severe. We should not indulge in condemning others, and we will not do so if we are one with Christ. We are to represent Christ in our dealings with our fellowmen. We are to be laborers together with God in helping those who are tempted. (TM 225:1).

Every inherited and cultivated tendency to evil must be brought under the blood. Victories must be gained over each and every one of them.

The servants of Christ are not to act out the dictates of the natural heart. They need to have close communion with God, lest, under provocation, self rise up, and they pour forth a torrent of words that are unbefitting, that are not as dew or the still showers that refresh the withering plants. This is what Satan wants them to do; for these are his methods. It is the dragon that is wroth; it is the spirit of Satan that is revealed in anger and accusing. But God's servants are to be representatives of Him. He desires them to deal only in the currency of heaven, the truth that bears His own image and superscription. The power by which they are to overcome evil is the power of Christ. The glory of Christ is their strength. They are to fix their eyes upon His loveliness. Then they can present the gospel with divine tact and gentleness. And the spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible. (DA 353:2).

Among all who walk in harmony with God, there must be perfect freedom from all the natural passions of the human heart. All who give themselves to the service of Christ will follow the example of Christ, and will be perfect overcomers. When self ceases to wrestle for the supremacy, and the heart is worked by the Holy Spirit, the soul lies perfectly passive--and then the image of God is mirrored upon the heart, the soul is in accord with the mind of God, and human identity is lost in Jesus Christ. Then all temporal and spiritual transactions which need to be done will be done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, without worry, perplexity, murmuring, faultfinding, accusation, or wrathful speeches, which, among those who have not surrendered self to God, are often not restrained but pour forth from the lips in any place and under any circumstance when selfish ideas are interfered with. (9MR 324:1).

There is not an impulse of our nature, not a faculty of the mind or an inclination of the heart, but needs to be moment by moment, under the control of the Spirit of God. There is not a blessing which God bestows upon man, not a trial which He permits to befall him, but Satan both can and will seize upon it to tempt, to harass and destroy the soul, if we give him the least advantage. Therefore however great one's spiritual light, however much he may enjoy of the divine favor and blessing, he should ever walk humbly before the Lord, pleading in faith that God will direct every thought and control every impulse. (PP 421:1).

Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to control a rash and impetuous temper. When the grace of meekness is cherished by those who are naturally sour or hasty in disposition, they will put forth the most earnest efforts to subdue their unhappy temper. Every day they will gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered. They become assimilated to the Divine Pattern, until they can obey the inspired injunction, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:9). [SL 15-16].

The indwelling Saviour is always revealed by the words. The Holy Spirit does not abide in the heart of the man who is peevish if others do not grasp his ideas and plans, which appear to him to be the sum and substance of everything desirable. From the lips of such a man there come scathing remarks, which grieve the Holy Spirit away, and produce attributes which are satanic rather than divine. The Lord would have those connected with His work speak at all times with the meekness of Christ. If you are provoked, do not become impatient. Manifest the gentleness of which Christ has given an example in His precious life. Christ took our nature that He might set us an example, showing those who receive Him the fruit they must bear. [MS 148, 1899 (RH 2/7/1957)].

Life is disciplinary. While in the world, the Christian will meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If injuries and insults are meekly borne, if insulting words are responded to by gentle answers, and oppressive acts by kindness, this is evidence that the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, that sap from the living Vine is flowing to the branches. We are in the school of Christ in this life, where we are to learn to be meek and lowly of heart; and in the day of final accounts we shall see that all the obstacles we meet, all the hardships and annoyances that we are called to bear, are practical lessons in the application of principles of Christian life. If well endured, they develop the Christlike in the character and distinguish the Christian from the worldling. (5T 344:2).

By the fruit of our lips we are known. The fire of haste and impatience can be extinguished by our Saviour. The law of kindness can be placed in our mouths and then "The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom." "The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable." "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding." "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." (Prov. 10:31,32; 14:29; Ps 119:165).

You are writing a gospel,
A chapter each day,
By deeds that you do,
By words that you say.
Men read what you write,
Whether faithless or true,
Say, what is the gospel according to you?

Author unknown

JESTING, JOKING, AND WITTY REMARKS

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. (Eph. 5:3,4).

The trifling talk, the foolish witticisms, spoken only to create a laugh, do not rightly represent Christ. Those who utter them would not be willing to meet a record of their words. Wrong impressions are made upon the listeners, and reproach is cast upon Christ. (MYP 388:1).

Indulge in no lightness or trifling. Let no low witticism escape your lips. (MH 491:2).

A stroll down the aisles of a bookstore will reveal a whole section of books of anecdotes, clean jokes, dirty jokes, ethnic jokes, and practical jokes. Telling a joke is the world's way of "breaking the ice," of "loosening up" the audience at the beginning of a speech, a studio audience, even a sermon. Getting the people to laugh is supposed to make them relax and be ready to listen to something serious. Joking has crept into everyday conversations and some people have a way of making even the most serious of subjects and situations a laughing matter. But such talk is not pleasing to God.

The tenor of the conversation reveals the treasure of the heart. The cheap, common talk, the words of flattery, the foolish witticism, spoken to create a laugh, are the merchandise of Satan, and all who indulge in this talk are trading in his goods. Impressions are made upon those who hear these things similar to that made upon Herod when the daughter of Herodias danced before him. All these transactions are recorded in the books of heaven; and at the last great day they will appear in their true light before the guilty ones. Then all will discern in them the alluring, deceptive workings of the devil, to lead them into the broad road and the wide gate that opens to their ruin. (TM 84:2).

One or two jokes thrown into speeches and conversations to "loosen people up" is called the merchandise of Satan. To tell a joke, to jest, to tease someone, is to be a dealer in Satan's goods. Yet many Seventh-day Adventist Christians who crack joke after joke would be appalled to think they were Satan's merchants selling Satan's goods.

The sin of these last days is upon the professed people of God. Through selfishness, love of pleasure, and love of dress, they deny the Christ that their church membership says that they are following. I thank God that Jesus Christ knows every impulse in the heart of the believer. Many profess to be children of God who do not follow Christ. Their frivolity, their cheap conversation, their want of high-toned piety, their low aims, mislead others who would pursue a different course were it not for the example of these deceptive characters, those who do not love Christ or do His will but simply follow their own imaginations. (TM 129:1).

Before we continue, we need to define jokes, jests, and teasing. By definition, a joke is one of several things said or done to arouse laughter, with those things being; a funny anecdote, a trick played on someone for fun, the humorous element in any situation, and also anything or person that is not to be taken seriously because it is absurd or ridiculous. A jest is a synonym for joke. To tease someone is to annoy or harass that person by mockery, poking fun, playful fooling, and ridicule. In simple terms, anything that is said or done to or about anything or anyone to get a laugh is a joke. It is human nature to enjoy attention that others give us. Our pride is bolstered and flattered by such attention. Some men and women have found that by telling joke after joke, that by being witty, they receive lots of attention because people like to laugh. Some of them even turn their wittiness into a lucrative career. Seldom do Christians realize that pride is the passion behind every joke.

This spirit of jesting and joking, of lightness and trifling, is a stumbling block to sinners and a worse stumbling block to those who give way to the inclination of the unsanctified heart. The fact that some have allowed this trait to develop and strengthen until jesting is as natural as their breath, does not lessen its evil

effects. When anyone can point to one trifling word spoken by our Lord, or to any lightness seen in His character, he may feel that lightness and jesting are excusable in himself. This spirit is unchristian; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. Jesus is a perfect pattern, and we must imitate His example. A Christian is the highest type of man, a representative of Christ. (Ev. 641:2).

Have you ever been the target of someone's joke, the object somebody used for ridicule to get a laugh out of his audience? Every jest, every joke, every witticism, must have an object of ridicule to be effective. It has to play off something or someone that is both immediately obvious and at least a little out-of-the-ordinary to the target audience. If you are the chosen object, it won't matter how well the joker may know and like you, even love you; to get the attention he craves in laughter, he will unpitifully hold you up to ridicule. He must disregard all his feelings of pity and love and human kindness that his pride might be fed. In reality, the audience is laughing at the object of the ridicule, and they, too, are void of pity, love, and kindness though they may be unaware of it. As Christians we are obligated to care for the feelings of others, to have pity on them, and to do nothing which will cause them needless pain and hurt.

Christians have many sources of happiness at their command, and they may tell with unerring accuracy what pleasures are lawful and right. They may enjoy such recreations as will not dissipate the mind or debase the soul, such as will not disappoint and leave a sad after influence to destroy self-respect or bar the way to usefulness. (CT 342:3).

Satan delights in causing pain, and he inspires the jokes that wound the souls of men and women and children. Christians will beware of telling or listening or partaking in any way of such frivolity.

If we will study the Book of Revelation and seek to understand its full significance, we shall see the necessity of putting away from our lives all the frivolity that so often marks our experience. We will have little desire for the foolish novel, and the amusements of the world. (6MR 287:1).

In our schools there is to be respect for God, principle, teachers, and fellow students. Jest, joking and ridicule are not to be indulged in. There is "no excuse for your low, cheap, common conversation and heedless frivolity." Such an atmosphere is "malarious." (KC 95,96). If a student doesn't care for the truth, he is still to "behave himself as a gentleman, remembering that it is inappropriate and unfair for him to jest and joke and make remarks that are calculated to divert the mind from pure and holy meditation." (Ibid 97:3). Any inappropriate behavior is not to be allowed to pass "without decided rebuke and command to cease." (Ibid. 96:4). "It is the duty of the principal and teachers to demand perfect order and perfect discipline." (Ibid. 98:1).

Between the associations of the followers of Christ for Christian recreation, and worldly gatherings for pleasure and amusement, will exist a marked contrast. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and sacred things, will be heard from the lips of worldlings the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. The idea is to have a general high time. Their amusements commence in folly and end in vanity. Our gatherings should be so conducted, and we should so conduct ourselves, that when we return to our homes we can have a conscience void of offense toward God and man; a conscience that we have not wounded or injured in any manner those with whom we have been associated, or had an injurious influence over them. (CT 336:3).

The youth want to be accepted by their peers, and cheap, frivolous talk and joking is a way of drawing attention, being accepted, and fitting in. Such young people have not been converted. They do not know Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Though professing to believe truth, some are ashamed of their faith and try to hide it, even belittling it.

I am sorry to see that many youth who profess religion do not have any knowledge of a change of heart. There is no transformation of character. They do not realize that it is a solemn thing to profess to be a Christian. Their life is entirely inconsistent with a religious frame of mind. If they were of that number who are indeed the sons and daughters of God, they would not be filled with nonsense and pleasantries and trifling; neither would the foolish remarks and conduct of others awaken the same in them. A mind that is intent upon having the prize, upon securing heaven, will reject with firm, determined purpose every attempt at wit and jest concerning religious things.

There is great danger in indifference upon this subject; no folly is so subtle as thoughtlessness and levity. On every hand we see youth of a frivolous character. All young people of this class should be avoided; for

they are dangerous. If they profess to be Christians, they are the more to be dreaded. Their minds have been cast in an inferior mold; and it will be far easier for them to bring you down to their level than for you to bring them up to elevated and ennobling thoughts and a correct course of action. Let your companions be those who observe decorum in words and deportment.

In order to do your best in showing forth the praises of God, your associations must be such as to keep in your minds the sacred distinct from the common. If you would have broad views, noble thoughts and aspirations, choose associations that will strengthen right principles. Let every thought and the purpose of every action bend to the securing of the future life, with eternal happiness. (MYP 266-7).

Those who are seeking the higher, Christlike life of any age will be careful in choosing their companions. But for the young this is especially important because their minds are so impressionable, and they desire so much to be part of the crowd, that they are willing to sacrifice principle to be accepted.

There are youth who have a certain kind of cleverness, which is acknowledged and admired by their associates, but their ability is not sanctified. It is not strengthened and solidified by the graces and trials of experience, and God cannot use it to benefit humanity and glorify His name. Under the guise of godliness, their powers are being used to erect false standards, and the unconverted look to them as an excuse for their wrong course of action. Satan leads them to amuse their associates by their nonsense and so-called wit. Everything that they undertake is cheapening; for they are under the control of the tempter, who directs and fashions their characters, that they may do his work.

They have ability, but it is untrained; they have capacity, but it is unimproved. Talents have been given them; but they misuse and degrade them by folly, and drag others down to their own low level. Christ paid the ransom for their souls by self-denial, self-sacrifice, humiliation, by the shame and reproach He endured. This He did that He might rescue them from the bondage of sin, from the slavery of a master who cares for them only as he can use them to ruin souls. But they make the love of the Redeemer in their behalf of no avail to them, and He looks with sadness on their work.

Such youth meet with eternal loss. How will their fun and frolic appear to them in the day when every man shall receive from the Judge of all the earth according to the deeds done in the body? They have brought to the foundation wood, hay, and stubble, and all their life work will perish. What a loss! (MYP 43:1-3).

But if these young people will be converted, what a change will be seen in their lives.

When young men and young women are in deed and in truth converted, a decided change will be seen by all who have any connection with them. Their frivolity will leave them; the continual desire for amusement and selfish pleasure, the longing for some kind of change, to be in parties and excursions, will no longer be seen. (FE 455:2).

Oh how much better is the condition of those who act their part in God's service, looking to Jesus for His approval, writing daily in their account-book their mistakes, their errors, their sorrow, the victories they have gained over temptation, their joy and peace in Christ! Such youth will not have to meet their life record with shame and dismay. (MYP 44:1).

Always act from principle, never from impulse. Temper the natural impetuosity of your nature with meekness and gentleness. Indulge in no lightness or trifling. Let no low witticism escape your lips. Even the thoughts are not to be allowed to run riot. They must be restrained, brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Let them be placed upon holy things. Then, through the grace of Christ, they will be pure and true. (MH 491:2).

We must be breathing in the atmosphere of heaven; eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus. These will purify our thoughts, and that which comes out of our mouths will be as pure as what went into our minds. We will find discomfort in associating with those whose goals are earthly and sensual.

The atmosphere of unbelief is heavy and oppressive. The giddy laugh, the jesting, the joking, sickens the soul that is feeding on Christ. Cheap, foolish talk is painful to Him. With a humble heart read carefully

1 Peter 1:13-18. Those who enjoy talking should see that their words are select and well chosen. Be careful how you speak. Be careful how you represent the religion you have accepted. You may feel it no sin to gossip and talk nonsense, but this grieves your Saviour, and saddens the heavenly angels. (FE 457:2).

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers. (1Pet. 1:13-18).

We are not to be tattlers, or gossipers, or talebearers; we are not to bear false witness. We are forbidden by God to engage in trifling, foolish conversation, in jesting, joking, or speaking any idle words. We must give an account of what we say to God. We will be brought into judgement for our hasty words, that do no good to the speaker or to the hearer. Then let us all speak words that will tend to edification. Remember that you are of value with God. Allow no cheap, foolish talk or wrong principles to compose your Christian experience. (FE 458:1).

A man's character may be quite accurately estimated by the nature of his conversation.... Those who jest and joke and indulge in cheap conversation place themselves upon a level where Satan can gain access to them.... When you associate together, you may be a help and a blessing one to another if you surround yourselves with an influence that is divine. But there are those who have grave defects, which are gaining a deeper hold upon them and which if not overcome will drive the Spirit of God out of the heart.... Jestings and joking may please a class of cheap minds, and yet the influence of this kind of conduct is destructive to spirituality. I speak to you as a class and also as individuals: Guard your words. Let sobriety and sound common sense characterize your conversation. Do not trifle with the purity and nobility of your souls by condescending to indulgence in stale jokes, and in cultivating habits of trifling conversation. (OHC 292:1).

Our every thought, our every word, our every action may carry with it the weight of eternity for another soul. What we think, do, and say can cost the life of someone for eternity.

Young and old have a conflict, a warfare, before them. They should not sleep for a moment. A wily foe is constantly on the alert to lead them astray and overcome them. Believers in present truth must be as watchful as their enemy and manifest wisdom in resisting Satan. Will they do this? Will they persevere in this warfare? Will they be careful to depart from all iniquity? Christ is denied in many ways. We may deny Him by speaking contrary to truth, by speaking evil of others, by foolish talking or jesting, or by words that are idle. In these things we manifest but little shrewdness or wisdom. We make ourselves weak; our efforts are feeble to resist our great enemy, and we are conquered. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and through lack of watchfulness we confess that Christ is not in us. Those who hesitate to devote themselves unreservedly to God make poor work of following Christ. They follow Him at so great a distance that half the time they do not really know whether they are following His footprints or the footsteps of their great enemy. Why are we so slow to give up our interest in the things of this world and take Christ for our only portion? Why should we wish to keep the friendship of our Lord's enemies, and follow their customs, and be led by their opinions? There must be an entire, unreserved surrender to God, a forsaking and turning away from the love of the world and earthly things, or we cannot be Christ's disciples. (1T 408:1).

One vain word, one trifling laugh, may balance a soul in the wrong direction. Terrible are the consequences of not having a constant connection with God. (FE 195:0).

It is this constant connection with Christ which is vital to our salvation as well as to others. We must keep our eyes on Jesus.

Those who profess to believe the third angel's message, often wound the cause of God by lightness, joking, and trifling. This evil is all through our ranks. There should be a humbling before the Lord; the

Israel of God should rend the heart, and not the garment. Child-like simplicity is rarely seen; the approbation of man is more thought of than the displeasure of God. Set your hearts in order, dear brethren and sisters, lest the brittle thread of life be cut, and you lie down in the grave unsheltered, unprepared for the Judgement. Unless you make your peace with God, and tear yourselves from the world, your hearts will grow harder, and you will lean upon a false prop, a supposed preparation, and find out your mistake too late to secure a well-grounded hope. (RH 9/9/84).

Jesting, joking, and light, frivolous chatter will require diligent effort to overcome.

One brother said this morning that he had repented of his lightness and trifling again and again, and had asked God to help him overcome this disposition; but for some reason he did not receive the help he asked for. Has the word of our God been tested, and proved false? No, no; the fault is with man, not with his Creator. This brother's efforts to reform have been made by fits and starts in his own weak strength. He must put forth steady, persevering effort; he must follow his prayers by placing a strict guard over himself. (RH 6/17/84).

Abstain from all evil. Common sins, however insignificant they may be regarded, will impair your moral sense, and extinguish the inward impression of the Spirit of God. The character of the thoughts leaves its imprint upon the soul, and all low conversation pollutes the mind. All evil works ruin to those who commit it. God may and will forgive the repenting sinner, but though forgiven, the soul is marred; the power of the elevated thought possible to the unimpaired mind is destroyed. Through all time the soul bears the scars. Then let us seek for that faith which works by love and purifies the heart, that we may represent the character of Christ to the world. (FE 195:1).

Does all this mean that Christians are to be humorless? Are they never to laugh at all, ever? Are we always to be perfectly solemn?

The *loud, boisterous laugh* is a denial of God in the soul; for it reveals that the truth is not ruling in the heart. All such professors have yet to be converted. (YI 7-14-98, emphasis supplied).

There are those who have never studied human nature, those who know not how to deal with human minds, those who act as though it were a sin to smile and to show joy and gladness. This is the spirit that is separating them far from the youth, that they cannot understand them. This is what I have been shown, and I know it is truth, but I had hoped that general principles laid down would correct the evils that seemed to be steadily growing. (6MR 94:2).

Jesus is our example, and He was a cheerful person. Cheerfulness, joy, and gladness are not expressed in jesting and joking and playing pranks and teasing others, but comes from serving Jesus.

Christ is our example. Do you imitate the great Exemplar? Christ often wept but never was known to laugh. I do not say it is a sin to laugh on any occasion. But we cannot go astray if we imitate the divine, unerring Pattern. We are living in a sad age of this world's history....

As we view the world bound in darkness and trammled by Satan, how can we engage in levity, glee, careless, reckless words, speaking at random, laughing, jesting, and joking? It is in keeping with our faith to be sober, watch unto the end, for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.....

Christian cheerfulness is not condemned by the Scriptures, but reckless talking is censured. Those who live in the last days should be circumspect in words and acts. Sobriety is more in accordance with our faith than levity. Those who realize the solemnity of the times in which we live will be among the number who bear about with them a weight of solemn influence. They are rich in good works, bearing the burden of souls, and by holy example faithfully represent Jesus Christ and win souls to accept Christ as their Saviour. (6MR 91:1-3).

In the night season I heard words spoken, reproving the speech and deportment of those who indulge in trifling words and careless actions. The Lord is not pleased with the careless speech, the frivolous words that come so often from lips professing to serve Him. His Spirit is grieved that those who are called by his name do not perfect his righteousness in their words. The righteous judgements of God will not spare the

trifler. The people who have had great light will not be excused if they neglect to give, by a godly example, the light of truth to those with whom they associate. (RH 9/28/11).

Before leaving the subject of jesting and joking, let us look at one more aspect of this topic, that of ridicule.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. (2Pet. 3:3-5).

Because we, as Seventh-day Adventist Christians, maintain high moral standards; because we believe God's word just as it reads; because we accept a latter day messenger of God in Ellen White; because we keep the whole law, we are, and will be, the object of ridicule, derision, sneers, sarcasm, scorn, and scoffing.

Many do not hesitate to sneer at the word of God. Those who believe that word just as it reads are held up to ridicule. There is a growing contempt for law and order, directly traceable to a violation of the plain commands of Jehovah. Violence and crime are the result of turning aside from the path of obedience. Behold the wretchedness and misery of multitudes who worship at the shrine of idols and who seek in vain for happiness and peace. (PK 185:2).

Since sin entered the world, and men began to multiply on the earth, God's people have been the targets of other people's mockery and scorn. Daniel, one of the outstanding heroes of the Bible, stands as a type of the final generation who must choose between receiving God's seal or the mark of the beast. This most noble, godly man did not have a smooth and easy time in the great metropolis of Babylon.

The history of Daniel, if all was written, would open chapters before you that would show you the temptations he had to meet, of ridicule, envy, and hatred; but he learned to master the difficulties. He did not trust in his own strength; he laid his whole soul and all his difficulties open to his heavenly Father, and he believed God heard him, and he was comforted and blessed. He rose superior to ridicule; and so will every one who is an overcomer. Daniel acquired a serene and cheerful state of mind, because he believed God was his friend and helper. (4BC 1168:3).

In the coming days of trial we must indeed follow Daniel's example and overcome ridicule. In the crisis just coming upon us, the taunts, sneers, and scorn will come at God's faithful children from all sides. It will come from family members and total strangers, from the bum on the street to highly honored officials, from professed church members to professed church leaders. We need now to prepare, for this will be a severe test for some to bear, worse than facing death.

As we near the close of time, the opposing elements will work in the same lines in which they have worked in times past. Every soul will be tested. Under persecution it will be made manifest just what banner every individual has chosen to stand under. While sin remains, the offense of the cross will never cease. Satan has a thousand masked batteries which will be opened upon the loyal, commandment-keeping people of God to compel them to violate conscience. The followers of Christ must expect to encounter sneers. They will be reviled; their words and their faith will be misrepresented. Coldness and contempt may be harder to endure than martyrdom. With some persons it would require more courage to encounter a laugh than to be thrust through with a sword. (Let. 30a, 1892; APOC).

God sustained Daniel, He held him up and Daniel was able to rise above the boorishness of the scoffers of his day. God will give us the same strength; then we too, can face what Daniel faced.

If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule. He must stand upright like the palm tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth. Christians indeed may be fitly represented by the palm tree. They are like Enoch; although surrounded by corrupting influences, their faith takes hold of the Unseen. They walk with God, deriving strength and grace from Him to withstand the moral pollution surrounding them. Like Daniel

in the courts of Babylon, they stand pure and uncontaminated; their life is hid with Christ in God. They are virtuous in spirit amid depravity; they are true and loyal, fervent and zealous, while surrounded by infidels, hypocritical professors, godless and worldly men. Their faith and life are hid with Christ in God. Jesus is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Faith, like the rootlets of the palm tree, penetrates beneath the things which are seen, drawing spiritual nourishment from the Fountain of life. (3BC 1151:3).

Such is the faith we must have in the final crisis, for as the Sunday laws are being passed around the world:

Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals, men will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a "Thus saith the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God, cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. We are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people. (PK 605-6).

Ridicule and scoffing from fellow church members, from those who profess to be like believers, can be doubly hard to bear. When we hear our message belittled and mocked along with those who bear the message; when we ourselves become the objects of their scorn, it should break our hearts.

The lips that have uttered perverse things of God's servants and have scorned the message they have borne, have put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Instead of watching, as did the Pharisees, for something to scoff at and deride, had they opened their hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, they would have been offering grateful praise rather than watching for something which they could misinterpret or twist so as to find fault. (4BC 1138:4).

These poor, deluded souls have blinded themselves, and they believe that their darkness is great light. Their darkness engulfs them and their children.

The names of God's chosen servants have been handled with disrespect, and in some cases with absolute contempt, by certain persons whose duty it is to uphold them. The children have not failed to hear the disrespectful remarks of their parents in reference to the solemn reproofs and warnings of God's servants. They have understood the scornful jests and depreciatory speeches that from time to time have met their ears, and the tendency has been to bring sacred and eternal interests, in their minds, on a level with the common affairs of the world. What a work are these parents doing in making infidels of their children even in their childhood! This is the way that children are taught to be irreverent and to rebel against Heaven's reproof of sin. Spiritual declension can but prevail where such evils exist. These very fathers and mothers, blinded by the enemy, marvel why their children are so inclined to unbelief and to doubt the truth of the Bible. They wonder that it is so difficult to reach them by moral and religious influences. Had they spiritual eyesight, they would at once discover that this deplorable condition of things is the result of their own home influence, the offspring of their jealousy and distrust. Thus many infidels are educated in the family circles of professed Christians. (4T 195-6).

In turn these children who have learned to ridicule and belittle others at home become corrupting influences on other youth. The baleful work done by the parents doesn't stay within the family.

Their dwarfed spirituality is an offense to God. They taint and corrupt the minds of those with whom they associate. By their words and actions they encourage a careless inattention to sacred things. Not only do they imperil their own souls, but their example is detrimental to all with whom they come in contact. They are utterly incompetent to represent Christ. Servants of sin, careless, reckless, and foolish, they scatter away from Him.

Those who are satisfied with low attainments fail of being workers together with God. (MYP 42:2,3).

The influence of our young people in the office is not what it should be. A and B have virtually worked against the cause. The influence of their conversation and deportment has been such as to disgust unbelievers and turn them from our faith and from Christ. The young who heed not the warnings of the word of God and slight the *Testimonies* of His Spirit can only be a living curse to the office and should be separated from it. (4T 209:2).

I have been shown that Brethren F and G are almost wholly unacquainted with the operation of God's Spirit. They have been working in their own strength and have been so fully wrapped up in themselves that they have not seen and realized their great destitution. They talk flippantly of the *Testimonies* given of God for the benefit of His people, and pass judgement upon them, giving their opinions and criticizing this and that, when they would better place their hands upon their lips and lie with their faces in the dust; for they know no more of the spirit of the *Testimonies* than they do of the Spirit of God. (4T 443:1).

Today there are a heartbreaking number of people who profess to be God's true and faithful children who ridicule God's saints, speak flippantly of the *Testimonies*, and hold the Bible in low esteem. They are young and old alike, and some are connected with church office. This group is guilty of making darkness light and light darkness, that call evil good and good evil, of putting bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

The class here represented, in order to exalt their own opinions, employ a reasoning which is not authorized by the Word of God. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling. By their specious reasoning, they confuse the distinction that God desires to have drawn between good and evil. The sacred is brought down on a level with common things. Avarice and selfishness are called by false names; they are called prudence. Their rising up in independence and rebellion, their revenge and stubbornness, in their eyes are proofs of dignity, evidences of a noble mind. They act as though ignorance of divine things were not dangerous and even fatal to the soul; and they prefer their won reasoning to divine revelation, their own plans and human wisdom to the admonitions and commands of God. The piety and conscientiousness of others are called fanaticism, and those who practise truth and holiness are watched and criticized. They deride those who teach and believe the mystery of godliness, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." The principles underlying these things are not discerned by them; and they go on in wrong-doing, leaving the bars open for Satan to find ready access to the soul. (4BC 1138:3).

Not all names that stand registered in the church books will at last appear in the Lamb's book of life. There are tares among the wheat. There are betrayers, accusers, traitors, in the camp. These will wound, misrepresent, and falsely accuse you. They are false brethren, meddlesome and indiscrete, stumbling blocks to others. They are doing a work for Satan far more successfully than if they were not connected with the church. Some who have not spiritual discernment will fail to distinguish between the false and the true, and will highly esteem those who have no connection with God. Those who have been indifferent and neglectful, and have failed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, will be deceived. They do not comprehend the first principles of doctrine and experience, which secure to man the perfection of Christian character.

Our duty, our safety, our happiness and usefulness, and our salvation, call upon us each to use the greatest diligence to secure the grace of Christ, to be so closely connected with God that we may discern spiritual things, and not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Those who are willing to be instructed will heed the counsels and warnings of the Spirit of God. The Lord gives these admonitions and reproofs in mercy. When his professed people move in blindness, yield to temptation, and lose their hold upon Him, He sends them a message of reproof, of warning, of counsel; if they refuse to be corrected, if they rise up in rebellion, and cast reproach upon the messenger whom he sends, they reject not the messenger, but the Lord. When the people refused to listen to the counsel of Samuel the prophet, the Lord said unto him, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me."

Some have a heart of unbelief, and in their self-confidence and self-deception they cannot see their errors. They are blind to their defects and their dangers. Did they see their sins and errors, and still continue in them, the Lord would give them up to blindness of mind and hardness of heart, to follow their own ways, and be ensnared and ruined. Anciently when any neglected or refused to heed the words of

reproof and warning sent them of God, His protection was removed from them, and they were left to be deceived and deluded to their own ruin. Only those who, with tears of contrition, listened to the voice of God and gave heed to the warning, escaped the tempter's snare. (RH 1/8/84).

When we find ourselves on the receiving end of ridicule, as we surely shall if we are faithful, we need to remember that Jesus, too, had to suffer such derision. The gospels tell us that when He went to raise Jairus' daughter from the dead and He told the mourners she was sleeping, "they laughed Him to scorn." (Matt. 9:24). But Jesus did not retaliate in kind. "Jesus has given us an example that we should follow in His steps, and manifest compassion and love and good-will toward all. (SD 144:2).

What if reproaches are heaped upon me, even by those who profess to be looking for the Lord?... Shall I complain, when Jesus bore the scoffs and derision of His own people?... No, I will not complain; I will rather rejoice and be exceeding glad that I am accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, that my reward may be in heaven. Only let me have an inheritance in glory, and it will be enough.... (SD 352:5).

Sister M met her tormenters with such an attitude, and God commended her for it.

When railing accusations and taunts more cruel than spears and arrows have fallen upon you, the influence of the Spirit of God upon your heart has led you to speak calmly, dispassionately. It was not in nature to do this. It was the fruit of the Spirit of God. It was the grace of God which strengthened your faith amid all the heartsicknesses of hope deferred. Grace fortified you for the warfare and hardships, and brought you through conqueror. Grace taught you to pray, to love and trust, notwithstanding your unfavorable surroundings. As you repeatedly realized that your prayers were answered in a special manner, you did not feel that it was because of any merit in yourself, but because of your great need. Your necessity was God's opportunity. Your life in those days of trial was to trust in God. And the manifestations of His special deliverance when in most trying places were like the oasis in the desert to the faint and weary traveler. (2T 270:1).

We must learn to shun those who are guilty of mockery and ridicule. We must not imitate them.

Nothing can more effectually prevent or banish serious impressions and good desires than association with vain, careless, and corrupt-minded persons. Whatever attractions such persons may possess by their wit, sarcasm, and fun, the fact that they treat religion with levity and indifference is sufficient reason why they should not be associated with. The more engaging they are in other respects, the more should their influence be dreaded as companions, because they throw around an irreligious life so many dangerous attractions. (3T 126:0).

The ungodly are those who do not love and obey the commandments of God, but go contrary to them. This is the class of counselors you are warned to shun,— the class which Satan uses to lead youth astray. Their counsel, their suggestions, are of a character to make light of sin, to ridicule righteousness.... They are represented as standing in the way of sinners, always leading them out of the straight path of duty and obedience to God's commandments into paths of disobedience. If it were not for those persons who do wrong and tempt others to do wrong, many sinners might have chosen the path of duty, the life of purity and godliness.

The fear of ridicule leads many a youth to yield to temptation and to walk in the way of the ungodly.

Jesus would not place Himself in peril to please the devil. But how many today can stand a dare? (SD 211:1-3).

I warn you to stand firm, and never do a wrong action rather than be called a coward. Allow no taunts, no threats, no sneering remarks, to induce you to violate your conscience in the least particular, and thus open a door whereby Satan can come in and control the mind. (FE 93:2).

True independence of mind is not stubbornness. It leads the youth to form their opinions on the word of God, irrespective of what others may say or do. If in the company of the unbelieving, the atheist, or the infidel, it leads them to acknowledge and defend their belief in the sacred truths of the gospel against the cavilings and witticisms of their ungodly associates. If they are with those who think it is a virtue to parade

the faults of professed Christians and then scoff at religion, morality, and virtue, real independence of mind will lead them courteously yet boldly to show that ridicule is a poor substitute for sound argument. It will enable them to look beyond the cavalier to the one who influences him, the adversary of God and man, and to resist him in the person of his agent. (FE 88:4).

We cannot allow their words of belittlement to bring us down to their level. "Let no bitter sneer rise in mind or heart. Let no scorn be manifest in the voice." (COL 250:2). We are to love and forgive the mockers and taunters. Unless they repent and turn from their evil way, their end is sure, but the meek shall inherit the earth.

The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. (Isa. 29:19-24).

Caviling, ridicule, and misrepresentation can be indulged in only at the expense of the debasement of your own souls. The use of such weapons does not gain precious victories for you, but rather cheapens the mind and separates the soul from God. Sacred things are brought down to the level of the common, and a condition of things is created that pleases the prince of darkness and grieves away the Spirit of God. Caviling and criticism leave the soul as devoid of the dew of grace as the hills of Gilboa were destitute of rain. Confidence cannot be placed in the judgement of those who indulge in ridicule and misrepresentation. No weight can be attached to their advice or resolutions. You must bear the divine credentials before you make decided movements to shape the working of God's cause. (TM 466:1).

If a brother comes to you seeking to make an investigation of a scripture which you view in a different light than he does:

Should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented in the light of God's word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us. (TM 107:2).

There are some who indulge in levity, sarcasm, and even mockery toward those who differ with them. Others present an array of objections to any new view; and when these objections are plainly answered by the words of Scripture, they do not acknowledge the evidence presented, nor allow themselves to be convinced. Their questioning is not for the purpose of arriving at truth, but is intended merely to confuse the minds of others. (TM 108:2).

It is not our place to sit in the seat of the scornful or stand in the way of sinners. Our delight is to be in the law of the Lord; herein we are to meditate day and night.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6:8).

A BAND OF MOURNERS, MOANERS, AND MURMURERS

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them, let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. (Ps. 5:11).

Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise. It is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings, – as much a duty as it is to pray. If we are heaven-bound, how can we go as a band of mourners, groaning and complaining all along the way to our Father's house? (MH 251:1).

Have you ever known some mournful Christians? the kind who are always in a blue mood, who are always bemoaning the latest trial they're having to bear? Everyone has met at least one such person, and some may be willing to admit that they themselves are part of such a mournful band. Jesus tells us to “rejoice and be exceeding glad;” Paul says we are to be “rejoicing in hope and “patient in tribulation.” (Matt. 5:12; Rom. 12:12). While it is true that there is a time to mourn, we are not here referring to sorrow for sin or the sadness of bereavement, but to complaining, doubting, murmuring, and self-pity. Paul suffered through trials and persecutions of every type, yet he says, “I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.” (2Cor. 7:4). Jesus had told him, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” And Paul replied, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2Cor. 12:9).

Is it such a fast as I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? (Isa. 58:5).

We have everything to be thankful for. Never ought Christians to move along like a band of mourners in a funeral train. God does not require this of His followers. He does not ask them to spread sackcloth and ashes under them. (4BC 1150:4).

The bright and cheerful side of our religion will be represented by all who are daily consecrated to God. We should not dishonor God by the mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. **All trials that are received as educators will produce joy.** The whole religious life will be uplifting, elevating, ennobling, fragrant with good words and works. The enemy is well pleased to have souls depressed, downcast, mourning and groaning; he wants just such impressions made as to the effect of our faith. But God designs that the mind shall take no low level. He desires every soul to triumph in the keeping power of the Redeemer. (6T 365-6, emphasis supplied).

Many do not receive trials as educators, but as brickbats, and, instead of doing a thorough self-examination to discover what heart work they need done, they choose to moan and groan about their trials. Even with such an example as Paul:

Many cherish the impression that spirituality and devotion to God are detrimental to health. There are many professing Christians with diseased imaginations who do not correctly represent the religion of the Bible. They are ever walking under a cloud. They seem to think it a virtue to complain of depression of spirits, great trials, and severe conflicts. The Saviour of men has said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” It is the duty of all to cherish the light, to walk in the light, and to encourage habitual cheerfulness of mind, that they may reflect light rather than shadows of gloom and darkness. (RH 3/12/72).

Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; he owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency. (COL 147:0).

I feel it would not be wise to put a wet blanket over her cheerful, happy disposition. Religion, Bible

religion, never makes a person painfully solemn. (3MR 405:2).

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory” (1Cor. 3:18). Now you see how important it is that we are beholding this. The enemy has come in and his dark shadow has been thrown athwart our pathway, so that we dwell on the dark side and talk of gloom until our way seems almost hopeless, and we stumble along without courage, hope or love. But we do not want this to be so. We want this shadow to be swept away, and it will be if we look beyond the darkened shadow to the brightness beyond in Christ Jesus.... (11MR 240:3).

Human nature uses feelings as the basis for the demeanor; for the words and actions of any given time. How often is our excuse for some action or inaction: “I felt like doing it,” or “I don't feel like doing it”? We wake up feeling lousy, so we act grumpy and complain and groan all day. If, upon rising, we will submit ourselves and our feelings to the Lord, He will take them, give us His spirit, and we will have no record of guilt for expressing feelings of doubt and discouragement to others.

All this is harming your own soul; for every word of doubt you utter is inviting Satan's temptations; it is strengthening in you the tendency to doubt, and it is grieving from you the ministering angels. When Satan tempts you, breathe not a word of doubt or darkness. If you choose to open the door to his suggestions, your mind will be filled with distrust and rebellious questioning. If you talk out your feelings, every doubt you express not only reacts upon yourself, but it is a seed that will germinate and bear fruit in the life of others, and it may be impossible to counteract the influence of your words. You yourself may be able to recover from the season of temptation and from the snare of Satan, but others who have been swayed by your influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief you have suggested. How important that we speak only those things that will give spiritual strength and life! (SC 119:1).

Come to God with all your needs. Don't go to others with your trials and temptations; God alone can help you. If you fulfill the conditions of God's promises, the promises will be fulfilled to you. If your mind is stayed upon God, you will not go from a state of ecstasy to the valley of despondency when trial and temptation come upon you. You will not say, “I do not know about this or that. I do not feel happy. I am not sure that we have the truth.” You will not do this, for you will have an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. When we talk discouragement and gloom, Satan listens with fiendish joy; for it pleases him to know that he has brought you into his bondage. (RH 2/27/13).

Some folks don't seem to have enough trouble for just today. They borrow from tomorrow and next week and even further into the future. They worry and fret about what's going to happen. Unwilling to realize and appreciate today's blessings, they let their imaginations conjure up all kinds of troublesome thoughts of what might be. They are restless, anxious, troubled, and constantly under a shadow of dark gloominess.

They cherish unbelief and ingratitude, in that they overlook the blessings right in their pathway. The common, everyday blessings of life are unwelcome to them, as was the manna to the children of Israel. (2T 640:1).

Are you a victim of an overactive imagination? Do you find yourself borrowing trouble from the future? Sister White tells us:

You commit sin and deny your Saviour by dwelling on gloomy things, by gathering trials to yourself, and by borrowing troubles. You bring the troubles of tomorrow into today, and embitter your own heart, and bring burdens and a cloud upon those around you, by manufacturing trials. The precious probationary time that God has given you in which to do good and become rich in good works you are very unwise to employ in thinking unhappy thoughts and in airy castle-building. You suffer your imagination to run upon subjects that will bring you no relief or happiness. Your daydreaming stands directly in the way of your obtaining a sound, healthy, intelligent experience in the things of God and a moral fitness for the better life. (3T 332:2).

If you are one who is tempted in this way, there is hope for you. You do not have to be enslaved to such thoughts and feelings.

You should not give up in despair, thinking you must live and die in the bondage of doubt and unbelief.

In the Lord we have righteousness and strength. Lean upon Him; and through His power you may quench all the fiery darts of the adversary and come off more than conqueror. (4T 213:3).

Put away your distrust of our heavenly Father. Instead of talking of your doubts, break away from them in the strength of Jesus, and let light shine into your soul by letting your voice express confidence and trust in God. I know that the Lord is very nigh to give you victory, and I say to you, Be helped, be strengthened, be lifted out of and away from the dark dungeon of unbelief. Doubts will rush into your mind, because Satan is trying to hold you in captivity to his cruel power; but face him in the strength that Jesus is willing to give you, and conquer the inclination to express unbelief in your Saviour.

Do not talk of your inefficiency and your defects. When despair would seem to be sweeping over your soul, look to Jesus, saying, He lives to make intercession for me. Forget the things that are behind, and believe the promise, "I will come to you," and "abide with you."

God is waiting to bestow the blessing of forgiveness, of pardon for iniquity, of the gifts of righteousness, upon all who will believe in His love and accept the salvation He offers. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners. This blood "cleanseth us from all sin." (TM 516-517).

Our Saviour was deeply serious and intensely in earnest, but never gloomy or morose. The life of those who imitate Him will be full of earnest purpose; they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. Levity will be repressed; there will be no boisterous merriment, no rude jesting; but the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of Joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness nor cloud the sunny, smiling face. Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister; and when His love reigns in the heart, we shall follow His example. (SC 120:4).

We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.... They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.... Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word: but murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord. (Ps. 106:6,16,24,25).

The one sin above all others of which Israel was guilty, and which brought upon them severe judgements from God, was murmuring and complaining. Though they were already guilty of this sin several times over, it was their reaction to the report of the unbelieving spies which brought the most stern punishment on them.

As the people listened to this report they gave vent to their disappointment with bitter reproaches and wailing. They did not wait and reflect and reason that God, who had brought them out thus far, would certainly give them the land. But they yielded to discouragement at once. They limited the power of the Holy One and trusted not in God, who had hitherto led them. They reproached Moses and murmuringly said to one another, This, then, is the end of all our hopes. This is the land that we have been traveling from Egypt to obtain. (SR 158:3).

The Israelites not only gave vent to their complaints against Moses but accused God Himself of dealing deceitfully with them by promising them a land which they were unable to possess. Their rebellious spirit here rose so high that, forgetful of the strong arm of Omnipotence which had brought them out of the land of Egypt and had thus far conducted them by a series of miracles, they resolved to choose a commander to lead them back to Egypt, where they had been slaves and had suffered so many hardships. They actually appointed a captain, thus discarding Moses, their patient, suffering leader; and they murmured bitterly against God. (SR 160:1).

As a result of this sin, they had to wander in the desert for forty years, and die one by one. Their children finally entered Canaan, but the murmurers were all dead and buried in the wilderness.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.... Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (1Cor. 10:6,10,11).

Those who feel at liberty to find fault with and censure those whom God has chosen to act an important part in this last great work would better seek to be converted and to obtain the mind of Christ. Let them remember the children of Israel who were so ready to find fault with Moses, whom God had ordained to lead His people to Canaan, and to murmur against even God Himself. All these murmurers fell in the wilderness. It is easy to rebel, easy to give battle before considering matters rationally, calmly, and settling whether there is anything to war against. The children of Israel are an example to us upon whom the ends of the world are come. (1T 527:1).

The most convincing evidence of the power of the gospel to the world is its effect on the lives of those who believe it. He who is a true Christian will represent Christ, and will cease from all murmuring or complaining of God, or of his fellow-men. Those who complain at the providences of God manifest weakness of faith, and show that they lack the knowledge of the character of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. (RH 6/5/94).

As Christians we must show we are evergreens, and we must bear the fruits of righteousness.

But is murmuring, complaining, and rebellion the fruit of the Christian tree? O no; it is the fruit of the heart unsanctified and unsubdued, that is swayed by impulse, the language of one has no regard for the feelings of those about him. By murmuring and complaint it is made manifest that his soul is not under the discipline of the Holy Spirit. Those who are full of murmuring and complaint against God and their fellow-men will have to be converted and transformed before they can enter the kingdom of heaven. It may be necessary that the furnace of trial be kindled and heated sevenfold to purge away the dross from the character, that the gold may come forth purified, refined, and stamped with the image of the Refiner. (RH 6/5/94).

Murmuring and complaining are rebellion against God, and the children of Israel were very guilty of such rebellion. According to the words of Paul and of Ellen White, we must exercise great care that we, the final generation, are not also guilty of rebelling in a like manner. We must guard our thoughts and feelings closely and keep our trust in our heavenly Parent.

We are nearing the end of time.... Everyone who truly loves God will have the spirit of Christ and a fervent love for his brethren. The more a person's heart is in communion with God, and the more his affections are centered in Christ, the less will he be disturbed by the roughness and hardships he meets in this life. Those who are growing up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, will become more and more like Christ in character, rising above the disposition to murmur and be discontented. They will despise to be faultfinders. (5T 484:2).

If Christ's words were received into the soul, there would be a much higher intelligence, and a much deeper spiritual knowledge of what constitutes one a disciple and a sincere follower of Christ. When the test and trial comes to every soul, there will be apostasies. Traitors, heady, highminded and self-sufficient men will turn away from the truth, making shipwreck of their faith. Why?— Because they did not dig deep, and make their foundation sure. They were not riveted to the eternal Rock. When the words of the Lord, through His chosen messengers, are brought to them, they murmur and think the way is made too strait. Like those who were thought to be the disciples of Christ, ut who were displeased by His words, and walked no more with Him, they will turn away from Christ. (FE 460:0).

The test will come to every one of us. Each one must decide to trust in God and go forward to victory, or murmur, complain, and rebel until we are left to follow wherever our unsanctified hearts will lead us.

God has shown me that He gave His people a bitter cup to drink, to purify and cleanse them. It is a bitter draught, and they can make it still more bitter by murmuring, complaining, and repining. But those who receive it thus must have another draught, for the first does not have its designed effect upon the heart. And if the second does not effect the work, then they must have another, and another, until it does have its designed effect, or they will be left filthy, impure in heart. I saw that this bitter cup can be sweetened by patience, endurance, and prayer, and that it will have its designed effect upon the hearts of those who thus receive it, and God will be honored and glorified, It is no small thing to be a Christian and to be owned and

approved of God. The Lord has shown me some who profess the present truth, whose lives do not correspond with their profession. They have the standard of piety altogether too low, and they come far short of Bible holiness. Some engage in vain and unbecoming conversation, and others give way to the risings of self. We must not expect to please ourselves, live and act like the world, have its pleasures, and enjoy the company of those who are of the world, and reign with Christ in glory. (EW 47:1).

If we have had the evil habit of murmuring and complaining, of distrusting and doubting God's mercies, we can be cleansed and become victors over this trait for "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Age doesn't matter; though you may be advanced in years, though you may have had a habit of murmuring and doubting for years, you have hope.

When persons have yielded to Satan's devices, and have thus placed themselves upon his ground, if they would then recover themselves from his snares through the mercy of God, they must come into close connection with Him, daily crucify self, and be thoroughly transformed, in order to gain the victory and win eternal life. You both went a long distance from God. You have brought great reproach upon His cause. Now you must be most zealously in earnest to overcome every defect in your characters and lead a life of humiliation and trusting, pleading prayer; in faith ask God for Christ's sake to cancel the past, so that the seeds of evil that you have sown may not be extended and be treasured up as wrath against the day of wrath. (4T 349:3).

Self is difficult to conquer. Human depravity in every form is not easily brought into subjection to the Spirit of Christ. But all should be impressed with the fact that unless this victory is gained through Christ, there is no hope for them. The victory can be gained; for nothing is impossible with God. By His assisting grace, all evil temper, all human depravity, may be overcome. Every Christian must learn of Christ, "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again." (4T 349:1).

We have this beautiful promise from *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 101:

If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with glad consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ, – the yoke of obedience and service, – all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved. (MB 101:3).

A few more words to church members. Said Christ: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." We are not to make crosses for ourselves, by wearing sackcloth, by pinching our bodies, or by denying ourselves wholesome, nourishing food. We are not to shut ourselves in monasteries, away from the world, and do no good to our fellow beings, thinking this is the cross of Christ; neither are we required to expose health and life unnecessarily, nor to go mourning up the hill of Christian life, feeling it a sin to be cheerful, contented, happy, and joyful. These are all self-made crosses, but not the cross of Christ. (4T 626:2).

While we were in Switzerland I had many letters from a sister whom I dearly love and highly esteem. In every one of these letters were the most gloomy pictures. She seemed to be dwelling on everything objectionable. Soon after I received these letters I prayed the Lord that He would give her help to turn her mind from the channel that it was running in. That night I had a dream presented to me three times. I was walking in a beautiful garden, and Sister Martha _____ was by my side. As soon as she came into the garden I said, "Martha, do you not see this beautiful garden? See, here are the lilies, the roses, and the pinks." "Yes," she said, as she looked up and smiled. Soon I looked to see where she was. I was looking at the lilies, the roses, and the pinks, and did not see her. She was in another part of the garden, and was grasping a thistle. Then she was pricking her hands on the brambles. She said they hurt her hands, and she asked, "Why do they keep all these thistles and these briars in the garden? Why do they let them stay here?"

Then there appeared before us a tall, dignified man who said, "Gather the roses, the lilies, and the pinks; discard the brambles and touch them not." Then I awoke, and when I went to sleep I dreamed the very same thing again. Three times I had the same dream, and I arose – because I could not sleep – and wrote to Sister

Martha the dream I had had.

Now, said I, God does not want you to gather up everything objectionable; He wants you to look at His wonderful works and at His purity. He wants you to take a view of His matchless love and His power, to look up through the beauties of nature to nature's God. Said I, This [dream] represents your case exactly. You are dwelling on the dark side. You are talking of those things that give no light and bring no joy into your life. But you must turn your mind from these things to God. There are enough roses, pinks, and lilies in the garden of God's love so that you need not look at the briars, the thistles, and the brambles. Now, I did not see these things, because I was delighting myself with the flowers and all the beauties of the garden. (1888 Ma 77:1-3).

Our physical as well as our spiritual health is dependent on our attitude. Thoughts and feelings lead to words which lead to more thoughts and feelings. Whatever affects the mind, also affects the body. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." (Prov. 17:22).

Love for God is essential for life and health.... In order to have perfect health, our hearts must be filled with love, and hope, and joy. (3MR 329:2).

A gloomy attitude has just the opposite effect.

Sadness deadens the circulation in the blood vessels and nerves, and also retards the action of the liver. It hinders the process of digestion and of nutrition, and has a tendency to dry up the marrow of the whole system.... Mental depression causes dyspepsia, and this aggravates the mental disorder, and unless you can be induced through change of some kind to be attracted away from yourself and from your complaints, you will cut short your life, and while you do live be unable to think healthfully and to work healthfully. Your imagination will be diseased; you take for reality impressions in which there is no truth and for which there is no foundation. You have been alone too much and yet you choose this rather than to be connected with others. If you had now some very light physical employment it would divert your thoughts from your self and be of great advantage to you. (3MR 337:3 and 318:1).

The effects of some emotions present a more immediate threat to life and health.

The giving way to violent emotions endangers life. Many die under a burst of rage and passion. Many educate themselves to have spasms. These they can prevent if they will, but it requires will power to overcome a wrong course of action. All this must be a part of the education received in the school; for we are God's property. The sacred temple of the body must be kept pure and uncontaminated, that God's Holy Spirit may dwell therein. (3MR 322:2).

God would be recognized as the author of our being. That life He has given us is not to be trifled with. Recklessness in the bodily habits reveals a recklessness of moral character.

The health of the body is be regarded as essential for the advancement of growth in grace, an even temper. If food is given to the stomach which will prove a tax to it, it will surely result in perverting the finer feelings of the heart. The stomach has a controlling influence upon the whole being, and has everything to do with the health of the whole body. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of a moral character will be hindered.... Erroneous eating and drinking will result in erroneous thinking and acting.... Those who choose to be presumptuous, saying, "The Lord has healed me, and I need not restrict my diet, I can eat and drink as I please," will ere long need, in body and soul, the restoring power of God. (5MR 360:3,4).

Our words and emotions can have adverse effects not only on our own health, but on the health and well being of others also.

Sister Magan worked with her husband, struggling with him, and praying that he might be sustained. She did not think of herself but of him. And God did sustain them, as they walked in the light. From her small store of money, Sister Magan gave five hundred dollars, to erect the Memorial Hall. She strove untiringly to maintain a perfect home government, teaching and educating her children in the fear of God. Twice she had to nurse her husband through an attack of fever.

But it seemed to her as if some of our brethren had not a heart of flesh. After the General Conference in Oakland, a report was circulated that Sister White has turned against Brother Magan. There was not a word of truth in this statement. But his poor wife, who had toiled and sacrificed and prayed with him, was informed that Sister White had taken a stand against her husband. O, why did ever anyone say such a thing? Sister White never turned against Brother Magan or against Brother Sutherland. But Sister Magan was so weighted down with sorrow that she lost her reason. Sister Magan was so weighed with sorrow that she lost her reason.

I ask, Who, in the day of judgement, will be held responsible for putting out the light of that mind, that should be shining today? Who will be accountable in the day of God for the work that caused the distress which brought on this sickness? She suffered for months, and the husband suffered with her. And now the poor woman has gone, leaving two motherless children. All this, because of the work done by unsanctified tongues. (SPM 352:4-6).

How great is our responsibility to set a watch over our lips and put a bridle on our unruly tongues.

The body is a most important medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here often means the surrender of the whole being to evil. The tendencies of the physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death. The body is to be brought into subjection to the higher powers of the being. The passions are to be controlled by the will, which is itself to be under the control of God. The kingly power of reason, sanctified by divine grace, is to bear sway in the life. Intellectual power, physical stamina, and the length of life depend upon immutable laws. Through obedience to these laws, man may stand conqueror or himself, conqueror of his own inclinations, conqueror of principalities and powers, of "the rulers of the darkness of this world," and of "spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12. (PK 488:4).

Courage, hope faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul. (MH 241:3).

My brother, you need a daily baptism of brotherly love, love that will not savor of dissension, but love like that which in the days of the apostles made the whole company of disciples of one accord. This will have a telling influence upon others. It will bring health to mind, body, and soul. It will bless others, molding the characters of children and youth; for joy, peace, courage, hope, and divine charity have power to propagate themselves. These attributes have their influence upon human minds, and especially upon the mind of children and youth, transforming and assimilating their young, impressionable minds and hearts by divine grace. (1888 Ma 1155:2).

Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here....

There is a divinely appointed connection between sin and disease. No physician can practice for a month without seeing this illustrated. He may ignore the fact; his mind may be so occupied with other matters that his attention will not be called to it; but if he will be observing and honest he cannot help acknowledge that sin and disease bear to each other the relationship of cause and effect. The physician should be quick to see this and to act accordingly. When he has gained the confidence of the afflicted by relieving their sufferings and bringing them back from the verge of the grave he may teach them that disease is the result of sin and that it is the fallen foe who seeks to allure them to health-and-soul-destroying practices. He may impress their minds with the necessity of denying self and obeying the laws of life and health. In the minds of the young especially he may instill right principles. God loves His creatures with a love that is both tender and strong. He has established the laws of nature, but His laws are not arbitrary exactions. Every "Thou shalt not," whether in physical or moral law, contains or implies a promise. If it is obeyed, blessings will attend our steps; if it is disobeyed, the result is danger and unhappiness. The laws of God are designed to bring His people closer to Himself. He will save them from the evil and lead them to the good if they will be led, but force them He never will. We cannot discern God's plans, but we must trust Him and show our faith by our works. (5T 444:0,2).

Love's agencies have wonderful power, for they are divine. The soft answer that “turneth away wrath,” the love that “suffereth long, and is kind,” the charity that “covereth a multitude of sins” (Prov. 15:1; 1Cor. 13:4,R.V.; 1Pet. 4:8,R.V.)— would we learn the lesson, with what power for healing would our lives be gifted! How life would be transformed, and the earth become a very likeness and foretaste of heaven. (Ed 114:1).

LYING AND DECEPTION

Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually. Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah

Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. God shall likewise destroy thee forever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him: Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in riches and strengthened himself in wickedness. (Ps. 52:1-7).

A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome and cometh to shame. (Prov. 13:5).

Thou shalt not bear false witness. (Ex. 20:16).

False speaking in any manner, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment. (PP 309:3).

And he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? (Luke 10:29).

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. (COL 386:2).

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads.... And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. (Rev. 14:1,5).

For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and *whosoever loveth and maketh a lie*. (Rev. 22:15).

Very soon the one-hundred and forty-four-thousand will be made up and there will be nothing about them in their words or their actions or their thoughts that so much as hints at deception. Right now we must be removing all intimations of falsehood from our lives for "God despises misrepresentation and prevarication." "Falsehood and deception of every cast is sin against the God of truth and verity." "Christ hates all vain pretense." "The Lord hates all deception, secrecy, and guile." (Ev 132:2; 4T 336:1; 615:0; TM 274:1).

No man who does not utter the real sentiment of his heart can be called a truthful man. Falsehood virtually consists in an intention to deceive; and this may be shown by a look or a word. Even facts may be so arranged and stated as to constitute falsehoods. Some are adepts at this business, and they will seek to justify themselves for departing from strict veracity. There are some who, in order to tear down or injure the reputation of another, will, from sheer malice, fabricate falsehoods concerning them. Lies of self-interest are uttered in buying and selling goods, cattle, or any kind of merchandise. Lies of vanity are uttered by men who love to appear what they are not. A story cannot pass through their hands without embellishment. Oh, how much is done in the world which the doers will one day wish to undo! But the record of words and deeds in the books of heaven will tell the sad story of falsehoods spoken and acted. (4T 335:3).

Do you remember we learned in the chapter on cosmetics that wearing make-up, dying the hair, or using devices to change our figures for the purpose of vanity is deception – an attempt on our part to make others believe that we are something which we are not? Now we find that even the gestures we make with our hands or the expression of our

face, when intended to give a false impression or even just exaggerate the truth a little, is a deception – a lie. Such things as “deceptive compliments, the evasions of truth, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade,” are all of the cloth of deception and falsehood. (Ed 236:1). Even the entire life and profession can be a falsehood.

Though church members, they are unconverted. They may take part in the church service, they may chant the psalm, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God” (Ps. 42:1); but they testify to a falsehood. (COL 270:0).

“A mere profession of discipleship is of no value.” (MB 146:2). They may have been rooted and grounded in the faith at one time, but have lost their hold on Jesus.

The faithfulness for the past year will never atone for the neglect of the present year. A man's truthfulness yesterday will not atone for his falsehood today. (5T 63:3).

The lives of professing Christians who do not live the Christ life are a mockery to religion. Everyone whose name is registered on the church roll is under obligation to represent Christ by revealing the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit. They are to be His witnesses, making known the advantages of walking and working as Christ has given them example. The truth for this time is to appear in its power in the lives of those who believe it, and is to be imparted to the world. Believers are to represent in their lives its power to sanctify and ennoble....

There must be no pretense in the lives of those who have so sacred and solemn a message as we have been called to bear. The world is watching Seventh-day Adventists because it knows something of their profession of faith and of their high standard, and when it sees those who so not live up to their profession, it points at them with scorn. (9T 22-23).

There is absolutely no safeguard against evil but truth. No man can stand firm for right in whose heart the truth does not abide. There is only one power that can make and keep us steadfast – the power of God, imparted to us through the grace of Christ. (HP 179:4).

There are no circumstances, no emergencies, in which we are excused for telling a lie, for “lying lips are an abomination to” God. (AA 76).

Even life itself should not be purchased with the price of falsehood. By a word or a nod the martyrs might have denied the truth and saved their lives. By consenting to cast a single grain of incense upon the idol altar they might have been saved from the rack, the scaffold, or the cross. But they refused to be false in word or deed, though life was the boon they would receive by so doing. Imprisonment, torture, and death, with a clear conscience, were welcomed by them, rather than deliverance on condition of deception, falsehood, and apostasy. By fidelity and faith in Christ they earned spotless robes and jeweled crowns. Their lives were ennobled and elevated in the sight of God because they stood firmly for the truth under the most aggravated circumstances. (4T 336:2).

Satan is a liar and the father of lies. He brought sin into this world by deceiving – lying to – Adam and Eve. As we move into the last moments of time, he is working harder and more fiercely to deceive.

He will misrepresent, misapply, and pervert everything he possibly can, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Even in our day there have been and will continue to be entire families who have once rejoiced in the truth, but who will lose faith because of calumnies and falsehoods brought to them in regard to those whom they have loved and with whom they have had sweet counsel. They opened their hearts to the sowing of tares; the tares sprang up among the wheat; they strengthened; the crop of wheat became less and less; and the precious truth lost its power to them. For a time a false zeal accompanied their new theories, which hardened their hearts against the advocates of truth as did the Jews against Christ. (TM 411:2).

Today, within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, these things are clearly being seen and felt. Many members are following after the churches of Babylon and going into apostasy while others are entering the fires of fanaticism. They have opened their hearts to the sowing of tares.

There are but two parties. Satan works with his crooked, deceiving power, and through strong delusions he catches all who do not abide in the truth, who have turned away their ears from the truth and have turned

unto fables. Satan himself abode not in the truth; he is the mystery of iniquity. Through his subtlety he gives to his soul-destroying errors the appearance of truth. Herein is their power to deceive. It is because they are a counterfeit of the truth that spiritualism, theosophy, and the like deceptions gain such power over the minds of men. Herein is the masterly working of Satan. He pretends to be the savior of man, the benefactor of the human race, and thus he more readily lures his victims to destruction. (TM 365:2).

The prophet Jeremiah, who lived to see the first destruction of Jerusalem, wrote of the great apostasy and the deceptions that were among God's chosen people. He called them all "treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed everyone of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders. And they deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord." (Jer. 9:2-6).

A supplanter is a heel-grabber like Jacob's son Dan. "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. (Gen. 49:17). He is a backbiter and a deceiver.

A glance, a word, even an intonation of the voice, may be vital with falsehood, sinking like a barbed arrow into some heart, inflicting an incurable wound. Thus a doubt, a reproach, may be cast upon one by whom God would accomplish a good work, and his influence is blighted, his usefulness destroyed. Among some species of animals, if one of their number is wounded and falls, he is at once set upon and torn in pieces by his fellows. The same cruel spirit is indulged by men and women who bear the name of Christians. They manifest a pharisaical zeal to stone others less guilty than themselves. There are some who point to others' faults and failures to divert attention from their own, or to gain credit for great zeal for God and the church. (5T 59:1).

The Bible condemns in the strongest terms all falsehood, false dealing, and dishonesty. Right and wrong are plainly stated. But I was shown that God's people have placed themselves on the enemy's ground; they have yielded to his temptations and followed his devices until their sensibilities have become fearfully blunted. A slight deviation from truth, a little variation from the requirements of God, is thought to be, after all, not so very sinful, when pecuniary gain or loss is involved. But sin is sin, whether committed by the possessor of millions or by the beggar in the streets. Those who secure property by false representations are bringing condemnation on their souls. All that is obtained by deceit and fraud will be only a curse to the receiver. (4T 311:3).

Satan is constantly presenting inducements to God's chosen people to attract their minds from the solemn work of preparation for the scenes just in the future. He is in every sense of the word a deceiver, a skillful charmer. He clothes his plans and snares with coverings of light borrowed from heaven. He tempted Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit by making her believe that she would be greatly advantaged thereby. Satan leads his agents to introduce various inventions and patent rights and other enterprises, that Sabbathkeeping Adventists who are in haste to be rich may fall into temptation, become ensnared, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. He is wide awake, busily engaged in leading the world captive, and through the agency of worldlings he keeps up a continual pleasing excitement to draw the unwary who profess to believe the truth to unite with worldlings. The lust of the eye, the desire for excitement and pleasing entertainment, is a temptation and snare to God's people. Satan has many finely woven, dangerous nets which are made to appear innocent, but with which he is skillfully preparing to infatuate God's people. There are pleasing shows, entertainments, phrenological lectures, and an endless variety of enterprises constantly arising calculated to lead the people of God to love the world and the things that are in the world. Through this union with the world, faith becomes weakened, and means which should be invested in the cause of present truth are transferred to the enemy's ranks. Through these different channels Satan is skillfully draining the purses of God's people, and for it the displeasure of the Lord is upon them. (1T 550:3).

Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan; and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Yet it is not a light or an easy thing to speak the

exact truth. We cannot speak the truth unless we know the truth; and how often preconceived opinions, mental bias, imperfect knowledge, errors of judgement, prevent a right understanding of matters with which we have to do! We cannot speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth. (MB 68:3).

When we get down on our knees in secret prayer, which is absolutely vital to our salvation, we can ask God to show us what in our words, our movements and gestures, our expressions, may be deceptive. He will show us, for He has promised the Holy Spirit to teach us all things and bring all things to our remembrance. To be sealed with the seal of the Living God, we must be perfect as He is perfect and His grace is amply sufficient. He says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with Mine eye." (Ps. 32:8). If we let God lead and guide us we cannot go astray, we will not be deceived by Satan, we will not lead others astray. We will be with the redeemed in the New Jerusalem.

PRAISE, FLATTERY, AND BRAGGING RIGHTS

He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips. (Prov. 20:19). He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favor than he that flattereth with the tongue. (Prov. 28:23). A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet. (Prov. 29:5).

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! (James 3:5).

There is in the carnal heart the desire to be praised, flattered, and complimented. It makes us feel good about ourselves, it boosts our self-esteem, – in other words, our pride. Not only do we want to receive it from others, we give it to ourselves in boasting and bragging. Sometimes in honest sincerity and sometimes in self-seeking, we also praise others. Is there ever a time and place for the praise of men? Are we never to pay a compliment to another person? Is there a difference between praise, compliments, and flattery? We need to go to Inspiration to find the answers to these questions.

I have been shown that great caution should be used, even when it is necessary to lift a burden of oppression from men and women, lest they lean to their own wisdom and fail to make God their only dependence. It is not safe to speak in praise of persons or to exalt the ability of a minister of Christ. In the day of God, very many will be weighed in the balance and found wanting because of exaltation. I would warn my brethren and sisters never to flatter persons because of their ability, for they cannot bear it. Self is easily exalted, and, in consequence, persons lose their balance. I say again to my brethren and sisters: *If you would have your souls clean from the blood of men, never flatter, never praise the efforts of poor mortals; for it may prove their ruin.* It is unsafe, by our words and actions, to exalt a brother or sister, however apparently humble may be his or her deportment. If they really possess the meek and lowly spirit which God so highly esteems, help them to retain it. This will not be done by censuring them nor by neglecting to properly appreciate their true worth. But there are few who can bear praise without being injured. (3T 185:1, emphasis supplied).

We are in the greatest peril when we receive praise of one another, when we enter into a confederacy to exalt one another. The great burden of the Pharisees was to secure the praise of men; and Christ told them that that was all the reward they would ever receive. (5T 133:2).

Even those praises we call compliments are a form of flattery meant to appeal to our vanity. They can be offered in genuine sincerity, with little or no thought of causing harm to the hearer. “Flattery is a part of the world's policy, but it is no part of Christ's policy.” (FE 304:2). “No one is authorized to deal out to the soul this delusive intoxicant of Satan.” (Ibid 305:0). An intoxicant is a substance which causes drunkenness, or an altered state of mind. Just as there are very few who can drink alcohol and not get drunk, there are very few who can be flattered or praised without the same results. “Stay yourselves and wonder; cry ye out, and cry; they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.” (Isa. 29:9). The Bible curses any man who puts the bottle to his neighbor's lips; can we escape a similar curse if we intoxicate our neighbor with flattery and praise?

We need to shun everything that would encourage pride and self-sufficiency; therefore we should beware of giving or receiving flattery or praise. It is Satan's work to flatter. He deals in flattery as well as in accusing and condemnation. Thus he seeks to work the ruin of the soul. Those who give praise to men are used by Satan as his agents. Let the workers for Christ direct every word of praise away from themselves. Let self be put out of sight. Christ alone is to be exalted. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,” let every eye be directed, and praise from every heart ascend. (Rev. 1:5). [(COL 161:2).]

What are we to do when someone praises us? We are to “direct every word of praise away from” ourselves, and toward Christ. If you are gifted in areas such as music or art, and you receive compliments on these gifts turn these praises to God by expressing thankfulness to Him who blessed you with such talents that you can use for His glory.

If you are complimented on your clothing, express your gratitude to God for providing for your needs. Direct them to the promise in Matthew 6:31-33 that tells us God is cognizant of our temporal needs and has promised to supply them. If it's your children who are the objects of praise, express gratitude to God for the arrows He has placed in your quiver and for the promises He has made to help faithful parents to nurture their children in the Lord. Afterward you may want to ask God for an extra supply of strength to resist being harmed by the flattery and praise. Ask Him to renew your mind that your thoughts will be kept on Him.

In self-love, self-exaltation, and pride there is great weakness; but in humility there is great strength. Our true dignity is not maintained when we think most of ourselves, but when God is in all our thoughts and our hearts are all aglow with love to our Redeemer and love to our fellow men. Simplicity of character and lowliness of heart will give happiness, while self-conceit will bring discontent, repining, and continual disappointment. It is learning to think less of ourselves and more of making others happy that will bring to us divine strength. (3T 476:3).

Loose thoughts must be gathered up and centered on God. The very thoughts should be in obedience to the will of God. Praise should not be given or expected; for this will have a tendency to foster self-confidence rather than to increase humility, to corrupt rather than to purify. Men who are really qualified and who feel that they have a part to act in connection with the work of God will feel pressed beneath the sense of the sacredness of the work, as a cart beneath sheaves. Now is the time to make the most earnest efforts to overcome the natural feelings of the carnal heart. (3T 474:2).

While we are not to praise and flatter, neither are we to censure and criticize. For every soul an invaluable price has been paid. We are to value each person as the property of God and encourage them to use their talents and gifts in God's service. We should feel privileged to honor God with our talents and expect to receive no accolades from our fellowmen when we do so. Our treasure is in heaven, and our reward comes from God, not from men.

The way of the world is to begin with pomp and boasting. God's way is to make the day of small things the beginning of the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness. (PK 595:1).

The language of the meek is never that of boasting. (SL 15:1).

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (Matt. 5:5).

We forget that lowliness of mind is power.... Pride and self-importance, when compared with lowliness and humility, are indeed weakness. We are invited to learn of Him who was meek and lowly of heart; then we shall experience that rest and peace so much to be desired. (3T 477:1).

Many souls have been ruined or nearly ruined by well-meaning people who have flattered them and boasted of their abilities to others. "Flattery is an art by which Satan lieth in wait to deceive and to puff up the human agent with high thoughts of himself.... Flattery is a part of the world's policy, but it is no part of Christ's policy." (SD 73). Through flattery, people, especially the young, begin to think highly of themselves and their talents and abilities; they become proud and God must then bring them into strait places, that they might be humbled and see their hearts as heaven sees them.

He is permitted to make some decided blunder and is plunged into painful humiliation. But when he is writhing under a sense of his own weakness, he is not to be judged harshly. This is the time above all others when he needs a judicious counselor, a true friend, who has discernment of character. This is the time when he needs a friend who is led by the Spirit of God, and who will deal patiently and faithfully with the erring, and lift up the soul that is bowed down. (FE 304-5).

At this time he does not need more flattery nor does he need censure. He needs someone to love him in a Christlike manner, who will point out to him his weakness and lead him to the Saviour. He needs to climb the ladder that will take him heavenward one rung at a time.

We must beware of the so-called love which led to the petted on's downfall in the first place.

There is an element called love which would teach us to praise and flatter our associates, and not to faithfully tell them of their dangers and warn and counsel them for their good. This love is not Heaven-born. Our words and actions should be serious and earnest, especially before those who are neglecting their

soul's salvation. If we profess to be sons and daughters of God, we should pursue such a course toward the unbelieving that our souls will be clear of their blood when we meet them in the great day of final reckoning. If we unite with them in lightness, trifling, pleasure-seeking, or in any pursuit which will banish seriousness from the mind, we are constantly saying to them by our example, "Peace, peace; be not disturbed. You have no cause for alarm." This is saying to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee." (RH 1/8/84).

We must also beware of flattery and praise of men and women through the written word. All of our publications must be free of accolades, honors, and prizes heaped upon groups or individuals by other groups and/or individuals.

In the night I was earnestly addressing those who are bearing responsibilities of editors and contributors of our periodicals.... If those in charge of our periodicals have no more judgement than to fill the publications with the exaltations of human beings, then let them seek wisdom from God. Your spiritual eyesight needs the heavenly anointing.... In pouring forth an overflow of praise of one whom they do not know, who has not accepted a "Thus saith the Lord" in keeping His commandments, they place themselves where, in the crisis coming upon us, they will have defective discernment as they shall see the good things done by those who will seek to deceive, who will claim to be Christ and prophets sent of God. (CW 98:2).

There is another form of flattery which carries with it a special set of dangers. Praise and adulation from one person to a member of the opposite sex is especially abhorrent to God and is equated with idolatry. If the recipient of your adoration is not your spouse, you are treading on very dangerous ground. Many illicit affairs have begun in just such a manner. Men must beware of women who tempt them with flattery, with the desire to talk of private things.

Allow no one to praise or flatter you, or to cling to your hand as if loath to let it go. Be afraid of every such demonstration. When young or even married persons show a disposition to open their family secrets to you, beware. When they express a desire for sympathy, know that it is time to exercise great caution. Those who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ and who are walking with God will have no unholy pining for sympathy. They have a companionship that satisfies every desire of the mind and heart. Married men who accept the attention, the praise and petting, of women should be assured that the love and sympathy of this class are not worth the obtaining. (5T 596:1).

Women are likewise warned to beware of undue attention from men:

I was compelled to hear the words spoken by some men to women and girls – words of flattery, words that would deceive and infatuate. Satan uses all these means to destroy souls. Some of you may thus have been his agents; and if so, you will have to meet these things in the judgement. The angel said of this class: "Their hearts have never been given to God. Christ is not in them. Truth is not there. Its place is occupied by sin, deception, and falsehood. The word of God is not believed and acted upon." (5T 536:2).

These exchanges cater to the lustful, lower passions of the carnal nature. Such words used to praise another human are to be reserved for God. These cautions are given with special emphasis to the ministers.¹

When men have taken upon themselves the vows of consecration, to devote all their powers to the sacred service of God; when they occupy the position of expositors of Bible truth, and have received the solemn charge; when God and angels are summoned as witnesses to the solemn dedication of soul, body, and spirit to God's service— then shall these men who minister in a most holy office desecrate their God-given powers to unholy purposes? Shall the sacred vessel, whom God is to use for a high and holy work, be dragged from its lofty, controlling sphere to administer to debasing lust? Is not this idol worship of the most degrading kind?— the lips uttering praises and adoring a sinful human being, pouring forth expressions of ravishing tenderness and adulation which belong alone to God— the powers given to God in solemn consecration administering to a harlot; for any woman who will allow the addresses of another man than her husband, who will listen to his advances, and whose ears will be pleased with the outpouring of lavish words of affection, of adoration, of endearment, is an adulteress and a harlot. (TM 434:1).

¹ For a further discussion of this subject, see the chapter "Proper Department for Men and Women", sub-heading "Ministers" in *Section Three: Department*.

You will sometimes be flattered by men, but more frequently by women. Especially when you present the truth in new fields, will you meet persons who will engage in this wicked flattery. As a servant of Christ, despise the flattery; shun it as you would a venomous serpent. Rebuke the woman who will praise your smartness, holding your hand as long as she can retain it in her own. Have little to say to persons of this class; for they are the agents of Satan, and carry out his plans by laying bewitching snares to beguile you from the path of holiness. Every sensible Christian lady will act a modest part; she will understand the devices of Satan, and will not be a co-laborer with him. (Ev 679:2).

It is the natural heart's love of praise that leads men and women to listen to adulation from others, and even to seek for such praise.

Elijah humbled himself until he was in a condition where he would not take the glory to himself. This is the condition upon which the Lord hears prayer, for then we shall give the praise to him. The custom of offering praise to men is one that results in great evil. One praises another, and thus men are led to feel that glory and honor belong to them. When you exalt man, you lay a snare for his soul, and do just as Satan would have you. You should praise God with all your heart, soul, might, mind, and strength; for God alone is worthy to be glorified. If we should realize that our salvation cost the infinite price of the life of the Son of God, we should have more humble views of self. Our Saviour knew that there was no hope of redemption for us except through him, and he came to the world to be wounded for our transgressions, to be bruised for our iniquities, to bear our chastisement, that through his stripes we might be healed. (RH 3/27/13).

The love of praise has corrupted many hearts. Those who have been connected with the Health Institute have at times manifested a spirit of finding fault with the plans laid, and Satan has given them a hold upon the minds of others there who have accepted these persons as blameless while innocent persons have been charged with wrong. It is a wicked pride that delights in the vanity of one's own works, that boasts of one's excellent qualities, seeking to make others seem inferior in order to exalt self, claiming more glory than the cold heart is willing to give to God. The disciples of Christ will heed the Master's instruction. He has bidden us love one another even as He has loved us. Religion is founded upon love to God, which also leads us to love one another. It is full of gratitude, humility, long-suffering. It is self-sacrificing, forbearing, merciful, and forgiving. It sanctifies the whole life and extends its influence over others. (4T 223:1).

This love will govern our impulses; it will subdue our natural tendencies, and we will be able to gain the victory over our love of praise. We will then willingly lift our burdens and do our share of work in the vineyard without seeking the applause of men nor boasting of our achievements. The harvest is nearly ready and the work which must be done now requires men and women who are willing to sacrifice all for God.

There are those who will stand back when burdens are to be borne; but when the church is all aglow, they catch the enthusiasm, sing and shout, and become rapturous; but watch them. When the fervor is gone, only a few faithful Calebs will come to the front and display unwavering principle. These will not be talking self, vindicating self, but will lose their identity in Jesus Christ. To be great in God's kingdom is to be a little child in humility, in simplicity of faith, and in the purity of love. All pride must perish, all jealousy be overcome, all ambition for supremacy be given up, and the meekness and trust of the child encouraged. All such will find Christ their rock of defense, their strong tower. In Him they may trust implicitly, and He will never fail them. (5T 130:1)

We are now to be giving the trumpet a certain sound, but that trumpet is not our own horn. We are not to imitate the Pharisees. "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward." (Matt. 6:2). The Pharisees were fond of boasting for they loved the praise of men. But "all boasting of merit in ourselves is out of place." (COL 401:1).

Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually. Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. (Ps. 52:1-5).

We've been talking about the tongue and the fires of hell it starts, though it is just a little thing. Though it is little, James says, it boasts of great things. We really have nothing to brag about. God says we are full of putrefying sores from the top of our head to the soles of our feet, all our righteousness is like filthy rags, and without Him we can do nothing. Though we may have accomplished great things for God, we are never to brag about it. "Do not boast of what you have done in the past, but show what you can do now. Let your works and not your words praise you." (2SM 220:0). "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." (Prov. 27:2). Whatever our current work for God, we must not brag of it, anymore than of past work. "When you return from doing missionary work, do not praise yourself, but exalt Jesus; lift up the cross of Calvary." (5T 596:1).

Nothing will so quickly and decidedly separate the soul from God and bring defeat, as for man to lift up his soul unto vanity and speak proudly and boastingly, and in a masterly manner to his fellowmen, who are the property of God. "Ye are not your own; ...ye are bought with a price," even the precious blood of the Son of God. The Lord alone is to be exalted. Let every human agent keep in his place and not seek to get into the place where God should be. There has been altogether too much trusting in men. (TM 319:3).

When we have the meekness and humility of Christ, we will not seek to exalt self.

The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God and a submission of the will to His. The understanding grasps every divine truth, and the will bows to every divine precept, without doubting or murmuring. True meekness softens and subdues the heart and gives the mind a fitness for the engrafted word of God, as Lydia's was opened. It places us with Mary, as learners at the feet of Jesus. "The meek will he guide in judgement: and the meek will he teach his way" (Ps. 25:9). [SL 14:2].

Humility is a characteristic of those who have true wisdom, and no matter what may be their attainments, they will not be self-confident and boastful. (CSW 13:1).

All human ambition, all boasting, is to be laid in the dust. Self, sinful self, is to be abased, not exalted. By holiness in the daily life we are to reveal Christ to those around us. Corrupt human nature is to be subdued, not exalted. Thus only can we become pure and undefiled. We are to be humble, faithful men and women. Never are we to sit upon the judgement seat. God demands that His representatives shall be pure and holy, revealing the beauty of sanctification. The channel is always to remain unobstructed, that the Holy Spirit may have free course; otherwise some will gloss over the work that must be done in the natural heart in order to perfect Christian character; and they will present their own imperfections in such a way as to make of no effect God's truth, which is as steadfast as the eternal throne. And while God calls upon His watchmen to lift the danger signal, at the same time He presents before them the life of the Saviour as an example of what they must be and do in order to be saved. (8T 234:2).

We must be especially wary of boasting of our spiritual attainments. Man does not see as God sees, for God looks at the heart. Unless we are guided by the Holy Spirit, we can be self-deceived as to our own defects of character, and believe we are in better spiritual health than we actually are.

The nearer we come to Jesus and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly we shall discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the less we shall feel like exalting ourselves. Those whom heaven recognizes as holy ones are the last to parade their own goodness. (COL 160:1).

Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up or as if the staff should lift up itself if it were no wood. (Isa. 10:15).

Oh, how many flatter themselves that they have goodness and righteousness, when the true light of God reveals that all their lives they have only lived to please themselves! Their whole conduct is abhorred of God. How many are alive without the law! In their gross darkness they view themselves with complacency; but let the law of God be revealed to their consciences, as it was to Paul, and they would see that they are sold under sin and must die to the carnal mind. Self must be slain. (3T 475:1).

By their good works, Christ's followers are to bring glory, not to themselves, but to Him through whose grace and power they have wrought. It is through the Holy Spirit, that every good work is accomplished,

and the Spirit is given to glorify, not the receiver, but the Giver. When the light of Christ is shining in the soul, your benevolence, your self-denial, will not be the theme of your thought or conversation. Jesus will be magnified, self will be hidden, and Christ will appear as all in all. (MB 80:5).

There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and this thought will lead them to self-abasement. Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour. (GC 471:2).

If we ever reach heaven, it will be by linking our souls to Christ, leaning upon Him, and cutting loose from the world, its follies and enchantments. There must be on our part a spiritual co-operation with the heavenly intelligences. We must believe and work and pray and watch and wait. As the purchase of the Son of God, we are His property, and everyone should have an education in the school of Christ. Both teachers and pupils are to make diligent work for eternity. The end of all things is at hand. There is need now of men armed and equipped to battle for God.

It is not men whom we are to exalt, but God, the only true and living God. The unselfish life, the generous self-sacrificing spirit, the sympathy and love of those who hold positions of trust in our institutions, should have a purifying, ennobling influence which would be eloquent for good. Their words in counsel would not then come from a self-sufficient, self-exalted spirit; but their unobtrusive virtues would be of more value than gold. If man lays hold of the divine nature, working upon the plan of addition, adding grace to grace in perfecting a Christian character, God will work upon the plan of multiplication. He says in His word: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." 2 Peter 1:2. (6T 148:1,2).

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord. (Jer. 9:23,24).

There is one kind of boasting we may indulge in, but it is not boasting of ourselves. In a testimony to a young minister and his wife, Sister White recounts the early years of the work and the labor involved. There is so much we can learn from these paragraphs.

After those who led out in this work have labored hard to prepare the truth and bring the work up ready to your hand, you embrace it and go out to labor, presenting the precious arguments which others, with inexpressible anxiety, have searched out for you. While you are amply provided for in point of means, your weekly wages sure, leaving you no reason for care or anxiety in this direction, these pioneers of the cause suffered deprivations of every kind. They had no assurance of anything. They were dependent upon God and upon the few truehearted ones who received their labors. While you have sympathizing brethren to sustain you and fully appreciate your labors, the first laborers in this work had but very few to stand by them. All could be counted in a few minutes. We knew what it was to go hungry for want of food and to suffer with cold for the want of suitable clothing. We have traveled all night by private conveyance to visit the brethren, because we had no means with which to defray the expenses of hotel fare. We traveled miles on foot, time and again, because we had no money to hire a carriage. Oh, how precious was the truth to us! how valuable souls purchased by the blood of Christ!

We have no complaints to make of our sufferings in those days of close want and perplexity, which made the exercise of faith necessary. They were the happiest days of our lives. There we learned the simplicity of faith. There, while in affliction, we tested and proved the Lord. He was our consolation. He was to us like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. It is unfortunate for you, my brother, and for our young ministers generally, that you and they have not had a similar experience in privation, in trial, and in need; for such an experience would be worth to you more than houses or lands, gold or silver.

When we refer to our past experience of excessive labor and want, and of laboring with our hands to

support ourselves and to publish the truth at the very commencement of the work, some of our young preachers of but few years experience in the work seem to be annoyed and charge us with boasting of our own works. The reason of this is that their own lives have been so free from wearing care, want, and self-sacrifice that they know not how to sympathize with us, and the contrast is not agreeable to their feelings. To have presented before them the experience of others which is in such wide contrast with their own course does not make their labors appear in so favorable a light as they would have them.

When we commenced this work we were both in feeble health. My husband was a dyspeptic; yet three times a day, in faith, we made our supplications to God for strength. My husband went into the hayfield with his scythe, and, in the strength that God gave him in answer to our prayers, he there earned, by mowing, means with which to purchase us neat, plain clothing and to pay our fare to a distant state to present the truth to our brethren.

We have a right to refer to the past as did the apostle Paul. "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia." In referring to our past experience, we are carrying out the exhortation of the apostle to the Hebrews: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used."

Our lives are interwoven with the cause of God. We have no separate interest aside from this work. And when we see the advancement that the cause has made from a very small beginning, coming up slowly yet surely to strength and prosperity; as we see the success of the cause in which we have toiled, and suffered, and nearly sacrificed our lives, who shall prevent or forbid our boasting in God? Our experience in this cause is valuable to us. We have invested everything in it. (3T :317-319).

Let us diligently work and sacrifice for God that we might have a reason for this kind of boasting. To do so, we, too, must "invest everything in it." But let us avoid all other forms of boasting, even those which may not seem to be boasting at first glance.

"Oh, woe is me!" Whether spoken in words or in attitude, many people have a martyr complex. They spend much precious time in pitying themselves and seeking to induce others to feel sorry for them. This is actually the flip side of boasting. They are not bragging about all the great things they have accomplished, or how wonderful they are, but they boast, yes, boast, of how awful life treats them, of how they are underappreciated and how much greater things they could accomplish if only ?, whatever ? may be, wasn't standing in their way. Women have had an especially difficult time with self-martyrdom or a martyr complex. A woman's work in the home is not exciting; it is usually the same round of duties and tasks performed day after day. Even if she takes an outside job, she is still responsible for most of the household duties.

Many a home is made very unhappy by the useless repining of its mistress, who turns with distaste from the simple, homely tasks of her unpretending domestic life. She looks upon the cares and duties of her lot as hardships; and that which, through cheerfulness, might be made not only pleasant and interesting, but profitable, becomes the merest drudgery. She looks upon the slavery of her life with repugnance and imagines herself a martyr. (AH 248:1).

While the mistress of the household may perform her outward duties with exactitude she may be continually crying out against the slavery to which she is doomed, and exaggerate her responsibilities and restrictions by comparing her lot with what she styles the higher life of woman, and cherishing unsanctified longings for an easier position, free from the petty cares and exactions that vex her spirit. She little dreams that in that widely different sphere of action to which she aspires trials full as vexatious, though perhaps of a different sort, would certainly beset her. While she is fruitlessly yearning for a different life she is nourishing a sinful discontent, and making her home very unpleasant for her husband and children. (HR 8/77).

These women are encouraged in their martyr complex by soap operas and romance novels and even stories of “successful” women who seem to “have it all.” These avenues of escapism only serve to increase their dissatisfaction with the common duties of life which have been given every wife and mother by God Himself.

I am acquainted with a number of women who have thought their marriage a misfortune. They have read novels until their imaginations have become diseased, and they live in a world of their own creating. They think themselves women of sensitive minds, of superior, refined organizations, and imagine that their husbands are not so refined, that they do not possess these superior qualities, and therefore cannot appreciate their own supposed virtue and refined organizations. Consequently these women think themselves great sufferers, martyrs. They have talked of this and thought upon it until they are nearly maniacs upon this subject. They imagine their worth superior to that of other mortals, and it is not agreeable to their fine sensibilities to associate with common humanity. These women are making themselves fools; and their husbands are in danger of thinking that they do possess a superior order of mind.

From what the Lord has shown me, the women of this class have had their imaginations perverted by novel reading, daydreaming, and castle-building, living in an imaginary world. They do not bring their own ideas down to the common, useful duties of life. They do not take up the life burdens which lie in their path, and seek to make a happy, cheerful home for their husbands. They rest their whole weight upon them, not bearing their own burden. They expect others to anticipate their wants and do for them, while they are at liberty to find fault and to question as they please. These women have a lovesick sentimentalism, constantly thinking they are not appreciated, that their husbands do not give them all the attention they deserve. They imagine themselves martyrs. (2T 462:3-463:1).

Thus they go through their lives believing everybody owes them and they owe no one. They make their husbands and their children's lives miserable. They expect sympathy but are unwilling to give any and are cold, reserved, and unapproachable. “They are,” says Sister White, “unworthy of their husbands.” (2T 463). To such a woman God says:

Your imagination is diseased because you have permitted it to run in a forbidden channel, to become dreamy. Daydreaming and romantic castle-building have unfitted you for usefulness. You have lived in an imaginary world; you have been an imaginary martyr and an imaginary Christian. (2T 251:1).

The true wife and mother will pursue an entirely opposite course from this. She will perform her duties with dignity and cheerfulness, not considering that it is degrading to do with her hands whatever is necessary for her to do in a well-ordered household. If she looks to God for her strength and comfort, and in his wisdom and fear seeks to do her daily duty, she will bind her husband to her heart, and see her children coming to maturity, honorable men and women, having moral stamina to follow the example of their mother. (HR 8/77).

Housewives are not the only ones who are tempted to indulge in self-pity and martyrdom. It is a temptation to all who turn their thoughts inward to themselves, not to seek out and eradicate sin, but to nurse along the slights and hurts.

We must not consider as our enemies all those who do not receive us with a smile upon their lips and with demonstrations of love. It is much easier to play the martyr than to overcome a bad temper. (3BC 1160:5).

There are at least twelve examples of this type nature in the Bible, and Jesus had to deal with all twelve as they were His disciples. They suffered from both self-pity and boasting. Especially was Peter prone to such feelings.

Often Jesus, the burden heavy upon His own heart, sought to open to the disciples the scenes of His trial and suffering. But their eyes were holden. The knowledge was unwelcome, and they did not see. Self-pity, that shrank from fellowship with Christ in suffering, prompted Peter's remonstrance, “Pity Thyself, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.” Matthew 16:22, margin. His words expressed the thought and feeling of the Twelve.

So they went on, the crisis drawing nearer; they, boastful, contentious, in anticipation apportioning regal honors, and dreaming not of the cross. (Ed 88:3,4).

Jesus told Peter he would deny His Lord not once, but three times, yet Peter didn't heed the warning. Caught in

his self-pity and self-adulation, he was unwilling to bear the suffering of Jesus and to admit he was weak and could fall. So it was they slept while Jesus agonized in the garden; rather than humbling themselves, seeking for divine help, they trusted in their supposed, and boasted of, strength. When the test came, Peter suggested they should all flee, which they did with the errant disciple bringing up the rear. Peter and the other ten loved their Lord, but until self was put away, they could only follow the dictates of their bad tempers. By the day of Pentecost, they had put self away, there was no more self-pity, no more boasting, and when the fire fell, they received it with great joy. Self-pity is as dangerous to us as it was to the disciples.

We need to beware of self-pity. Never indulge the feeling that you are not esteemed as you should be, that your efforts are not appreciated, that your work is too difficult. Let the memory of what Christ has endured for us silence every murmuring thought. We are treated better than was our Lord. “Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not.” Jer. 45:5 The Lord has no place in His work for those who have a greater desire to win the crown than to bear the cross. He wants men who are more intent upon doing their duty than upon receiving their reward – men who are more solicitous for principle than for promotion. (MH 476:2).

Self-pity is called a spiritual disease, and like many other diseases it is “deteriorating to the character of those who cherish it, and it exerts an influence that spoils the happiness of others.” (MM 177:3). This disease has a cure, but it must be sought for and applied.

That thought that your character is not rightly estimated must be put from you; for it weakens your influence, and works out the sure result, making you of light estimation in the minds of others. You should overcome the idea that you are a martyr, and lay claim to the promise of Christ, who says, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” (MYP 91:3).

When the first symptoms [of this spiritual disease] appear, and the enemy works to make you grumble and murmur, look unto Jesus, trust in your Saviour. This is the only cure for this spiritual malaria....

God would have you trust in His love, and be constantly guarding your soul by locking the gate of your thoughts, that they shall not become unmanageable; for when you allow your mind to indulge these thoughts of self-pity, the enemy comes in to suggest the most unkind and unreasonable things in regard to those who would do you good, and only good....

Listen to Jesus, follow His counsel and you will not go astray from the wise and mighty Counsellor, the only true Guide, the only One who can give you peace, happiness, and fullness of joy.... Whatever others may think of us or may do to us, it need not disturb this oneness with Christ, this fellowship of the Spirit. You know we cannot rest anywhere out of Christ. (SD 298).

We must learn that the world is not a parade ground, but a battlefield. All are called to endure hardness as good soldiers. We are to be strong and quit ourselves like men. We must learn that the true test of character is found in the willingness to bear burdens, to take the hard place, to do the work that needs to be done and lies nearest, though it bring us no earthly recognition or reward. (see Ed 295:2).

Humility is a characteristic of those who have true wisdom, and no matter what may be their attainments, they will not be self-confident and boastful. (TSS 43:2).

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. . . . And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:1,4).

The speech that parents use with children largely determines the speech the children will use in the home and away from home. It is essential to children's salvation, then, for parents to know when, where, and how to talk with children. They must "train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6).

In order to do this work, parents must themselves become acquainted with the word of God. Instead of spending their time in gossip, or in needless ornamentation of their houses or their persons, they will seek diligently to understand the will of God as revealed to them in his word; and instead of speaking vain words and telling idle tales to their children, they will talk with them upon Bible subjects. That book was not designed for scholars alone. It was written in plain, simple style, to meet the understanding of the common people; and, with proper explanations, a large portion of it can be made intensely interesting and profitable to very small children. (RH 11/13/88).

From the earliest infancy, babies need to be taught about Jesus. When the child begins to talk, "let the first lisplings be of Christ." (CG 487:2). Little ones who grow up hearing their mothers and fathers telling Bible stories and singing sacred songs will grow up talking and singing about Jesus. "Everything leaves its impress upon the youthful mind. The countenance is studied, the voice has its influence, and the deportment is closely imitated by them." (Ibid).

Parents must take great care with their words to each other. Children repeat what they hear. To this any parent will testify. If they use harsh, impatient words, if they are rude and impolite, if they scold and criticize, if they are loud and angry to each other, and to their children, it will be repeated. The neighbors will hear it, as well as the church members, and the parents will hear those words being volleyed back at themselves out of the mouths of babies.

Let the father and mother always be guarded in their words and actions. The husband is to treat his wife, the mother of his children, with due respect, and the wife is to love and reverence her husband. How can she do this if he treats her like a servant, to be dictated to, ordered about, scolded, found fault with before the children? He is forcing her to dislike him and even to hate him. . . .

Fathers and mothers, bring sweetness and brightness and hopefulness into the lives of your children. Kindness and love will work wonders. Never punish a child in anger. When you do this, you are acting like grown-up children, who have not left behind them the unreasonableness of childhood. Will you strive earnestly to be able to say, "When I became a man, I put away childish things."? (UL 163:4,6).

The father and mother are to be respected in the Christian home. The father is the priest and house-band of the home. The mother is the teacher of the little ones from their babyhood, and queen of the household. Never is she to be slighted. Never are careless, indifferent words to be spoken to her before the children. In thought and word and deed the father is to reveal the religion of Christ, that his children may see plainly that he has a knowledge of what it means to be a Christian. (RH 6/22/05).

Those who govern by force have far less influence than those who govern by love. Harshness hardens the heart and braces the will to resistance. Gentleness softens the heart and subdues the most stubborn will. (RH 7/8/02).

The prudent mother keeps the door of her lips, that she may not utter one hasty, fretful word. Fathers and mothers, never scold. (RH 9/15/04).

Indulge in no foolish talking in your house. Even very young children will be benefited by "the form of sound words." But idle and foolish words exchanged between father and mother will lead to the same kind of words among the children; while right, candid, truthful, and serious words will lead to the same in all the household and will lead to right actions also. (AH 438:2).

When you speak angry words to your children, you are helping the cause of the enemy of all righteousness. Let every child have a fair chance from babyhood up. The work of teaching should begin

in childhood, not accompanied by harshness and fretting, but in kindness and patience; and this instruction should be continued through all their years to manhood and womanhood. (AH 438:3).

The children should be surrounded by the best of influences and associations. Parents who undertake this work in the fear and love of God, will guard every word, that they may hear nothing that would pain them when their own conversation is repeated by the children. They will seek to supply the weakness, ignorance, and deficiency in their children by high moral instruction, that they may grow up strong in purity, with well-established habits that tend to health and happiness. With such an education they will gather up that kind of knowledge that will perfect the character in symmetry and strength. (CSW 51:1).

Parents, every time you lose self-control and speak and act impatiently, you sin against God. The recording angel writes every impatient, unguarded word spoken before them, carelessly or in jest; every word that is not chaste and elevated, he marks as a spot against your Christian character. Speak kindly to your children. Remember how sensitive you are, how little you can bear to be blamed, and do not lay upon them that which you cannot bear; for they are weaker than you and cannot endure as much. The fruits of self-control, thoughtfulness, and painstaking on your part will be a hundredfold. (CG 217:2).

The course of one father was so reprehensible, that Sister White said his cattle had received, in many respects, better treatment than his children. She told him:

You are exacting, overbearing, tyrannical; you fret, and scold, and censure, and by so doing wean their affections from you. You treat them as though they had no just rights, as though they were machines to turn in your hands according to your pleasure. You do not give them love and affection. Love begets love, affection begets affection. The spirit which you manifest toward your children will be reflected upon you. (2T 94:1).

Let the children hear gentle and kind words, words of love and understanding, and angels of God will be present to help your children draw closer to you and to God.

If we desire our children to love and reverence God, we must talk of his goodness, his majesty, and his power, as displayed in the works of creation and in the sacred word. If we desire them to love and imitate the character of Christ, we must tell them of the sacrifice which he made for our redemption, of the humility and self-denial, the matchless love and sympathy, displayed in his life on earth, and then tell them that this is the pattern which we are to follow. We should tell them often the wonderful story of the Saviour's life; of his early youth, when he was subject to such temptations as they have to meet; of his obedience and filial love, as he toiled in the workshop at Nazareth, aiding his father to bear the burdens of life. We should tell them of his generous, self-denying course, his spotless purity, his love for little children, his compassion for the sorrowing and the sinful. (RH 6/13/82).

Love breaks down all barriers. Let there be no scolding, no loud-voiced, angry commands. Obey the injunction, "Be still, and know that I am God." The Lord will give rich blessings to those parents who make diligent efforts to rule the spirit. The grace of Christ softens harsh traits of character and smoothes out the rugged disposition. (RH 7/8/02).

See that your words are pure, your conversation holy. Give your children an example of that which you wish them to be.... Let there be peace, pleasant words, and cheerful countenances. (CG 219:1).

Children should be taught by precept and example. Parents should meet their grave responsibilities with fear and trembling. Fervent prayers should be offered for divine strength and guidance in this task. (2T 200:3).

Two very important lessons which children must be taught are obedience and respect. They can be trained from their earliest days to obey their parents commands. "From their earliest life children should be taught to obey their parents, to respect their word, and to reverence their authority. (CG 82:3).

At a very early age children can comprehend what is plainly and simply told them, and by kind and judicious management, can be taught to obey.... The mother should not allow her child to gain an advantage over her in a single instance; and, in order to maintain this authority, it is not necessary to resort to harsh

measures; a firm steady hand and a kindness which convinces the child or your love will accomplish the purpose. (CG 82:7). Show respect for your children, and do not allow them to speak one disrespectful word to you. (Ibid 98:5). Never should they be allowed to show their parents disrespect. Self-will should never be permitted to go unrebuked. The future well-being of the child requires kindly, loving, but firm discipline. (Ibid 83:1).

Especially should children and youth never be petted or flattered. Children are often put on display to perform some little something before an audience which will then laud the child and feed its vanity. This is prevalent even among Seventh-day Adventist Christians. Many parents extol the wonderful virtues of their children. They will see promising ability in their child which they promote through training and performance, leaving the poor child in a spiritually dwarfed condition.

Children need appreciation, sympathy, and encouragement, but care should be taken not to foster in them a love of praise. It is not wise to give them special notice, or to repeat before them their clever sayings. The parent or teacher who keeps in view the true ideal of character and the possibilities of achievement, cannot cherish or encourage self-sufficiency. He will not encourage in the youth the desire or effort to display their ability or proficiency. He who looks higher than himself will be humble; yet he will possess a dignity that is not abashed or disconcerted by outward display or human greatness. (Ed 237:3).

In many families the seeds of vanity and selfishness are sown in the hearts of the children almost during babyhood. Their cunning little sayings and doings are commented upon and praised in their presence, and repeated with exaggerations to others. The little ones take note of this and swell with self-importance; they presume to interrupt conversations, and become forward and impudent. Flattery and indulgence foster their vanity and willfulness, until the youngest not infrequently rules the whole family, father and mother included. (2T 200:3).

Give children but little notice. Let them learn to amuse themselves. Do not put them on exhibition before visitors as prodigies of wit or wisdom, but leave them as far as possible to the simplicity of their childhood. One great reason why so many children are forward, bold, and impertinent is they are noticed and praised too much, and their smart, sharp sayings repeated in their hearing. Endeavor not to censure unduly, not to overwhelm with praise and flattery. Satan will all too soon sow evil seed in their young hearts, and you should not aid him in his work. (CG 37:4).

Many a youth has been flattered that he has ability as a natural gift; when the ability he thinks he has, can be attained only through diligent training and culture, learning the meekness and lowliness of Christ. Believing he is naturally gifted, he thinks there is no necessity of putting his mind to the task of mastering his lessons; and before he is aware he is fast in the snare of Satan. He is permitted to make some decided blunder and is plunged into painful humiliation. But when he is writhing under a sense of his own weakness, he is not to be judged harshly. This is the time above all others when he needs a judicious counselor, a true friend, who has discernment of character. This is the time when he needs a friend who is led by the Spirit of God, and who will deal patiently and faithfully with the erring, and lift up the soul that is bowed down. He is not to be lifted up by the aid of flattery. (FE 304-5).

There are some around you who have been religiously instructed, and some who have been indulged, petted, flattered, and praised until they have been literally spoiled for practical life. I am speaking in regard to persons that I know. Their characters are so warped by indulgence, flattery, and indolence that they are useless for this life. And if useless so far as this life is concerned, what may we hope for that life where all is purity and holiness, and where all have harmonious characters? I have prayed for these persons; I have addressed them personally. I could see the influence that they would exert over other minds in leading them to vanity, love of dress, and carelessness in regard to their eternal interests. The only hope for this class is for them to take heed to their ways, humble their proud, vain hearts before God, make confession of their sins, and be converted. (3T 364:2).

I feel deeply pained at heart for the fathers and mothers of these youth, as well as for the children. There has been a lack in the training of these children, which leaves a heavy responsibility somewhere. Parents who have petted and indulged their children instead of from principle judiciously restraining them, can see

the characters they have formed. As the training has been, so the character inclines. (3T 367:3).

Dear brother, you have made a sad mistake in standing before the patients in the parlor, as you have frequently done, and exalting yourself and your wife. Your own children have learned lessons from these remarks that have given shape to their characters. You will now find it not an easy matter to correct the impressions that have been made. They have been proud and self-conceited. They have thought that as your children they were superior to children in general. (4T 98:1).

If you are approved because of your sound principles and moral worth, this is your gain. But if you are petted and courted and flattered because you can make bright speeches and apt remarks, and because you are cheerful, lively, and witty, and not because of intellectual and moral worth, you will be looked upon by sensible, godly men and women as an object of pity rather than envy. You should be guarded against flattery. Whoever is foolish enough to flatter you cannot be your true friend. Your true friends will caution, entreat, and warn you, and reprove your faults. (3T 226:0).

When pampered, petted, flattered children are sent to school, they often rebel against authority, and must be rebuked and properly disciplined. These youth are very often trouble-makers and fall in with a demoralizing crowd. When they are disciplined the parents become irritated and upset with school authorities.

The parents despised reproof themselves, and despised the reproof given to their children, and were not careful to conceal this from them. The sin of the parents began with their mismanagement at home. The souls of some of these children will be lost because they did not receive instruction from God's word and did not become Christians at home. Instead of sympathizing with their children in a perverse course, the parents should have reproved them and sustained the faithful teacher. These parents were not united to Christ themselves, and this is the reason of their terrible neglect of duty. That which they have sown they will also reap. They are sure of a harvest. (5T 51:4).

The dangers of the young are greatly increased as they are thrown into the society of a large number of their own age of varied character and habits of life. Under these circumstances many parents are inclined to relax rather than redouble their own efforts to guard and control their children. Thus they cast a tremendous burden upon those who feel the responsibility. When these parents see that their children are becoming demoralized, they are inclined to find fault with those who have charge of the work at Battle Creek, when the evils have been caused by just such a course as these parents themselves have pursued.

Instead of uniting with those who bear the burdens, to lift up the standard of morals, and working with heart and soul in the fear of God to correct the wrongs in their children, many parents soothe their own consciences by saying: "My children are no worse than others." They seek to conceal the glaring wrongs which God hates, lest their children shall become offended and take some desperate course. If the spirit of rebellion is in their hearts, far better subdue it now than permit it to increase and strengthen by indulgence. If parents would do their duty, we should see a different state of things. Many of these parents have backslidden from God. They do not have wisdom from Him to perceive the devices of Satan and to resist his snares. (4T 650:2,3).

Some of these petted children are among the students who attend our College. Teachers, and all who are interested in the students and would help them, have an unenviable task in seeking to benefit this class of untamed youth. They have not been in subjection of their parents at home, and have no idea of having a head at school or in the homes where they board. What faith, and patience, and grace, and wisdom, are required to deal with these neglected, much-to-be-pitied youth. The deceived parents may even take sides with the children against the school and home discipline. They would restrain others from doing the duty God requires of them, and which they have grossly neglected. What wisdom from God is needed to deal justly and love mercy under these trying circumstances. How difficult to balance in the right direction minds that have been warped by this mismanagement. While some have been unrestrained, others have been governed too much; and when away from the vigilant hands that have held the reins of control harshly, leaving love and mercy out of the question, they have felt that they would not be dictated to by any one. They despise the very thought of restraint. (FE 52:3).

Here we see the sins of evil-speaking, gossip, backbiting, hasty, impatient words, and flattery all have their bitter harvest. The tongues of parents can set entire schools aflame with the fires of hell. How very important it is that we parents learn at the feet of Jesus that we might teach those things He has taught us diligently to our children.

Have you ever felt your lot was hard, and complained and murmured? Then as you received no help in this line, beg in another course of action. Speak kindly, be cheerful. Because you have Jesus as your helper, break forth in songs of praise. When tempted, when reviled, revile not again; and labor with your children while there is one out of Christ. Sow the seed, the living seed, deep into the soil of the heart. Let your words be wisely chosen. Consider yourself as God's appointed missionary, to be the light of your home. (3MR 371:2).

In words, in spirit, in character, in meekness, in patience and forbearance, in cheerfulness, be a signpost pointing out the way, the path that leads heavenward. (3MR 370:2).

There was a time not so very long ago when children were taught to be seen and not heard. Children of today are loud, noisy, rude, talkative, and impolite. We want to think that children of generations past were better behaved, but the Spirit of Prophecy tells us otherwise.

The direction given by the Son of God to Moses for the instruction of the children of Israel, is just as essential now as it was then, and it should be heeded as diligently by parents today as by God's ancient people. Religion must be woven into every part of the home life if we would see the results that God has designed as the fruit of following His way. Pride, self-esteem, and boldness are marked characteristics of the children of this day; and they are the curse of the age. When I see this un-Christlike, unlovely manifestation on every side, and then see parents and teachers seeking to display the ability and proficiency of their children and scholars, I am pained to the heart; for I know that is it exactly the opposite course from the one that should be pursued.

Parents and teachers who gather their knowledge from the Bible, who are governed in mind and action by its holy principles, need not go astray, and be found in by and forbidden paths. The most sacred lessons of modesty and humility are to be taught to children, both at home and in the Sabbath School. They are to be instructed as to the high claim of the law of God, and as to their responsibility before Him. The lessons that should be presented to them should be of such a character as would qualify them for usefulness in this life, and for a place in the future, immortal kingdom. (CSW 45:2-46:1).

Will you to whom I now address these words take heed to the instruction given you? Let the youth take warning; let them not be forward in conversation, but be modest and retiring. Let them be quick to hear things that will profit the soul, and be slow to speak, unless it be to represent Jesus, and to witness to the truth, Show humility of mind by modesty of demeanor. (CG 144:3).

Wherever I go, I am pained by the neglect of proper home discipline and restraint. Little children are allowed to answer back, to manifest disrespect and impertinence, using language that no child should ever be permitted to address to its superiors. Parents who permit the use of unbecoming language are more worthy of blame than their children. Impertinence should not be tolerated in a child even once. But fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts and grandparents laugh at the exhibition of passion in the little creature of a year old. Its imperfect utterance of disrespect, its childish stubbornness, are thought cunning. Thus wrong habits are confirmed, and the child grows up to be an object of dislike to all around him. (CG 288:2).

Parents do their children great wrong when they allow them to scream and cry. They should not be allowed to be careless and boisterous. (CG 97:3).

Let only pleasant words be spoken by parents to their children, and respectful words by children to their parents. Attention must be given to these things in the home life; for if, in their character building, children form right habits, it will be much easier for them to be taught by God and to be obedient to His requirements. (AH 437:4).

It is the work of parents to train their children to proper habits of speech. The very best school for this culture is the home life. From the earliest years the children should be taught to speak respectfully and lovingly to their parents and to one another. They should be taught that only words of gentleness, truth, and

purity must pass their lips. Let the parents themselves be daily learners in the school of Christ. Then by precept and example they can teach their children the use of "sound speech, that cannot be condemned." Titus 2:8. This is one of the greatest and most responsible of their duties. (COL 338:2).

The Lord desires us to understand that we must place our children in right relation to the world, the church, and the family. Their relation to the family is the first point to be considered. Let us teach them to be polite to one another, and polite to God. "What do you mean," you may inquire, "by saying that we should teach them to be polite to God?" I mean that they are to be taught to reverence our heavenly Father and to appreciate the great and infinite sacrifice that Christ has made in our behalf. (CG 99:2).

As children grow and mature, they reach an age of accountability which usually commences with the teen years. During these years the youth are especially susceptible to something we call peer pressure. Youth who have been firmly grounded in living a godly life will not be easily swayed from right doing. Moses' mother had just twelve years to train him in righteousness before sending him to live in the palace of the mightiest monarch on earth. But those twelve years had molded his character for life. Even if a youth has not had such advantages as godly parents and a Christian upbringing, he is still accountable to God for his words and actions. His prayer should be, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer." (Ps. 19:14).

The young are required in whatsoever they do, in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. I saw that but few of the youth understand what it is to be Christians, to be Christlike. They will have to learn the truths of God's word before they can conform their lives to the pattern. There is not one young person in twenty who has experienced in his life that separation from the world which the Lord requires of all who would become members of His family, children of the heavenly King. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (1T 510:1).

Consider for a moment that the preceding words are from a testimony written to the youth of the Adventist faith. The ratio of not one in twenty does not apply to youth in general, but to Adventist youth in particular. These, Sister White says, do not know what experimental religion is.

The young, generally, are in a terrible deception, and yet they profess godliness. Their unconsecrated lives are a reproach to the Christian name; their example is a snare to others. They hinder the sinner, for in nearly every respect they are no better than unbelievers. They have the word of God, but its warnings, admonitions, reproofs, and corrections are unheeded, as are also the encouragements and promises to the obedient and faithful. God's promises are all on condition of humble obedience. One pattern only is given to the young, but how do their lives compare with the life of Christ? (1T 496:1).

I have had recently brought to my knowledge, circumstances in regard to a class of youth, who, though professed Christians, seemed leagued together to help one another to be not only irreligious, but immoral. Letters were written to each other filled with slang; the contents were concerning the parties and dances they attended, the young men they kept company with; and language the most low and debasing was freely used. The truth and those who advocated it were reviled. Some of these were learning the dress-maker's trade, and some the millinery business; and they gloried in their aptitude to deceive their parents, their employers, and the church, and in the thought that their base conduct was kept a secret among themselves. The mothers of some of these girls were not entirely unaware of their course; but the children had broken away from all restraint, and refused to obey or respect the wishes of their parents.

Young people of this class have attended the colleges, have been associated with others in day-school and Sabbath-school, and so have exerted an influence over the other pupils, who did not know all the vileness of their course. If forced to obey rules and regulations, they become insubordinate, and manufacture lies against the teachers in the schools, just in accordance with their own vile imaginings. We might suppose these could have no influence, yet they have had a decided one. We cannot feel that the mothers are inexcusable in these matters; for if they had managed their children after the rules laid down in the word of God, they would not have taken such a course. (SSW 10/1/85).

The youth of today vary little from their counterparts of the last century. What was written of and to those young people applies with equal force and power to the youth of today. The pleasures sought by the young then are the same pleasures sought by the young now. Girls, and boys too, just want to have fun. They congregate together to seek out pleasure and fun. In these groups there will usually be found at least one person who is the smart mouthed wisecracking cynic, another will be the comic and joker, still another will have the beat—able to sing or rap whatever songs are currently being played over the radio. The purpose of such savoir faire is the intense desire to fit in, to be a part of the crowd, to be accepted. To be an outcast is, to the teen, a fate to be feared. No one wants to be known as a drip or nerd or wimp or dweeb or geek or any other name applied to the outcasts. To be among the unacceptable usually means a life of misery, of always being picked on and being left out of everything. To any young person who does not have a living experience with Jesus Christ as their best friend, such exclusion is unbearable. To prevent being an outcast, many young people will throw away their principles and blunt their consciences so that they might fit into the group. “The fear of ridicule leads many a young person to yield to temptation, and to walk in the way of the ungodly.” (RH 12/12/12). This peer pressure is just as prevalent in Christian and Seventh-day Adventist groups as in none-Christian groups.

Those who are artificial in character and religious experience too readily gather for pleasure and amusement, and their influence attracts others. Sometimes young men and women who are trying to be Bible Christians are persuaded to join the party. Unwilling to be thought singular, and naturally inclined to follow the example of others, they place themselves under the influence of those who, perhaps, have never felt the divine touch on mind or heart. Had they prayerfully consulted the divine standard, to learn what Christ has said in regard to the fruit borne on the Christian tree, they would have discerned that these entertainments were really banquets prepared to keep souls from accepting the invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (MYP 388:4).

Partying is a major pastime with many children and youth. No reason is even needed to party, they just gather and congregate to while away the hours in idle chatter and useless conversation.

The tenor of conversation carried on at many social gatherings reveals what the heart is set upon. The trifling talk, the foolish witticisms, spoken only to create a laugh, do not rightly represent Christ. O that the youth would guard well their words! for by them they will be justified or by them condemned. Remember that Jesus is beside you wherever you go, noting your actions and listening to your words. Would you be ashamed to hear His voice speaking to you, and to know that He hears your conversation? (MYP 388:1).

There are social gatherings of a different character, where pride of appearance, hilarity, and trifling are too often seen. In their desire for amusement, those who attend are in danger of forgetting God, and things take place that make the watching angels weep. The scene of pleasure becomes, for the time being, their paradise. All give themselves up to hilarity and mirth. The eyes sparkle, the cheek is flushed; but the conscience sleeps. (MYP 387:2).

I feel alarmed as I witness everywhere the frivolity of young men and young women who profess to believe the truth. God does not seem to be in their thoughts. Their minds are filled with nonsense. Their conversation is only empty, vain talk. They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for divine knowledge, for a growth in grace, are wanting. (1T 496-7).

Please notice that God's servant tells us that the youth have a “keen ear for music.” She also tells us that “Satan knows what organs to excite” through the use of music. A study of the physiologic effects of music demonstrate that the music which is most preferred by young people is notable for bypassing the reasoning centers of the brain and going straight to the pleasure centers. The whole body is affected by the music we call rock 'n roll.² Many young people, if asked, will tell you they never listen to the words of a song. That may be because it bypasses the brain center which would consciously acknowledge the lyrics and enters directly the cerebral cortex. They may not know the words, nevertheless, they have already been registered and stored in the brain.

² For more on music and its effects on the body, see the section on deportment.

Most, if not all, parties of amusement had for the young will include music. It is a part of the ritual, part of the pattern they follow. Read what the Spirit of Prophecy has to say on this subject.

Eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words and acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers, and especially in _____. Music has occupied the hours which should have been devoted to prayer. Music is the idol which many professed Sabbathkeeping Christians worship. Satan has no objection to music if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God and engage the time which should be devoted to His service. He works through the means which will exert the strongest influence to hold the largest numbers in a pleasing infatuation, while they are paralyzed by his power. When turned to good account, music is a blessing; but it is often made one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly. When allowed to take the place of devotion and prayer, it is a terrible curse. Young persons assemble to sing, and, although professed Christians, frequently dishonor God and their faith by their frivolous conversation and their choice of music. Sacred music is not congenial to their taste. I was directed to the plain teachings of God's word, which have been passed by unnoticed. In the judgement all these words of inspiration will condemn those who have not heeded them. (1T 505-6).

I was shown that the youth must take a higher stand and make the word of God the man of their counsel and their guide. Solemn responsibilities rest upon the young, which they lightly regard. The introduction of music into their homes, instead of inciting to holiness and spirituality, has been the means of diverting their minds from the truth. Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should have been devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace while humbly making known his wants and with strong cries and tears pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of the evil one. Satan is leading the young captive. Oh, what can I say to lead them to break his power of infatuation! He is a skillful charmer, luring them on to perdition. Listen to the instructions from the Inspired Book of God. I saw that Satan had blinded the minds of the youth that they could not comprehend the truths of God's word. Their sensibilities are so blunted that they regard not the injunctions of the holy apostle:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the [new] earth.” “Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.” Children who dishonor and disobey their parents and disregard their advice and instructions, can have no part in the earth made new. The purified new earth will be no place for the rebellious, the disobedient, the ungrateful, son or daughter. Unless such learn obedience and submission here, they will never learn it; the peace of the ransomed will not be marred by disobedient, unruly, unsubmitive children. No commandment breaker can inherit the kingdom of heaven. Will all the youth please read the fifth commandment of the law spoken by Jehovah from Sinai and engraven with His finger upon tables of stone? “Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” (1T 497:1,2).

I do not recommend pleasure parties where young people assemble for mere amusement, to engage in cheap, nonsensical talk, and where loud, boisterous laughter is to be heard. I do not recommend the kind of gathering where there is a letting down of dignity and the scene is one of weakness and folly. (CT 344:2).

Gatherings for amusement confuse faith and make the motive mixed and uncertain. The Lord accepts no divided heart. He wants the whole man. He made all there is of man. He offered a complete sacrifice

to redeem the body and soul of man. That which He requires of those whom He has created and redeemed is summed up in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22:37-39. God will accept nothing less than this. (CT 345:1).

Great care must be taken by youth and by their parents that their associates are of noble, Christian spirit. The influence of one unconsecrated, corrupt person in a group can defile them all, and there is little chance a young person will maintain strict integrity when he or she mingles with a crowd whose ideals are no higher than their heads.

I was shown that the two younger sons of Brother X were naturally goodhearted, conscientious young men, but that Satan had blinded their perception. Their companions were not all of that class which would strengthen and improve their morals or increase their understanding and love for the truth and heavenly things. "One sinner destroyeth much good." The ridicule and corrupt conversation of these companions had had its effect to dispel serious and religious impressions.

It is wrong for Christians to associate with those whose morals are loose. An intimate, daily intercourse which occupies time without contributing in any degree to the strength of the intellect or morals is dangerous. If the moral atmosphere surrounding persons is not pure and sanctified, but is tainted with corruption, those who breathe this atmosphere will find that it operates almost insensibly upon the intellect and heart to poison and to ruin. It is dangerous to be conversant with those whose minds naturally take a low level. Gradually and imperceptibly those who are naturally conscientious and love purity will come to the same level and partake of and sympathize with the imbecility and moral barrenness with which they are so constantly brought in contact.

It was important that the associations of these young men should change. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Satan has worked through agents to ruin these young men. Nothing can more effectually prevent or banish serious impressions and good desires than association with vain, careless, and corrupt-minded persons. Whatever attractions such persons may possess by their wit, sarcasm, and fun, the fact that they treat religion with levity and indifference is sufficient reason why they should not be associated with. The more engaging they are in other respects, the more should their influence be dreaded as companions, because they throw around an irreligious life so many dangerous attractions. (3T 125:1,2,3).

I was then shown a young girl of the same place, who had departed from God and was enshrouded in darkness. Said the angel: "She did run well for a season; what did hinder her?" I was pointed back and saw that it was a change of surroundings. She was associating with youth like herself, who were filled with hilarity and glee, pride, and love of the world. Had she regarded the words of Christ, she need not have yielded to the enemy. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." (2T 100:1).

There is great danger in indifference upon this subject; no folly is so subtle as thoughtlessness and levity. On every hand we see youth of a frivolous character. All young people of this class should be avoided; for they are dangerous. If they profess to be Christians, they are the more to be dreaded. Their minds have been cast in an inferior mold; and it will be far easier for them to bring you down to their level than for you to bring them up to elevated and ennobling thoughts and a correct course of action. Let your companions be those who observe decorum in words and deportment. (MYP 267:1).

They formed associations with other youth who in their words and actions manifested objectionable traits of character. They lost a sense of what God requires of them, and what He longs to do for them. Oh, if they had but followed on to know the Lord, they might have known that His going forth was prepared as the morning. I tried to encourage them. But when such ones form companionship with others who give themselves up to cheap conversation, and who indulge in smoking and in liquor-drinking, they are lost, unless they repent and become converted. (5MR 332:3).

The eternal God has drawn a line of distinction between the saint and the sinner, between converted and unconverted. The two classes do not blend into each other imperceptibly, like the colors of a rainbow, but are as distinct as midday and midnight. God's people cannot with safety enter into intimate associations with those who know the truth, but do not practice it. The patriarch Jacob, when speaking of certain deeds

of his sons, which he contemplated with horror, exclaimed, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honor, be not united." He felt that his own honor would be compromised if he associated with sinners in their doings. He lifted the danger signal, warning us to shun wrong associations, lest we become tainted with evil. And the Holy Spirit, through the apostle Paul, utters a similar warning, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (MYP 390:2).

And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. (Gen. 34:1,2).

Had Dinah never desired to see and associate with the "daughters of the land," Hamor would never have met her and she would have maintained her purity. But because she chose wrong associates, she was defiled, and her brothers committed a horrible deed to avenge the wrong. This was the act which Jacob did not want to enter into.

Shun those who are irreverent. Shun one who is a lover of idleness; shun the one who is a scoffer of hallowed things, Avoid the society of one who uses profane language or is addicted to the use of even one glass of liquor. (4MR 196:1).

We are living in an age of licentiousness, and men and youth are bold in sin. Unless our youth are sacredly guarded, unless they are fortified with firm principles, unless greater care is manifested in choosing their associates and the literature which feeds the mind, they will be exposed to a society whose morals are as corrupt as the morals of the inhabitants of Sodom.... Our youth will meet temptations on every hand, and they must be so educated that they will depend upon higher power, higher teaching, than can be given by mortals. There are despisers of our Lord everywhere, who habitually throw contempt upon Christianity.... Those who have not moral power cannot stand in defense of truth; they have no courage to say: "Unless such conversation ceases, I cannot remain in your presence. Jesus, the world's Redeemer is my Saviour; in Him is centered my hope of eternal life." But this is the very way to silence them. If you argue with them, they will have arguments with which to meet you, and nothing you may say will touch them; but if you live for Christ, if you are firm in your allegiance to the God of heaven, you may do for them that which argument will fail to do. (SD 232:1).

It is not safe for the professed follower of Christ to associate with the careless and reckless; for it is an easy matter to come to view things as they do, and to lose all sense of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Guard yourself on this one point in particular, – do not be influenced and led astray by those you have reason to know, by their words and works, are not in connection with God. (SD 164:1).

Every association we form, however limited, exerts some influence upon us. The extent to which we yield to that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy, the constancy of the intercourse, and our love and veneration for the one with whom we associate. (SD 166:2).

Contemplate for a few minutes the force of the preceding quotation from the pen of Ellen White. We are influenced by **every** association we form and we in turn influence all that we associate with.

You all have an influence for good or for evil on the minds and characters of others. And just the influence which you exert is written in the book of records in heaven. An angel is attending you and taking record of your words and actions. When you rise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God? and do you humbly, heartily make known your wants to your heavenly Father? If so, angels mark your prayers, and if these prayers have not gone forth out of feigned lips, when you are in danger of unconsciously doing wrong and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions. (3T 363:3).

Your frivolous conversation, in common with that of other of the young people, was disgusting. There was nothing noble and elevated in the turn your minds took. It was common chitchat and gossip, the silly, vain laugh, the jesting, the joking. Angels have written the scenes you have acted over and over again. Notwithstanding the most solemn appeals have been made to you, and you have been reprov'd, rebuked, and warned, you are more censurable than other youth. You have lived the longest at –. You were among

the first to profess to believe the truth and to be Christ's followers, and your course of vanity and pride has done more toward shaping the experience of the youth in that place than has that of any of the others. Those who have been converted to the truth you have taken by the hand, as it were, and united to the world. (2T 180:1).

This young lady, professing to be a Christian, was exerting a great influence for evil over the other young people around her.

If each one realized his accountability to God for his personal influence, he would in no case be an idler, but would cultivate his ability and train every power that he might serve Him who has purchased him with His own blood. (MYP 188:1).

I saw that Satan is a vigilant foe intent upon his purpose of leading the youth to a course of action entirely contrary to that which God would approve. He well knows that there is no other class that can do as much good as young men and women who are consecrated to God. The youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence. Preachers, or laymen advanced in years, cannot have on half the influence upon the youth that the youth, devoted to God, can have upon their associates. (1T 511:1).

Remember, dear young friends, that each day, each hour, each moment, you are weaving the web of your own destiny. Each time the shuttle is thrown, there is drawn into the web a thread which either mars or beautifies the pattern. If you are careless and indolent, you spoil the life which God designed should be bright and beautiful. If you choose to follow your own inclinations, unchristlike habits will bind you with bands of steel. And as you walk away from Christ, your example will be followed by many who, because of your wrong course, will never enjoy the glories of heaven. But if you make brave efforts to overcome selfishness, allowing no opportunity to pass for helping those around you, the light of your example will guide others to the cross. (MYP 212:1).

With such an influence as this, the youth need to watch very closely every word which comes out of their mouths and every thought which preceded it. In a testimony to a young woman, Ellen White wrote:

You should control your thoughts. This will not be an easy task; you cannot accomplish it without close and even severe effort. Yet God requires this of you; it is a duty resting upon every accountable being. You are responsible to God for your thoughts. If you indulge in vain imaginations, permitting your mind to dwell upon impure subjects, you are, in a degree, as guilty before God as if your thoughts were carried into action. All that prevents the action is the lack of opportunity. Day and night dreaming and castle-building are bad and exceeding dangerous habits. When once established, it is next to impossible to break up such habits, and direct the thoughts to pure, holy, elevated themes. You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul. The power of grace alone can accomplish this most desirable work. You are weak in this direction. (2T 561:1).

Thoughts always precede actions and speech. This same girl was disobedient to her parents, pert, unthankful and unholy. Day-dreaming leads a young person to look to the world and what they want rather than looking to Jesus. The thoughts are on self.

I have been shown the dangers of the youth. Their hearts are full of high anticipations, and they see the downward road strewn with tempting pleasures which look very inviting; but death is there. The narrow path to life may appear to them to be destitute of attractions, a path of thorns and briars, but it is not. It is the path which requires a denial of sinful pleasures; it is a narrow path, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. None can walk this path and carry with them their burdens of pride, self-will, deceit, false-hood, dishonesty, passion, and the carnal lusts. The path is so narrow that these things will have to be left behind by those who walk in it, but the broad road is wide enough for sinners to travel it with all their sinful propensities. (4T 364:1).

The atmosphere of unbelief is heavy and oppressive. The giddy laugh, the jesting, the joking, sickens the soul that is feeding on Christ. Cheap, foolish talk is painful to him. With a humble heart read carefully 1 Peter 1:13-18. Those who enjoy talking should see that their words are select and well chosen. Be careful

how you speak. Be careful how you represent the religion you have accepted. You may feel it no sin to gossip and talk nonsense, but this grieves your Saviour, and saddens the heavenly angels. (FE 457:2).

If the minds of the youth were directed aright, their conversation would be upon exalted themes. When the mind is pure and the thoughts ennobled by the truth of God, the works will be of the same character, "like apples of gold in baskets of silver." Proverbs 25:11, R.V. But with the present understanding and the present practices, with the low standard that Christians are content to reach, the conversation is cheap and profitless. It is of the earth, earthy, and does not reach even the standard of the more cultured class of worldlings. When Christ and heaven are the theme of contemplation, the conversation will give evidence of the fact. The speech will be seasoned with grace, and the speaker will show that he has been obtaining an education in the school of the divine Teacher. (CT 443:1).

Satan is gratified to have the attention of the youth attracted by anything to divert their minds from God so that the deceiver can steal a march upon them and they, unprepared for his attacks, be ensnared. They are not aware that the great heavenly Artist is taking cognizance of every act, every word, and that their deportment, and even the thoughts and intents of the heart, stand faithfully delineated. Every defect in their moral character stands revealed to the gaze of angels, and they will have the faithful picture presented to them in all its deformity at the execution of the judgement. Those vain, frivolous words are all written in the book. Those false words are written. Those deceptive acts, whose motives were concealed from human eyes, but discerned by the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, are all written in living characters. Every selfish act is exposed. (1T 501:1).

Dear young friends, that which you sow, you will also reap. Now is the sowing time for you. What will the harvest be? What are you sowing? Every word you utter, every act you perform, is a seed which will bear good or evil fruit and will result in joy or sorrow to the sower. As is the seed sown, so will be the crop. God has given you great light and many privileges. After this light has been given, after your dangers have been plainly presented before you, the responsibility becomes yours. The manner in which you treat the light that God gives you will turn the scale for happiness or woe. You are shaping your destinies for yourselves. (3T 363:2).

It is important for the youth to develop right habits of speech, a well-cultured voice, and use pure language uncluttered by profanity, idle, useless words, gutter slang, and limit the use of local and cultural jargon.

Students, educate yourselves to speak in the language of Canaan. Put away all foolish talking and jesting, all foolish amusements. By faith grasp God's promises and determine that you will be Christians here below while preparing for translation. If you strip yourselves of every hindrance to progress in the Christian life, your minds will be worked by the Holy Spirit, and you will become fishers of men. The salvation of God will go forth from you as a lamp that burneth. If your own hearts are filled with light from above, wherever you may be you will shed light upon others. He will bless you in your service, and you will see of His salvation. (CT 548:2).

If children and youth seek to be kind and courteous at home, thoughtfulness will become an abiding habit. Every-day politeness will cause them to be always polite. Home is the very best place in which to practice self-denial and thoughtfulness to each member of the family; thus it is with the family of heaven, thus it will be when the scattered families of earth are reunited in the heavenly home. (SD 113:3).

When young men and women are in deed and in truth converted, a decided change will be seen by all who have any connection with them. Their frivolity will leave them; the continual desire for amusement and selfish pleasure, the longing for some kind of change, to be in parties and excursions, will no longer be seen. (FE 455:2).

Christ rejoices when the thoughts of the young are occupied by the grand and ennobling themes of salvation. He enters the hearts of all such as an abiding guest, filling them with joy and peace. And the love of Christ in the soul is a "well of water, springing up into everlasting life," sending forth living streams, that bring life and glory wherever they go. Those who possess this love will delight to talk of the things that God has prepared for them that love Him. (YI 2/4/97).

I am sorry to see that many youth who profess religion do not have any knowledge of a change of heart. There is no transformation of character. They do not realize that it is a solemn thing to profess to be a Christian. Their life is entirely inconsistent with a religious frame of mind. If they were of that number who are indeed the sons and daughters of God, they would not be filled with nonsense and pleasantry and trifling; neither would the foolish remarks and conduct of others awaken the same in them. A mind that is intent upon having the prize, upon securing heaven, will reject with firm, determined purpose every attempt at wit and jest concerning religious things. (MYP 266:4).

Students who expect to become workers in the cause of God should be trained to speak in a clear, straightforward manner, else they will be shorn of half their influence for good. The ability to speak plainly and clearly, in full, round tones, is invaluable in any line of work. This qualification is indispensable in those who desire to become ministers, evangelists, Bible workers, or canvassers. Those who are planning to enter these lines of work should be taught to use the voice in such a way that when they speak to people about the truth, a decided impression for good will be made. The truth must not be marred by being communicated through defective utterance. (6T 380:2).

The only safety for the young is in unceasing watchfulness and humble prayer. They need not flatter themselves that they can be Christians without these. Satan conceals his temptations and his devices under a cover of light, as when he approached Christ in the wilderness. He was then in appearance as one of the heavenly angels. The adversary of our souls will approach us as a heavenly guest, and the apostle recommends sobriety and vigilance as our only safety. The young who indulge in carelessness and levity, and who neglect Christian duties, are continually falling under the temptation of the enemy, instead of overcoming as Christ overcame. (3T 374:1).

The greatest want of the world is the want of men – men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. (Ed 57:3).

With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come – the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where “the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell there forever;” where “the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick,” and “the voice of weeping shall be no more heard.” Ps. 37:29; Isa. 33:24; 65:19. (Ed 271:2).

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1Pet. 1:13-19).

WOMEN

A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing. For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, to call passengers who go right on their ways: whoso is simple let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the midst of hell. (Prov. 9:13-18).

Women are proverbial for being talkers, for gossiping, and for verbal harassment— hen pecking – their husbands. Solomon, who knew women very well, had quite a few things to say about them. Many of his proverbs deal with women's speech. He notes that their words were often not noble, gracious, or kind.

It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.... It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.... A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.... It is better to dwell in the corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house. (Prov. 21:9,19; 27:15; 25:24).

In these verses, Solomon states it is easier to move to a private corner of the roof, no matter how big the house, than to live with a loud, quarrelsome, belligerent, obnoxious woman. Even the desert he finds preferable to living with a woman who is always ready to argue. Solomon must have known a lot about contentious women and big houses. His father David, king of Israel, had several wives, plus many concubines. With 700 wives and 300 concubines of his own, there was no way for Solomon to avoid lots of arguments with that many women fighting over one man in the palace. He probably had to go to the roof or the desert for peace and quiet. But just one woman can cause the rest of the family to seek peace elsewhere. Solomon also wrote of the strange woman who as a harlot, an adulteress, a seductress. Her speech was much different than that of either the contentious woman or the virtuous woman.

And behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart. (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner).... With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. (Prov. 7:10-12,21). The mouth of a strange woman is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein.” (Prov. 22:14).

This woman flatters with her tongue, she lures, she entices. She is a flirt. She can also be loud and stubborn to draw attention to herself. Solomon compares a woman without discretion to a pig with a jewel in its snout. (Prov. 11:22). What is a woman without discretion? She is a woman who is not careful about what she says or does. Just as a pig will root and wallow in the filth regardless of the jewel in his snout, so some women will handle sensitive, delicate, and important information with little or no regard of what she does with it or how she handles such information.

In only two passages did Solomon refer to women in a positive sense, and in them he speaks of gracious and virtuous women. “A gracious woman retaineth honor.” (Prov. 16:11). A gracious woman is kind, courteous, merciful, compassionate; in short she has pleasing qualities. This is the kind of woman described in the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs called the virtuous woman whose worth is much greater than the value of the most flawless ruby. This woman “openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her mouth is the law of kindness.” (ver. 36). What manner of woman should every lady be. Her husband and children aren't afraid of dwelling in the same house with her. She isn't looked upon as foolish and obnoxious. She is loved and blessed and praised by her family. This is a truly godly woman.

A woman has great influence on the mind and thinking of her husband. She influences him to a great extent with her words.

Sister F wants to be a Christian, but she has not cultivated discretion and true courtesy. She is of a very sanguine turn of mind, ardent and self-confident. She shows the rough part of her character, and has not appeared to advantage. She has moved from impulse, acting just as she felt, and sometimes her feelings have been much excited and strong. She has strong likes and dislikes, and has permitted this unfortunate trait in her character to develop itself, greatly to the detriment of her own spiritual advancement and to the

injury of the church. She has talked too much and unwisely, just as she felt. This has had a strong influence upon her husband, and has at times led him to move from excitement of feeling, when if he had waited and looked at matters calmly and weighed them properly, it would have been better for himself and for the church. Nothing is gained by moving hurriedly, moving from impulse, or from strong feeling. (2T 50:2).

In a letter written to Elder and Mrs. Butler in December of 1888, just after the now well-known General Conference session in Minneapolis, Sister White had these pointed words for Mrs. Butler.

I beg of you, Sister Butler, as God has given you health, to praise His holy name. You have not only done your own soul injury but the soul of your husband in suggesting doubts, criticizing, in evil speaking, in suspicing evil, in gathering up that which appears to you to be faults and errors in others, and talking of these. You and Brother Butler have taken credit for having great penetration and discernment, when it is registered in the heavenly record as thinking evil, speaking evil, and harboring prejudice and evil-surmisings. This is not savoring of the spirit of Christ, but is another spirit. Sister Butler, if you were indeed living in the light, you would have light to impart to others. You confuse your husband's mind, bewilder his judgement, and he has woven into his experience your ideas and your feelings. This has been brought into his work to a greater or less extent. The leaven of suspicion has made you both unkind in thoughts, and uncharitable in feelings; and this is not pleasing to the Lord.

Now, Sister Butler, it is your solemn duty before God to learn the eloquence of silence; to have far less words, and to close your heart to these suspicious jealousies. If you do this the Lord will be your helper. The peace of Christ will pervade your soul. This unjust criticism is just as much a sin as any other fault, and it is offensive to God. I hope you will both place yourselves where you will think no evil. The grace of Christ must come into the soul, then it will be revealed in the character. Be careful, I beseech of you, be careful that you be not found on the enemy's side, doing the enemy's work, while you think you are doing God service.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. We must be Christians. Blindness of mind will come upon us if we fail to heed the injunction of the Spirit of God. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are also called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (1888 Ma 190:3-192:0).

The words written to novel readers can be applied to these women who, by their faultfinding ways make so much trouble for their husbands, for they have the same characteristics.

I would say to women of this description: You can make or destroy your own happiness. You can make your position happy or unbearable. The course which you pursue will create happiness or misery for yourself. Have these persons never thought that their husbands must tire of them in their uselessness, their peevishness, their faultfinding, their passionate fits of weeping while imagining their case so pitiful? Their irritable, peevish disposition is indeed weaning from them the affections of their husbands and driving them to seek for sympathy, and peace, and comfort elsewhere than at home. A poisonous atmosphere is in their dwelling, and home is to them anything but a place of rest, peace, or happiness. The husband is subject to Satan's temptation, and his affections are placed on forbidden objects, and he is lured on to crime and finally lost. (2T 464:3).

The words of both Sister F and Sister Butler had a strong, negative effect on their husbands, coloring their thinking and their experiences. This is especially detrimental when a woman is a minister's wife, as in Mrs. Butler's case. Her husband was not only a minister, but had also been the General Conference president.

The minister's wife who is not devoted to God is no help to her husband. While he dwells upon the necessity of bearing the cross and urges the importance of self-denial, the daily example of his wife often

contradicts his preaching and destroys its force. In this way she becomes a great hindrance and often leads her husband away from his duty and from God. She does not realize what a sin she is committing. Instead of seeking to be useful, seeking with true love for souls to help such as need help, she shrinks from the task and prefers a useless life. She is not constrained by the power of F's love and by unselfish, holy principles. She does not choose to do the will of God, to be a co-worker with her husband, with angels, and with God. When the wife of the minister accompanies her husband in his mission to save souls, it is a great sin for her to hinder him in his work by manifesting unhappy discontent. Yet instead of entering heartily into his labors, seeking every opportunity to unite her interest and labor with his, she often studies how she can make it more easy or pleasant for herself. If things around them are not as agreeable as she could wish (as they will not always be), she should not indulge homesick feelings, or by lack of cheerfulness and by spoken complaints harass the husband and make his task harder, and perhaps by her discontent draw him from the place where he could do good. She should not divert the interest of her husband from laboring for the salvation of souls, to sympathize with her ailments and gratify her whimsical, discontented feelings. If she would forget herself and labor to help others, talk and pray with poor souls, and act as if their salvation was of higher importance than any other consideration, she would feel from day to day a sweet satisfaction as a reward for her unselfish labor; I cannot call it sacrifice, for some of our ministers' wives do not know what it is to sacrifice or suffer for the truth's sake. (1T 450:1).

So great can a wife's influence be that Sister White compared one woman to Jezebel.

His wife has an excitable, bitter spirit, and has been zealous to spread false reports. She acts the part to her husband that Jezebel did to Ahab, and stirs him up to fight against the servants of God, who bear a pointed testimony. (1T 251:0).

Jezebel easily manipulated Ahab. Her wickedness has become proverbial. Her words were so influential they caused the death of Naboth and satisfied the covetous desire of Ahab. She brought about the slaughter of the prophets of God and put to flight the mighty Elijah. There are Jezebels today who are craftily manipulating and maneuvering large interests with their little member, the tongue. As Christian women, we must be careful to avoid the Jezebel tongue.

Every woman should develop a well-balanced mind and a pure character, reflecting only the true, the good, and the beautiful. The wife and mother may bind her husband and children to her heart by unvarying love, shown in gentle words and courteous deportment. Politeness is cheap, but it has power to soften natures which would grow hard and rough without it. Christian politeness should reign in every household. The cultivation of a uniform courtesy, a willingness to do by others as we would like them to do by us, would banish half the ills of life. (WM 154:3).

A truly converted woman will exert a powerful transforming influence for good. Connected with her husband, she may aid him in his work and become the means of encouragement and blessing to him. When the will and way are brought into subjection to the Spirit of God, there is no limit to the good that can be accomplished. (WM 157:2).

In the role of wife, it is necessary for a woman to keep silence on things which do not belong outside the family circle. Many, many women who love to talk and who find themselves unhappily married, or only imagine themselves to be, show little reserve in keeping private family information private and will talk openly of family troubles to men and women, and even to children and teens. One sister who was in a particularly miserable home was counseled by Ellen White. Her husband was a most reprehensible man who was totally wrapped up in himself. This affected the wife greatly. "Conscious of being wronged and misjudged by your husband, you have cherished a feeling of bitterness against him, and when censured you have retaliated upon those who questioned your course." (4T 137:1). She had forged ahead making a life for herself, but she retained her bitterness, and this led to blindness of her own faults.

But while you have fully realized your husband's faults, you have failed to mark your own. You have erred in talking of his failings to others, thus cultivating a love for dwelling upon disagreeable topics, and keeping your disappointments and trials constantly before you. You have thus fallen into the habit of making the most of your sorrows and difficulties, many of which you create by exaggeration and by talking to others. (4T 137:2).

It can be so very easy to fall into the habit of telling all the troubles to any willing ear. When these marital troubles are spoken of to man, other than the husband, the results are most serious.

When a woman relates her family troubles, or complains of her husband, to another man, **SHE VIOLATES HER MARRIAGE VOWS**; she dishonors her husband and breaks down the wall erected to preserve the sanctity of the marriage relation; she throws wide open the door and invites Satan to enter with his insidious temptations. This is just as Satan would have it. If a woman comes to a Christian brother with a tale of her woes, her disappointments and trials, he should ever advise her, if she must confide her troubles to someone, to select sisters for her confidants, and then there will be no appearance of evil whereby the cause of God may suffer reproach. (2T 306:1, emphasis supplied).

Thousands of times a day across this nation, women break their marriage vows by pouring out their troubles into the ear of their therapist or psychoanalyst, a family counselor, or a pastor. It is even occurring in thousands of Seventh-day Adventist families. Jesus is the only man to whom a woman should go with such troubles. He is the One with the answers, and the power to change hearts. We need to take all such problems to Him.

In conversing with men and with their husbands, women must take care in how they speak and what they talk about.

There is a sacred circle around every family which should be preserved. No other one has any right to that sacred circle. The husband and wife should be all to each other. The wife should have no secrets to keep from her husband and let others know, and the husband should have no secrets to keep from his wife to relate to others. The heart of his wife should be the grave for the faults of the husband, and the heart of the husband the grave for his wife's faults. Never should either party indulge in a joke at the expense of the other's feelings. Never should either the husband or wife in sport or in any other manner complain of each other to others, for frequently indulging in this foolish and what may seem perfectly harmless joking will end in trial with each other and perhaps estrangement. I have been shown that there should be a sacred shield around every family.

The home circle should be regarded as a sacred place, a symbol of heaven, a mirror in which to reflect ourselves. Friends and acquaintances we may have, but in the home life they are not to meddle. A strong sense of proprietorship should be felt, giving a sense of ease, restfulness, trust. (AH 177:1,2).

One spouse should not speak derogatorily of the other or make that person the brunt of a joke. Many people get in the habit of calling the other spouse by a nickname which is, in reality, derogatory in nature, such as "my old man," or "the old lady." These names and comments are not reflective of Christlikeness, and as Christians we should refrain from using them.

With some women professing godliness, there is a careless, coarse freedom of manner which leads to wrong and evil. But those godly women whose minds and hearts are occupied in meditating upon themes which strengthen purity of life, and which elevate the soul to commune with God, will not be easily led astray from the path of rectitude and virtue. Such will be fortified against the sophistry of Satan; they will be prepared to withstand his seductive arts. (2T 456:2).

Those who are careless, Satan uses as his instruments to entice men into evil, and there are men willing to be so enticed. "Weak-minded, sympathetic women have praised you and appeared charmed with your society; and you have felt a fascinating power upon you in their company." "Weak-headed and unprincipled women have retained you in their presence, and you were like a charmed bird. You seemed attracted by these superficial persons" (2T 292:0,1). Notice that the godly women are the virtuous women; they are modest and circumspect in their words and deportment. It is the weak-minded, weak-headed woman who sports about with men who are not her husband.

Our sisters should encourage true meekness; they should not be forward, talkative, and bold, but modest and unassuming, slow to speak. They may cherish courteousness. To be kind, tender, pitiful, forgiving, and humble, would be becoming and well-pleasing to God. If they occupy this position they will not be burdened with undue attention from gentlemen in the church or out. All will feel that there is a sacred circle of purity around these God-fearing women, which shields them from any unwarrantable liberties. (2T 456:1).

The apostle exhorted the women in the faith to be chaste in conversation and modest in dress and deportment. "Whose adorning, He counseled, "let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and

of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” (AA 523:1).

We live in a fast age and a very morally relaxed culture where interaction between men and women is loose and even vulgar. We do not stop even to consider how such matters, as we are discussing here, stand in God's sight, but God has considered them and He has a message for women.

I have been designing to speak to my sisters and tell them that, from what the Lord has been pleased to show me from time to time, there is a great fault among them. They are not careful to abstain from all appearance of evil. They are not all circumspect in their deportment, as becometh women professing godliness. Their words are not as select and well chosen as those of women who have received the grace of God should be. They are too familiar with their brethren. They linger around them, incline toward them, and seem to choose their society. They are highly gratified with their attention.

From the light which the Lord has given, our sisters should pursue a very different course. They should be more reserved, manifest less boldness, and encourage in themselves “shamefacedness and sobriety.” Both brethren and sisters indulge in too much jovial talk when in each other's society. Women professing godliness indulge in much jesting, joking, and laughing. This is unbecoming and grieves the Spirit of God. These exhibitions reveal a lack of true Christian refinement. They do not strengthen the soul in God, but bring great darkness; they drive away the pure, refined, heavenly angels and bring those who engage in these wrongs down to a low level. (2T 455:1,2).

God has assigned woman her mission; and if she, in her humble way, yet to the best of her ability, makes a heaven of her home, faithfully and lovingly performing her duties to her husband and children, continually seeking to let a holy light shine from her useful, pure, and virtuous life to brighten all around her, she is doing the work left her of the Master, and will hear from His divine lips the words: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. These women who are doing with ready willingness what their hands find to do, with cheerfulness of spirit aiding their husbands to bear their burdens, and training their children for God, are missionaries in the highest sense. They are engaged in an important branch of the great work to be done on earth to prepare mortals for a higher life, and they will receive their reward. Children are to be trained for heaven and fitted to shine in the courts of the Lord's kingdom. When parents, especially mothers, have a true sense of the important, responsible work which God has left for them to do, they will not be so much engaged in the business which concerns their neighbors, with which they have nothing to do. They will not go from house to house to engage in fashionable gossip, dwelling upon the faults, wrongs, and inconsistencies of their neighbors. They will feel so great a burden of care for their own children that they can find no time to take up a reproach against their neighbor. Gossipers and news carriers are a terrible curse to neighborhoods and churches. Two thirds of all the church trials come from this source. (2T 465:2).

Paul told the women – young, old, and widowed, – to refrain from gossip, talebearing, and being busybodies. (1Tim. 5:11-14; Titus 2:3-5). Herein is one sin of which women tend to be primarily guilty and which they seem to gravitate to with great ease. A group of women gets together and before long their tongues have dissected all the neighbors, moved through the church and the local population, and then slashed their way into the midst of more distant victims; the rich, the famous, and those in the news.

I saw that when sisters who are given to talk get together, Satan is generally present; for he finds employment. He stands by to excite the mind and make the most of the advantage he has gained. He knows that all this gossip, and talebearing, and revealing of secrets, and dissecting of character, separate the soul from God. It is death to spirituality and a calm religious influence. Sister U sins greatly with her tongue. She ought by her words to have an influence for good, but she frequently talks at random. Sometimes her words put a different construction upon things than they will bear. Sometimes there is exaggeration. Then there is misstatement. There is no intention to misstate, but the habit of much talking and talking upon things that are unprofitable has been so long cherished that she has become careless and reckless in her words, and frequently does not know what she is stating herself. This destroys any influence for good she

might have. It is time there was an entire reform in this respect. Her society has not been prized as it would have been had she not indulged in this sinful talking. (2T 185:3).

Sister U probably dominated most of the conversation in which she was involved while the other ladies were either lapping it up or failed to find the courage to stop her. Sister F had a similar problem. She was a faultfinder, always talking about the faults and failings of her brethren and sisters in the church, as well as her neighbors, until her friends became her non-friends. Her tongue seemed to be in overdrive, and all those around her were becoming unhappy and as miserable as she was. She excused her actions, but God would not.

You have excused yourself for speaking of your brother or sister or neighbor to others before going to him and taking the steps which God has absolutely commanded. You say: "Why, I did not speak to anyone until I was so burdened that I could not refrain." What burdened you? Was it not a plain neglect of your own duty, of a thus saith the Lord? You were under the guilt of sin because you did not go and tell the offender his fault between you and him alone. If you did not do this, if you disobeyed God, how could you be otherwise than burdened unless your heart was hardened while you were trampling the command of God underfoot, and in your heart hating your brother or neighbor? And what way have you found to unburden yourself? God reproves you for a sin of omission in not telling your brother his fault, and you excuse and comfort yourself by a sin of commission by telling your brother's faults to another person! Is this the right way to purchase ease – by committing sin? (2T 53:1).

This dear sister was then told what her duty was, the same duty which is ours.

Dear friend, an entire transformation must take place in you, or you will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. The church at –, especially talking women, have a lesson to learn. "If any man [or woman] among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Many will be weighed in the balance and found wanting in this matter of so great importance. Where are the Christians who walk by this rule? who will take God's part against the evilspeaker? who will please God, and set a watch, a continual watch, before the mouth, and keep the door of the lips? Speak evil of no man. Hear evil of no man. If there be no hearers, there will be no speakers of evil. If anyone speaks evil in your presence, check him. Refuse to hear him, though his manner be ever so soft and his accents mild. He may profess attachment, and yet throw out covert hints and stab the character in the dark.

Resolutely refuse to hear, though the whisperer complains of being burdened till he speak. Burdened indeed! with a cursed secret which separateth very friends. Go, burdened ones, and free yourselves from your burden in God's appointed way. First go tell your brother his fault between you and him alone. If this fail, next take with you one or two friends, and tell him in their presence. If these steps fail, then tell it to the church. Not an unbeliever is to be made acquainted with the slightest particular of the matter. Telling it to the church is the last step to be taken. Publish it not to the enemies of our faith. They have no right to the knowledge of church matters, lest the weakness and errors of Christ's followers be exposed. (2T 54:1,2).

God wants us to work for Him, to do that which He has given us to do. We have an influence on all with whom we come in contact. Those with whom we associate should be made less worldly by our influence. The sisters of the church have a work that they can do in this regard. Rather than gossiping or discussing the latest fashion news or some unimportant and nonessential subject, the mind should be dwelling upon the things of God.

The efforts of these sisters to do good would be far more acceptable to God were there seen in their lives less dressing, less cheap, worldly talking, and less visiting; less complaining and murmuring against the ministers laboring for you, and more praying and reading of the Bible. (5T 131:0).

Women professing godliness generally fail to train the mind. They leave it uncontrolled, to go where it will. This is a great mistake. Many seem to have no mental power. They have not educated the mind to think; and because they have not done this, they suppose they cannot. Meditation and prayer are necessary to a growth in grace. Why there is no more stability among women is because of so little mental culture, so little reflection. Leaving the mind in a state of inaction, they lean upon others to do the brain work, to plan, and think, and remember for them, and thus grow more and more inefficient. Some need to discipline

the mind by exercise. They should force it to think. While they depend upon someone to think for them, to solve their difficulties, and they refuse to tax the mind with thought, the inability to remember, to look ahead and discriminate, will continue. Efforts must be made by every individual to educate the mind. (2T 187:3).

The mind cannot be allowed to wander at random. It must not be allowed to dwell upon impure subjects. There should be no romance novels, or other kinds of fiction, no soap operas, no tabloids, and even few worldly magazines in the home. These lead to daydreaming and that leads to uselessness.

Had you trained your mind to dwell upon elevated subjects, meditating upon heavenly themes, you could have done much good. You could have had an influence upon the minds of others, to turn their selfish thoughts and world-loving dispositions into the channel of spirituality. Were your affections and thoughts brought into subjection to the will of Christ, you would be capable of doing good. Your imagination is diseased because you have permitted it to run in a forbidden channel, to become dreamy. Daydreaming and romantic castle-building have unfitted you for usefulness. You have lived in an imaginary world; you have been an imaginary martyr and an imaginary Christian.

There is much of this low sentimentalism mingled with the religious experience of the young in this age of the world. My sister, God requires you to be transformed. Elevate your affections, I implore you. Devote your mental and physical powers to the service of your Redeemer, who has bought you. Sanctify your thoughts and feelings that all your works may be wrought in God. (2T 251:1,2).

We have heard desire expressed that husbands and families should come into the truth. This is right; it should be a prominent wish. But do we do all our duty? Do we make all the advancement that we should? Do we not come far short of our duty in meeting the work of progression? Don't be a spiritual dwarf. We love to see infants and watch their baby ways, but the same ways would be disgusting if retained until the child was two years old. So the Christian must grow. Be *conformed* to Christ, not *deformed*. Just feel as though you were anchored in Christ. Let there be a solidity to the sisters who are alone. Avoid frivolity and keep constantly watching. (UL 147:2).

When the believing women shall feel the burden of souls, and burden of sins not their own, they will be working as Christ worked. They will consider no sacrifice too great to make to win souls to Christ. And everyone who has this love for souls, is born of God; they are ready to follow in His footsteps, and their words and voice would be talents employed in the Master's service; the very nourishment coming from the parent stock to their own souls would flow out in distinct channels of love to souls who are withered and dried up.

In this work is a constant education. The desire to be a blessing discovers the weakness and inefficiency of the worker. This drives the soul to God in prayer, and the Lord Jesus gives light and His Holy Spirit, and they understand that it is Christ who does the melting and breaking of the hard hearts. (Ev 465-6).

Dear Sister:...You are capable of exerting a strong influence in favor of the truth if you will only train your mind to run in the right channel. All your words and acts should be such as to honor your Redeemer, exalt His love, and magnify His charms. (2T 247:2).

When unkind, discouraging words are spoken to you, do not retaliate. Do not reply unless you can return a pleasant answer. Say to yourself, "I will not disappoint my Saviour." The Christian woman is a gentlewoman. On her lips is ever the law of kindness. She utters no hasty words. To speak gentle words when you are irritated will bring sunshine into your hearts and make your path more smooth. A school girl, when asked for a definition of meekness, said, "Meek people are those who give soft answers to rough questions." Christ says, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." They will be fair subjects for the kingdom of heaven, for they are willing to be taught. (WM 153:1).

Great is the work and mission of women, especially those who are wives and mothers. They can be a blessing to all around them. They can have a powerful influence for good if they will let their light shine that others may be led to glorify our heavenly Father. Women may have a transforming influence if they will only consent to yield their way and their will to God, and let Him control their mind, affections, and

being. They can have an influence which will tend to refine and elevate those with whom they associate. But this class are generally unconscious of the power they possess. They exert an unconscious influence which seems to work out naturally from a sanctified life, a renewed heart. It is the fruit that grows naturally upon the good tree of divine planting. Self is forgotten, merged in the life of Christ. To be rich in good works is as natural as their breath. They live to do others good and yet are ready to say: We are unprofitable servants. (2T 465:1).

The Lord, I fully believe, is leading you that you shall keep clear and distinct in all their purity the principles of temperance in connection with the truth for these last days. They that do his will shall know of the doctrine. The Lord designs that woman should learn of his meekness and lowliness of heart, and cooperate with the greatest teacher the world has ever known. When this is done, there will be no strife for the supremacy, no pride of opinion; for it will be realized that mind, voice, every jot of ability, are only lent talents, given by God to be used in his work, to accumulate for him, and to be returned to the Giver with all the increase. We are expected to grow in capability, in influence, and in power, ever looking unto Jesus. And by beholding, we shall become changed into his likeness. (7MR 156:1).

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY

But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. (Hab. 2:20).

Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of the habitation of his holiness. (Zech. 2:13, margin).

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. (Ps. 89:7).

The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part.... God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath. How important, then, that our example in Sabbathkeeping should be right. (6T 352:1).

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, "Remember." (6T 353:3).

The church, the sanctuary, is where God meets with His people. Here is where God's people assemble to meet with Him every Sabbath. Here the angels and the Holy Spirit come to bring God's blessings and to work upon the hearts of those in attendance. This is God's house. "Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. (5T 491:3). We are to "fear God and give glory to Him." (Rev. 14:7).

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. (1Chron. 16:29,30).

When we meet in God's house we are come into His presence, our Creator, our King, the Ruler of the universe. We are commanded to keep silence before Him, to reverence His sanctuary. From the moment we enter the house of God we are to act as if we are in the presence of the King of the universe, for indeed we are.

When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. If there is a stove in the room, it is not proper to crowd about it in an indolent, careless attitude. Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers. (5T 492:1).

All of our chatter, our greetings, gossip, news gathering, and such like, are to be left outside the doors of the sanctuary.

The whispering and laughing and talking which might be without sin in a common business place should find no sanction in the house where God is worshiped. The mind should be prepared to hear the word of God, that it may have due weight and suitably impress the heart. (5T 492:2).

We are to go to our seats and in the moments before the services begin, we need to "maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls." (6T 492:2). At all times during the service, we are to maintain reverence, even, and especially, the children and youth. The young should be with their parents but:

They are too often found in groups, away from the parents, who should have charge of them. Notwithstanding they are in the presence of God, and His eye is looking upon them, they are light and trifling, they whisper and laugh, are careless, irreverent, and inattentive. They are seldom instructed that the minister is God's ambassador, that the message he brings is one of God's appointed agencies in the salvation of souls, and that to all who have the privilege brought within their reach it will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. (5T 497:0).

These little knots of young people are great disrupters of the church services.

Reverence is greatly needed in the youth of this age. I am alarmed as I see children and youth of religious parents so heedless of the order and propriety that should be observed in the house of God. While God's servants are presenting the words of life to the people, some will be reading, others whispering and

laughing. Their eyes are sinning by diverting the attention of those around them. This habit, if allowed to remain unchecked, will grow and influence others. (MYP 265:3).

The house of God is desecrated and the Sabbath violated by Sabbath believers' children. They run about the house, play, talk, and manifest their evil tempers in the very meetings where the saints have met together to glorify God and to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. The place that should be holy, where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon and a place where confusion, disorder, and untidiness reign. This is enough to shut out God from our assemblies and cause His wrath to be kindled, that He will not be pleased to go out with the armies of Israel to battle against our enemies....

Parents, it is your duty to have your children under perfect subjection, having all their passions and evil tempers perfectly subdued. I saw that if they were carried to the house of God, they should be made to know where they are, that they are not at home, but where God meets with His people. They should be kept quiet, from all play and running about, then God will deign to meet with His people. (9MR 321, 322).

Children and youth should never feel that it is something to be proud of to be indifferent and careless in meetings where God is worshipped. God sees every irreverent thought or action, and it is registered in the books of heaven. He says, "I know thy works." Nothing is hid from His all-seeing eye. If you have formed in any degree the habit of inattention and indifference in the house of God, exercise the powers you have to correct it, and show that you have self-respect. Practice reverence until it becomes a part of yourself. (MYP 366:1).

Many of these youths, if questioned, will excuse "their carelessness and irreverence, because of the wrong example given them by more experienced professors." (MYP 429:2). In other words, the older folks who sit and whisper, who laugh and talk during the service stand accused of providing an excuse for the youth to do the same thing. Folks of all ages, these things show great disrespect and irreverence for our Maker and our Saviour. We are to keep silence before God. How can we hear His voice speaking to our hearts if our own tongues are geared up and firing away?

Because of irreverence in attitude, dress, and deportment, and lack of a worshipful frame of mind, God has often turned His face away from those assembled for His worship. (5T 499:0, emphasis supplied).

As we meet for worship, our voices should be raised in praise to God for His blessings bestowed on us. In song, in testimony, we are to honor Him with our words of praise.

The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory. (Ps. 29:9).

We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. (Ps. 48:9).

Let the love of Christ be the burden of the speaker's utterance. Let it be expressed in simple language in every song of praise. Let the inspiration of the Spirit of God dictate your prayers. As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you receive the message as from heaven. This is very old-fashioned, I know; but it will be a thank offering to God for the bread of life given to the hungry soul. This response to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will be a strength to your own soul and an encouragement to others. It will give some evidence that there are in God's building living stones that emit light. (6T 367:1).

Let us all bear in mind that in every assembly of the saints below are angels of God, listening to the testimonies, songs, and prayers. Let us remember that our praises are supplemented by the choirs of the angelic host above. (6T 367:0).

Angels are always present where God is being worshiped and they note what takes place. These silent witnesses are there to draw souls to Christ. "As long as there is hope, until men resist the Holy Spirit to their eternal ruin, they are guarded by heavenly intelligences." (6T 366:1). Satan and his angels are also in attendance to snatch away the bread of life from those who need it. He works to paralyze the senses so that the cautions, reproofs, and warnings fall on deaf ears. He might do this by causing a baby or little child to cry or to start a fuss that draws attention from the speaker. The child should, of course, be immediately removed from the sanctuary, quieted, and then returned, for they

must learn reverence in church. Sometimes it is the youth or adults he uses to create distractions by getting them into conversations or some kind of frivolity during the service.

Do not have so little reverence for the house and worship of God as to communicate with one another during the sermon. If those who commit this fault could see the angels of God looking upon them and marking their doings, they would be filled with shame and abhorrence of themselves. God wants attentive hearers. It was while men slept, that the enemy sowed tares. (MYP 266:2).

When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places. (5T 493:2).

“At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, “Remember.” Not only in the church are we to remember, but throughout the whole 24 hours of the Sabbath. Actually, we need to remember all week and prepare all week for the Sabbath. Our lives are to be centered in the worship of God which climaxes on the seventh day of every week, the Sabbath. On this day, set apart for holy use, we honor God by refraining from all that occupies us the rest of the week. We are to honor Him by not seeking our own pleasures, or doing our own ways, or even speaking our own words. There is a blessing that God waits to bestow upon His people each Sabbath.

He has this for every one who shows his love for God in keeping holy the Sabbath day, God's great memorial of creation. Speak softly, walk softly. Let not a word of lightness or trifling come from your lips. This is God's day. He has blessed the seventh day, as his Sabbath, to be sacredly observed. (RH 6/8/97).

If you have something which needs to be discussed that would not be fitting for the Sabbath, it needs to be done on one of the other six days of the week. We have the Lord's command that the Sabbath is not a day for ordinary business or every day pursuits.

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. (Lev. 23:3).

And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. (Ex. 16:23).

Friday is the preparation day for the Sabbath, on which all our duties for the Sabbath should be completed.

Time can then be devoted to making the necessary preparation for the Sabbath and to thinking and conversing about it. Nothing which will in the sight of Heaven be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath. (2T 703:0).

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, “confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” James 5:16. (6T 356:2).

As the sun begins to sink into the Western sky on Friday evening, announcing the soon arrival of the Sabbath hours:

Let the members of the family assemble to read God's word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to God and to one another. We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be prepared to honor the day which God has blessed and sanctified. (6T 356:5).

In this way we greet the arrival of Sabbath with peace and joy, with reverence and holiness, with thankfulness and gratitude to God for the blessed day of rest. “When the Sabbath commences, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord's.”

(2T 702:1). The next 24 hours belong to God and our own words are not to be spoken. This means that the mind must be reigned in, and the thoughts closely controlled. “God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes.” (2T 703:0).

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Ex. 20:8-11).

The Commandment states that not only is each individual to keep the Sabbath holy, but that all within the household are to also keep it holy. This applies not only to the family members, but even to lodgers within your home's boundaries. To permit others to watch TV, conduct business, cook, or do other common, weekday work, is breaking the fourth commandment.

And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy day. (PP 307:3).

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isa. 58:13,14).

Oh, how frequently do people forget, as soon as they are outside the sanctuary doors, that not just the house, but the entire day is holy. As soon as church is let out, the talk immediately turns to all sorts of everyday concerns. One can move from one little cluster to another little cluster of people and hear discussions about the weather, fashion, cooking, business, work, medical problems, gossip, and nearly anything else one can think of. Everything is discussed except that which should be on everyone's lips – the soon return of Jesus Christ. How does God view all the kinds of talk that has just been described?

But we should not talk about matters of business or engage in any common, worldly conversation. At all times and in all places God requires us to prove our loyalty to Him by honoring the Sabbath. (6T 360:1).

The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings us into bondage and condemnation. (2T 703:0).

Those who discuss business matters or lay plans on the Sabbath are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. (PP 307:3).

Dear children, are you as careful as you should be in keeping the Sabbath? You have something to do besides laying aside your work and amusements on that day. If you, on that day, lay plans of what you will do when the Sabbath is past, or talk of your work, amusements and clothes, you pollute the Sabbath. The Prophet has in another chapter told us how to keep the Sabbath from polluting it, and nothing short of doing as he has pointed out will be keeping the Sabbath holy. (YI 2/1/53).

Those who are not fully converted to the truth frequently let their minds run freely upon worldly business, and, although they may rest from physical toil upon the Sabbath, their tongues speak out what is in their minds; hence these words concerning cattle, crops, losses, and gains. All this is Sabbath breaking. If the mind is running upon worldly matters, the tongue will reveal it; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (2T 703:2).

God requires not only refraining from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but the mind must be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things, business transactions, and light and trifling conversation. Talking upon everything or

anything which may come into the mind is speaking their own words. Every deviation from the right brings into bondage and condemnation. (5MR 301:3).

If you are telling someone how you cook a certain dish, God holds you guilty as though you were in the kitchen cooking. If you are discussing last week's business losses, God counts you guilty of having conducted business on His time.

Far more sacredness is attached to the Sabbath than is given it by many professed Sabbathkeepers. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have not kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit. He calls for a reform in the observance of the Sabbath. (6T 353:2).

We are the repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in. The reformation must begin with us. We must learn to control our thoughts upon the Sabbath, then our tongues will follow suit.

You have been unguarded and frequently joined with the unconsecrated in conversation upon common topics of the day – in regard to losses and gains, stock and provisions, crops, etc. This is all wrong and injures your influence. Your example is wrong. In this respect you should reform. (5MR 302:1; see also 2T 703).

It is interesting to note that these words were originally written in a testimony to a minister! Ministers should be foremost in setting the example for their parishioners.

The example of ministers especially should be circumspect in this respect. Upon the Sabbath they should conscientiously restrict themselves to conversation upon religious themes– to present truth, present duty, the Christian's hopes and fears, trials, conflicts, and afflictions; to overcoming at last, and the reward to be received. (2T 703:3).

The children are not to be allowed to run and play, whoop and holler on this day. Parents need to take them out into nature.

Above everything, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not let them violate it, for you may just as well violate it yourself as to let your children do it. When you suffer your children to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as a commandment breaker. You transgress His Sabbath. (9MR 323:2).

Describe to them God's great work of creation. Tell them that when the earth came from His hand, it was holy and beautiful. Every flower, every shrub, every tree, answered the purpose of its Creator. Everything upon which the eye rested was lovely and filled the mind with thoughts of the love of God. Every sound was music in harmony with the voice of God. Show that it was sin which marred God's perfect work; that thorns and thistles, sorrow and pain and death, are all the result of disobedience to God. Bid them see how the earth, though marred with the curse of sin, still reveals God's goodness. The green fields, the lofty trees, the glad sunshine, the glory of the starry heavens, and the moon in its beauty all bear witness of the Creator. Not a drop of rain falls, not a ray of light is shed on our unthankful world, but it testifies to the forbearance and love of God.

Tell them of the way of salvation; how "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Let the sweet story of Bethlehem be repeated. Present before the children Jesus, as a child obedient to His parents, as a youth faithful and industrious, helping to support the family. Thus you can teach them that the Saviour knows the trials, perplexities, and temptations, the hopes and joys, of the young, and that He can give them sympathy and help. From time to time read with them the interesting stories in Bible history. Question as to what they have learned in the Sabbath school, and study with them the next Sabbath's lesson. (6T 358:2,3).

Thus parents can make the Sabbath, as it should be, the most joyful day of the week. They lead their children to regard it as a delight, the day of days, the holy of the Lord, honorable. (6T 359:2).

Never on this day when we to leave the church and go home, should we proceed to carve up the minister for dinner.

Many heads of families make the service a subject of criticism at home, approving a few things and condemning others. Thus the message of God to men is criticized and questioned, and made a subject of levity. What impressions are thus made upon the young by these careless, irreverent remarks the books of

heaven alone will reveal. The children see and understand these things very much quicker than parents are apt to think. Their moral senses receive a wrong bias that time will never fully change.... These things should be spoken of with reverence, with propriety of language, and with fine susceptibility, that you may reveal to all you associate with that you regard the message from God's servants as a message from God Himself. (5T 497:1).

In regard to the service of the sanctuary, if the speaker has a blemish, be afraid to mention it. Talk only of the good work he is doing, of the good ideas he presented, which you should heed as coming through God's agent. (5T 498:1).

The Sabbath should be a happy, joyful day for the whole family. It should draw them closer to each other and to heaven. As the Sabbath hours draw to a close, it should be ended in the manner that it was begun – with reverence and praise to God.

All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. Yet they can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interesting our children. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can walk out with them in the open air; we can sit with them in the groves and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and can inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature.

The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than by devising means to impart proper instruction to their families and interesting them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God and what He requires of us in order to perfect Christian characters and attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children may look forward to it and have a welcome in their hearts for it. (2T 584:1-585:1).

As the sun goes down, let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God's presence through the cares of the week of labor. (6T 359:1).

From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience. (6T 350:1).

PROFANITY AND SWEARING

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. (Ex. 20:7).

This commandment not only prohibits false oaths and common swearing, but it forbids us to use the name of God in a light or careless manner, without regard to its awful significance. By the thoughtless mention of God in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him. "Holy and reverend is His name." Ps. 111:9. All should meditate upon His majesty, His purity and holiness, that the heart may be impressed with a sense of His exalted character; and His holy name should be uttered with reverence and solemnity. (PP 306-7).

Reverence should be shown also for the name of God. Never should that name be spoken lightly or thoughtlessly. Even in prayer its frequent or needless repetition should be avoided. "Holy and reverend is His name." Ps. 111:9. Angels, as they speak it, veil their faces. With what reverence should we who are fallen and sinful, take it upon our lips. (Ed 243:5).

We must be very careful how, when, and where we use our Father's name, for He is holy and His name is holy. Yet how often in common conversation does His name come into our speech yet not in what we would consider a profane way. Many people call upon God as their witness or end statements of desire by saying "God willing." Often these phrases are not even really thought about, but they are not usually said in earnest seriousness, and therefore they are profanity.

May 14, 1851, I saw the beauty and loveliness of Jesus. As I beheld His glory, the thought did not occur to me that I should ever be separated from His presence. I saw a light coming from the glory that encircled the Father, and as it approached near to me, my body trembled and shook like a leaf. I thought that if it should come near me I would be struck out of existence, but the light passed me. Then could I have some sense of the great and terrible God with whom we have to do. I saw then what faint views some have of the holiness of God, and how much they take His holy and reverend name in vain, without realizing that it is God, the great and terrible God, of whom they are speaking. While praying, many use careless and irreverent expressions, which grieve the tender Spirit of the Lord and cause their petitions to be shut out of heaven. (EW 70:2).

I saw that God's holy name should be used with reverence and awe. The words God Almighty are coupled together and used by some in prayer in a careless, thoughtless manner, which is displeasing to Him. Such have no realizing sense of God or the truth, or they would not speak so irreverently of the great and dreadful God, who is soon to judge them in the last day. Said the angel, "Couple them not together; for fearful is His name." Those who realize the greatness and majesty of God, will take His name on their lips with holy awe. He dwelleth in light unapproachable; no man can see Him and live. I saw that these things will have to be understood and corrected before the church can prosper. (EW 122:1).

As Seventh-day Adventists, we usually consider ourselves to be victorious over cursing, swearing, and profanity, with nothing to worry about as far as that commandment goes. When we turn to Christ, this is usually one of the first things we give up. But sometimes what we give up is the most overt profanity. Many Adventists are guilty of swearing everyday without realizing they are doing so. They forget the words of the third commandment.

One of the most common methods of such swearing is euphemisms. We say one particular word or phrase, but it is really a transmutation of another word or phrase. One such word is zounds, a word found in Shakespeare's writings which is a derivative of "God's wounds." Another phrase that is frequently heard in the South and probably has Scottish origins, is "I swanee" meaning "I'll warrant you" or I'll guarantee you. In other words, you'll swear to it. Following is a list of commonly used words and phrases that are really mutations of other words and phrases. They have not been written to be sensational but to point out to those who are thoughtlessly using them, wherein they are wrong. The commonly used phrase is in the left column and the most likely original form is in the right column.

heck. hell
 blue blazes. hell
 gosh. Oh God!
 gee whiz. Oh God!
 be jebbers. by Jesus
 phooey. fool
 doggone it. damn it
 dang. damn
 gee. Jesus
 jeez. Jesus
 B S. bull ____ (dung)
 shoot. ____ (dung)
 golly. God

Not only do we make abundant use of the words in the above list, we will take any number of items and make them holy, i.e., holy ___! We also give the heavens, which are not ours to give, to a sizeable number of people and things, or we keep them for ourselves, i.e., My heavens! We even take the liberty of declaring what the heavens are, i.e., Good heavens! Many people swear by their own goodness, their own gracious(ness), even body parts, and sometimes their own lives. Even dad is not left out as many folks will put dad in front of gum and burn and blast and several other words. It is still just another way of saying damn. They make all manner of other things good, besides the heavens, unusually things that are already good such as the inhabitants of heaven. Some swear, perhaps unknowingly, by false gods. Some people use the expression “By Jove” without realizing that Jove was considered the father of the gods in pagan Greece and Rome.

But profanity and swearing goes beyond the use of these phrases and expressions. The Biblical meaning of the third commandment is very far reaching.

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. (Matt. 5:33-37).

This refers to common conversation. Some exaggerate in their language. Some swear by their own life; others swear by their head – as sure as they live; as sure as they have a head. Some take heaven and earth to witness that such things are so. Some hope that God will strike them out of existence if what they are saying is not true. It is this kind of common swearing against which Jesus warns His disciples. (1T 201:1).

These words condemn all meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. They condemn the deceptive compliments, the evasion of truth, the flattering phrases, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in the business world. They teach that no one who tries to appear what he is not, or whose words do not convey the real sentiment of his heart, can be called truthful. (MB 68:1).

Slang must also be avoided. Not only does much slang border on profanity, much of it is gutter language which is commonly considered a species of cussing and is unacceptable in respectful circles. Even when working among those who use such language heavily, all, including the minister, need not resort to the use of such language to give the last message to these people.

I have heard loose language, careless, vulgar words, and slang phrases from the lips of parents. I have heard these words taken up and repeated by their children; and my heart has been pained; for I knew that

these parents had sown the seed which Satan delights to cultivate. I knew that they had sown seeds that would produce a harvest of corruption. And oh, how Jesus is pained by the cruel work of these parents! (HR 7/89).

The Lord has blessed us with the light of truth, and we are to let that light be seen, by being doers of the word. We are to let the bright rays of God's word extent to others, to cheer and bless all that are in the house. If we do not have oil in our vessels, accept of the grace of Christ, which is abundantly provided for us, our light will burn dim, and, if neglected, will die out. But if from the treasure of the heart you bring forth good things, then your light shines out to those who are in darkness. But if you indulge in slang phrases and foolish talk, you bring forth from the treasure of the heart evil things, and darkness comes upon your soul, and upon the souls of others; for evil words bring forth a harvest after their kind. Evil words do more mischief than you have any idea of; they are seeds sown to produce a harvest, and your influence as a Christian is weakened. Foolish, idle jesting fails to exalt the character of Christ; and when he is not lifted up, souls are not drawn to him. The Lord Jesus calls upon you to place yourself in the channel of light, that the result of thorough faith in Christ as your personal Saviour may appear. Christianity is not to be put on and off at will, but it is to be our constant adorning; we are to be clothed with Christ's righteousness as a garment. (ST 11/21/92).

Those who are teaching the way to life have much to learn, and the Lord invites all who will to come to him and learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart. He declares, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Take your text from the word of God, and make use of the scenes of nature, and of events and objects about you, to make the meaning plain, and find your way to the hearts of the people, and angels of God will make a personal application of the truth to the hearts of those who are ignorant. You need not be formal or mechanical. You need not depend upon notes, neither need you be rough and uncouth, and use coarse language and slang expressions, thinking that in this way you will reach the uneducated classes. Look at the manner in which Jesus addressed the poor. His language was pure, but it was simplicity itself, and through the imagination and the heart he reached the hearts of the people. Boisterous gesticulation, jumping up and down, and pounding on the desk, is not after the order of Christ, and the good that has been accomplished has not been on account of these things, but in spite of them. (ST 3/19/94).

He who believes the truth for this time will practice personal piety. The language of his heart will be, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Let every minister be sedate. As he studies the life of Christ he will see the necessity of walking circumspectly. Ye he may be, and will be, if connected with the Sun of Righteousness, cheerful and happy, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvelous light. The conversation will be pure, entirely free from all slang phrases. (1888 Ma 142:3).

Even words which sound innocent may be profanity to God and angels. "Burning words of passion should never be spoken, for in the sight of God and holy angels they are as a species of swearing. (AH 439:3). The expletives which are so often used are unnecessary words and come under swearing. Many, many of us use these words and phrases as expressions of frustration, anger, disgust, shock, surprise, and annoyance at little provocations. Such terms as, Oh, dear!, Oh, boy!, Oh, no!, and other such phrases are truly meaningless and are therefore profane. They are also indicative of an attitude that we need to conquer. Jesus never allowed anything to provoke his peace and rest in His Father and we must do likewise. These are common, cheap expressions, and though in wide use among all classes, they should be excluded from the Christian's speech.

We are counseled to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth; but a corrupt communication is not simply something that is vile and vulgar. It is any communication that will eclipse from the mind the view of Christ, that will blot from the soul true sympathy and love. It is a communication in which the love of Christ is not expressed, but rather sentiments of an un-Christlike character. (6BC 1117:8).

You will recall that earlier in this section we discussed the effect which diet has on our words; that an intemperate man can never be a patient man. He will be hasty in speech; slow to control his tongue. This has an effect on the use

of profanity in the speech. An intemperate man or woman will be more easily provoked by annoyances, and has far less control of his or her lower passions. Says the prophet, "In temperance and profanity and licentiousness are sisters." (Te 198:2). Where you find one, you will usually find the other two. An intemperate man is not only impatient, he is also profane and licentious. Jesus gained this victory for us in the wilderness. We can claim the same power He used to defeat Satan on the point of appetite. When we throw out intemperance, her sisters will also leave. We can do all things through Christ who gives us strength.

The observance of temperance and regularity in all things was a wonderful power. It will do more than circumstances or natural endowments in promoting that sweetness and serenity of disposition which count so much in smoothing life's pathway. At the same time the power of self-control thus acquired will be found one of the most valuable of equipments for grappling successfully with the stern duties and realities that await every human being. (Ed 206:4).

PLEASE PASS THE KINDNESS

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. (Acts 2:46).

Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. (Luke 14:12-14).

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Rev. 19:9).

The dishes that get passed around the table at mealtime can make or break the digestion of food in the stomach. It is not only the kinds of food we have in the dishes, but the kinds of words we are passing around with the food. When we come to the table, we should come with a pleasant attitude. We should “cast off care and anxious thought; do not be feel hurried, but eat slowly and with cheerfulness, with your heart filled with gratitude to God for all His blessings.” (MH 306:1).

Let the table be made inviting and attractive, as it is supplied with the good things which God has so bountifully bestowed. Let mealtime be a cheerful, happy time. As we enjoy the gifts of God, let us respond by grateful praise to the Giver. (MH 385:1).

Such a table will be filled with pleasant, kind words. The food will be eaten with joy and digested with ease.

Mealtime should be a season for social intercourse and refreshment. Everything that can burden or irritate should be banished. Let trust and kindness and gratitude to the Giver of all good be cherished, and the conversation will be cheerful, a pleasant flow of thought that will uplift without wearying. (Ed 206:2).

When they gather about the table to partake of God's precious bounties make this a season of cheerfulness. Do not make it a season of grave decorum as though they were standing about a coffin, but have it a social season where every countenance is full of joy and happiness, where nought but cheerful words are spoken. And the youth should not feel that they are under an eye that is watching them, ready to reprove and condemn. (6MR 92:2).

There are families, though, where an attitude of thankfulness and gratitude to God is not found. Indeed, it may be that the family is eating under the eye of one who is ready to reprove and condemn.

In the family the spirit of criticizing and faultfinding should have no place. The peace of the home is too sacred to be marred by this spirit. But how often, when seated at the meal table, the members of the family pass round a dish of criticism, faultfinding, and scandal. (5MR 217:4).

How many families season their daily meals with doubt and questionings! They dissect the characters of their friends and serve them up as a dainty dessert. A precious bit of slander is passed around the board to be commented upon, not only by the adults, but by the children. In this God is dishonored. (AH 440:2).

Let the conversation at the family board be such as is calculated to leave a fragrant influence on the minds of the children. (AH 440:4).

When the family gather alone around the breakfast or dining table, the same courtesy should prevail as if guests were present. Reproof, complaint, unpleasant discussion, and scandal, no less than moody silence, should be banished. Let the conversation be genial, and suited to the little folks as far as possible. Interesting incidents of the day's experience may be mentioned at the evening meal, thus arousing the social element. If resources fail, sometimes little bits read aloud from the morning or evening paper will kindle the conversation. (HR 2/1874).

Sister White has left some words of counsel to pastors who are visiting in the homes of their parishioners, and sharing a meal with the family.

When our ministers are visiting a family, let them seek to make the hour of worship a great blessing, and let them when at the meal table, seek to make the conversation a source of spiritual refreshing. Let them talk on Bible subjects, and relate their experiences in holding meetings and in visiting among the people. The parents will be benefited, the children will be impressed, and as the warmth and grace of Christ are felt, the spiritual pulse will be quickened. (6MR 48:1).

Mealtime can and should be a pleasant experience for the whole family. If we leave our troubles at the door and sit down determined, through God's grace, to be cheerful and happy, all the family should partake of the meal with contentment and rise from the table with smiles on their faces, and no hint of indigestion.

SILENCE IS ELOQUENCE

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (Isa. 53:7).

I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. (Ps. 39:1).

It was early Friday morning and Jesus stood in Pilate's judgement hall. Outside the roar of the mob grew deafening. The accusers had informed Pilate of their charges against Jesus. All around was tumult, a cacophony of noise, voices screaming for the blood of the innocent Son of God, but He spoke not a word.

His whole bearing gave evidence of conscious innocence. He stood unmoved by the fury of the waves that beat about Him. It was as if the heavy surges of wrath, rising higher and higher, like the waves of the boisterous ocean, broke about Him, but did not touch Him. He stood silent, but His silence was eloquence. It was as a light shining from the inner to the outer man. (DA 726:3).

A short time later he was dragged before Herod who demanded a miracle, but once again "Jesus gave no evidence that He heard a word." Herod threatened Jesus again and then again, yet Jesus "remained unmoved and silent." (DA 730).

Christ might have spoken words to Herod that would have pierced the ears of the hardened king. He might have stricken him with fear and trembling by laying before him the full iniquity of his life, and the horror of his approaching doom. But Christ's silence was the severest rebuke that He could have given. Herod had rejected the truth spoken to him by the greatest of the prophets, and no other message was he to receive. Not a word had the Majesty of heaven for him. That ear that had ever been open to human woe, had no room for Herod's commands. Those eyes that had ever rested upon the penitent sinner in pitying, forgiving love, had no look to bestow upon Herod. Those lips that had uttered the most impressive truth, that in tones of tenderest entreaty had pleaded with the most sinful and the most degraded, were closed to the haughty king who felt no need of a Saviour. (DA 730:4).

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (Isa. 53:7).

Silence is sometimes the greatest sermon we can preach, the greatest rebuke we can give. Silence is eloquence. Silence is golden.

There is a noble majesty in the silence of the one exposed to evil-surmising or outrage. To be master of one's spirit is to be stronger than kings or conquerors. A Christian leads one to think of Christ. He will be affable, kind, patient, humble, and yet courageous and firm in vindicating the truth and the names of Christ. (3BC 1160:4).

Trials will come, it is true, even to those who are fully consecrated. The patience of the most patient will be severely tested. The husband or the wife may utter words that are liable to provoke a hasty reply, but let the one who is spoken to keep silent. In silence there is safety. Often silence is the severest rebuke that could be given to the one who has sinned with his lips. (AH 442:2).

Do you think that perhaps no trials will arise? Certainly there will be trials. If there were not, you might rejoice that you had no devil to tempt you. But you will have temptations till the very close of time. Therefore you need to keep in close companionship with Christ. His angels are commissioned to watch over you. They are your appointed guardians. If someone says something that tends to provoke you, remember that at such a time silence is eloquence. Do not respond in a manner to retaliate. It will be better to say nothing than to speak unadvisedly. We will all have our battles to fight, though these struggles may vary in character, according to our disposition and our experience. (UL 242:2).

When you are tempted to speak unadvisedly, be on guard. If someone else approaches you with words of criticism regarding one of God's children, turn a deaf ear to every such word. If you are spoken to

harshly, never retaliate. Utter not a word. When under provocation, remember that “silence is eloquence.” Silence is the greatest rebuke that you can possibly give to a faultfinder or one whose temper is irritated. (OHC 293:3).

If impatient words are spoken to you, never reply in the same spirit. Remember that “a soft answer turneth away wrath.” Proverbs 15:1. And there is wonderful power in silence. Words spoken in reply to one who is angry sometimes serve only to exasperate. But anger met with silence, in a tender, forbearing spirit, quickly dies away. (MH 486:1).

Never let a word of reproach or faultfinding fall upon the ears of your husband. You sometimes pass through strait places, but do not talk of these trials. Silence is eloquence. Hasty speech will only increase your unhappiness. Be cheerful and happy. Bring all the sunshine possible into your home, and shut out the shadows. Let the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine into the chambers of your soul temple. Then the fragrance of the Christian life will be brought into your family. There will be no dwelling upon disagreeable things, which many times have no truth in them. (AH 349:4).

When we are tempted to speak hasty, impatient words, our best solution to the provocation is silence. When we are being hailed with a torrent of angry, harsh, hurtful words, our best response is silence.

When a parent or teacher becomes impatient and is in danger of speaking unwisely, let him remain silent. There is wonderful power in silence. (Ed 292:2).

Why do we speak words of blame and censure? To be silent is the strongest rebuke that you can give to one who is speaking harsh, discourteous words to you. Keep perfectly silent. Often silence is eloquence. (CG 551:2).

There is a wonderful power in silence. When impatient words are spoken to you, do not retaliate. Words spoken in reply to one who is angry usually act as a whip, lashing the temper into greater fury. But anger met by silence quickly dies away. Let the Christian bridle his tongue, firmly resolving not to speak harsh, impatient words. With the tongue bridled, he may be victorious in every trial of patience through which he is called to pass. (MYP 135-6).

Sometimes we find ourselves in situations where the conversation has turned to common things; to talk of one's self. Or perhaps there is a temptation presented to indulge in something of which God would not approve. Is this a time to keep silence?

When the first suggestion of wrong is heard, dart a prayer to heaven, and then firmly resist the temptation to tamper with the principles condemned in God's Word. The first time the temptation comes, meet it in such a decided manner that it will never be repeated. Turn from the one who has ventured to present wrong practices to you. Resolutely turn from the tempter saying, I must separate from your influence; for I know you are not walking in the footsteps of our Saviour.

Even though you may not feel able to speak a word to those who are working on wrong principles, leave them. Your withdrawal and silence may do more than words. Nehemiah refused to associate with those who were untrue to principle, and he would not permit his workmen to associate with them. The love and fear of God were his safeguard. He lived and worked as in view of the unseen world. And David said, “I have set the Lord always before me.”

Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Thus, as did Moses, you will endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. But a cowardly and silent reserve before evil associates, while you listen to their devices, makes you one of them. (3BC 1155:3-5).

Silence, in the right circumstances, is indeed eloquence.

THE TONGUES OF MEN AND ANGELS

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. (Ps. 19:14).

Where the heart is purified and refined, and made fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the tongue will be sanctified to the glory of God.... You can surround your souls with an atmosphere that will be like breezes from the heavenly Eden. Open your heart to the Lord Jesus. Guard your tongue. Let not your tongue run at random in jesting and joking. These are signs that your heart needs to be cleansed from its defilement....

Our words index the state of our heart; and whether men talk much or little, their words express the character of their thoughts. A man's character may be quite accurately estimated by the nature of his conversation. Sound, truthful words have the right ring in them.

Some are seen to come forth from their daily communion with God clothed with the meekness of Christ. Their words are not like desolating hail, crushing everything before it; they come forth sweetly from their lips. They scatter seeds of love and kindness all along their path, and that all unconsciously, because Christ lives in their heart. Their influence is felt more that it is seen.

Kind, tender, compassionate words will flow from sanctified hearts and lips. (SD 180:1,2,5,6).

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?... Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God. (Ps. 50:14-16, 19-23).

I had the following dream:

I was visiting Battle Creek in company with a person of commanding manner and dignified deportment. In my dream I was passing around to the houses of our brethren. As we were about to enter, we heard voices engaged in earnest conversation. The name of my husband was frequently mentioned, and I was grieved and astonished to hear those who had professed to be our firmest friends relating scenes and incidents which had occurred during the severe affliction of my husband, when his mental and physical powers were palsied to a great degree. I was grieved to hear the voice of the professed brother from New York before mentioned, relating in an earnest manner, and in an exaggerated light, incidents of which those at Battle Creek were ignorant, while our friends in Battle Creek, in their turn, related that which they knew. I became faint and sick at heart, and in my dream came near falling, when the hand of my attendant supported me, and said: "You must listen. You must know this even if it is hard to bear."

At several houses we approached, the same subject was the theme of conversation. It was their *present truth*. Said I: "Oh, I did not know this! I was ignorant that such feelings existed in the hearts of those whom we have regarded as our friends in prosperity, and our fast friends in suffering, affliction, and adversity. Would I had never known this. We have accounted these our very best and truest friends."

The person with me repeated these words: "If they would only engage as readily and with as much earnestness and zeal in conversation upon their Redeemer, dwelling upon His matchless charms, His disinterested benevolence, and His merciful forgiveness, His pitiful tenderness to the suffering, His forbearance and inexpressible love, how much more precious and valuable would be the fruits."

I then said: "I am grieved. My husband has not spared himself to save souls. He stood under the burdens until they crushed him; he was prostrated, broken physically and mentally; and now to gather up words and acts and use them to destroy his influence, after God has put His hand under him to raise him up that his

voice may again be heard, is cruel and wicked.”

Said the person who accompanied me: “The conversation where Christ and the characteristics of His life are the themes dwelt upon will refresh the spirit and the fruit will be unto holiness and everlasting life.” He then quoted these words: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” These words so impressed my that I spoke upon them the next Sabbath. (1T 573:2-574:3).

We have learned all the things that should not be taken on our lips and our tongues, now we must find what should be there. First, we must remember that every word which comes out of us, whether spoken or written, or even signed by countenance, hand signals, or body stance, conveys only what is already in our minds. Consider these words from the pen of inspiration: “The expression of the countenance is itself a mirror of the life within.” (OHC 175:2). The thoughts come first, and they are conveyed to the world in the expressions of our mouths, faces, and body.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. (Eph. 4:17-27).

In the sermon on the mount, Christ presented before His disciples the far-reaching principles of the law of God. He taught His hearers that the law was transgressed by the thoughts before the evil desire was carried out in actual commission. We are under obligation to control our thoughts, and to bring them into subjection to the law of God. The noble powers of the mind have been given to us by the Lord, that we may employ them in contemplating heavenly things. God has made abundant provision that the soul may make continual progression in the divine life. He has placed on every hand agencies to aid our development in knowledge and virtue; and yet, how little these agencies are appreciated or enjoyed! How often the mind is given to the contemplation of that which is earthly, sensual, and base! We give our time and thought to the trivial and commonplace things of the world, and neglect the great interests that pertain to eternal life. The noble powers of the mind are dwarfed and enfeebled by lack of exercise on themes that are worthy of their concentration. (3BC 1145:2).

What would those themes be? They are anything that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; if it is virtuous and praiseworthy, then it is healthy food for thought. What goes in must also come out. If we pollute our minds with garbage, when we open our mouths, garbage will come out.

The thoughts must be bound about, restricted, withdrawn from branching out and contemplating things that will only weaken and defile the soul. The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean, if the words of the mouth are to be words acceptable... There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. (3BC 1145).

By beholding, we become changed. When we partake of the pure water of life, words of life will flow forth from our lips and our words will be a savor of life unto life. Our tongues will be “educated and disciplined and trained to speak of the glories of heaven, to talk of the matchless love of Jesus Christ.” (3BC 1146).

On our tongues will be written the law of kindness. No evil-speaking, gossip, joking, jesting, no lies or deception, or hasty, impatient words will escape our lips. Our mouths, our lips, will have been touched with a coal from off the altar and God's words will be in our mouths.

Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.... Now we exhort you,

brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. (1Thes. 5:11, 14-18).

If we have Christ abiding in us, we shall be Christians at home as well as abroad. He who is a Christian will have kind words for his relatives and associates. He will be kind, courteous, loving, sympathetic, and will be educating himself for an abode with the family above. If he is a member of the royal family, he will represent the kingdom to which he is going. He will speak with gentleness to his children, for he will realize that they too are heirs of God, members of the heavenly court. Among the children of God no spirit of harshness dwells.

We must educate ourselves to be pitiful, gentle, tender, full of forgiveness and compassion. While we lay aside all vanity, all foolish talking, jesting, and joking, we are not to become cold, unsympathetic and unsocial. The Spirit of the Lord is to rest upon you until you shall be like a fragrant flower from the garden of God. You are to keep talking of the light, of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, until you shall change from glory to glory, from character to character, going on from strength to strength, and reflecting more and more of the precious image of Jesus.

Christ is ever ready to impart of His riches, and we should gather the jewels that come from Him, that, when we speak, these jewels may drop from our lips. (MLT 196:1,4,5).

Never underestimate the importance of little things. Little things supply the actual discipline of life. It is by them that the soul is trained that it may grow into the likeness of Christ, or bear the likeness of evil. God helps us to cultivate habits of thought, word, look, and action that will testify to all about us that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him! (MYP 202:1).

We individually have a case pending in the court of heaven. Character is being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and it should be the earnest desire of all to walk humbly and carefully, lest, neglecting to let their light shine forth to the world, they fail of the grace of God and lose everything that is valuable. All dissension, all differences and faultfinding, should be put away, with all evil speaking and bitterness; kindness, love, and compassion for one another should be cherished, that the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He is one with the Father may be answered. The harmony and unity of the church are the credentials that they present to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Genuine conversions will ever lead to genuine love for Jesus and for all those for whom He died. (5T 279:1).

We all need to sow a crop of patience, compassion, and love. We shall reap the harvest we are sowing. Our characters are now forming for eternity. Here on earth we are training for heaven. We owe everything to grace, free grace, sovereign grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our adoption to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others. (6T 268:3).

Kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul. The Scripture says of Christ that grace was poured into His lips, that He might "know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." And the Lord bids us, "Let your speech be alway with grace," "that it may minister grace unto the hearers." When the heart is pure, rich treasure of wisdom will flow forth. (SD 72:4).

Sympathy is good, wisely given, but it must be judiciously imparted, with a knowledge that the subject is deserving sympathy. What shall be said of receiving advice and counsel? Prov. 25:9-12. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame,... A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reproof upon an obedient ear." When we can associate together to help one another heavenward, when the conversation is upon heavenly things, then it amounts to something to talk; but when the conversation centers upon self and upon earthly and unimportant matters, silence is golden. The obedient ear will receive reproof with humility, patience, and teachableness. Then only do our communications with each other prove beneficial, and fulfill all that God would have them. When both

sides of the divine instruction are fulfilled, the wise reprover does his duty, and the obedient ear hears to a purpose and is benefited. (SD 166:1).

The Bible is full of instruction enjoining us to show love, patience, and respect in our speech and in our treatment of one another. The love of Jesus in the soul never leads to malice and envy. The tender plant of Christlike love must be carefully cherished. It will not grow unless it is cultivated. (OHC 234:4).

Without Christ we can do nothing. The pure principles of uprightness, virtue, and goodness are all from God. A conscientious discharge of duty, Christlike sympathy, love for souls and love for you own soul, because you belong to God, and have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, will make you a laborer together with God, and endow you with persuasive, drawing power. You must respect your own faith in order successfully to introduce it to others. By example as well as precept, you must show that you reverence your faith, speaking reverently of sacred things. Never allow one expression of lightness and trifling to escape your lips when quoting Scripture. As you take the Bible in your hands, remember that you are on holy ground. Angels are around you, and could your eyes be opened, you would behold them. Let your conduct be such that you will leave the impression upon every soul with whom you associate that a pure and holy atmosphere surrounds you. One vain word, one trifling laugh, may balance a soul in the wrong direction. Terrible are the consequences of not having a constant connection with God. (FE 194:2).

God's Word is our light. It is Christ's message to His heritage, who have been bought with the price of His blood. It was written for our guidance, and if we make this Word our counselor, we shall never walk in strange paths. Our words, whether we are in the home or associating with those outside the home, will be kind, affectionate, and pure. If we study the Word and make it a part of our lives, we shall have a wholesome experience, which will always speak forth the truth. We shall search our hearts diligently, comparing our daily speech and tenor of life with the Word, that we may make no mistake. (HP 132:1).

Those who love God cannot harbor hatred or envy. When the heavenly principle of eternal love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not merely because favors are received of them, but because love is the principle of action and modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and elevates and ennoble the affections. This love is not contracted so as merely to include "me and mine," but is as broad as the world and as high as heaven, and is in harmony with that of the angel workers. This love cherished in the soul sweetens the entire life and sheds a refining influence on all around. Possessing it, we cannot but be happy, let fortune smile or frown. If we love God with all the heart, we must love His children also. This love is the spirit of God. It is the heavenly adorning that gives true nobility and dignity to the soul and assimilates our lives to that of the Master. No matter how many good qualities we may have, however honorable and refined we may consider ourselves, if the soul is not baptized with the heavenly grace of love to God and one another, we are deficient in true goodness and unfit for heaven, where all is love and unity. (4T 223:2).

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (Col. 3:8-17).

All that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, good, virtuous, and praiseworthy is found in God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

God has given us the gift of speech that we may recite to others His dealing with us, that His love and

compassion may touch other hearts, and that praise may arise from other souls also to Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. The Lord has said, "Ye are My witnesses." Isaiah 43:10. (CT 243:1).

What is it that we are to witness to others of?

If there is anything in our world that should inspire enthusiasm, it is the cross of Calvary.... Christ is to be accepted, believed on, and exalted. This is to be the theme of conversation— the preciousness of Christ. (CT 338:1).

When God's people place the gift of speech under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit, thousands will hear the message that God is love; that He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). His heart of infinite love embraces every human being. His love is an inexhaustible wellspring of joy and peace. It is as enduring as eternity. It is the fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem. From its unfailing supply every soul may be satisfied. This love is the life of God, working with transforming power in the soul, perfecting Christian character, making human beings partakers of the divine nature. Through Christ this living stream of love and life flows to the world. (UL 129:3).

Let us talk faith, talk courage. Let our lips utter praise of the Lord. Behold Him, behold Him who is the Light of the world. Talk of His love, tell of His wonderful works. (UL 289:3).

If we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes. (MYP 114:1).

The most intellectual, those who are looked upon and praised as the world's great and gifted men and women, are often refreshed by the most humble, simple words spoken by one who loves God, who can speak of that love as naturally as worldlings can speak of those things which their minds contemplate and feed upon. Words, even if well prepared and studied, have little influence; but the true, honest, work of a son or a daughter of God in words, or in a service of little things, done in natural simplicity, will unbolt the door, which has long been locked, to many souls. (MYP 203:4).

Let us remember that there is need of sanctified pens and sanctified tongues. When we as a people live as God would be pleased to have us live, we shall see the deep movings of His Spirit. Much will then be done for those who have never heard the truth. (MLT 265:3).

As followers of Christ we should make our words such as to be a help and an encouragement to one another in the Christian life. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. We should speak of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, of the matchless depths of the Saviour's love. Our words should be words of praise and thanksgiving. If the mind and heart are full of the love of God, this will be revealed in the conversation. It will not be a difficult matter to impart that which enters into our spiritual life. Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for piety and holiness, will bear fruit in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure. When Christ is thus revealed in our speech, it will have power in winning souls to Him. (COL 338:1).

Speak of Jesus, educate the tongue to speak of His mercy, to tell of His power, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (SD 189:2).

Purity of thought must be cherished as indispensable to the work of influencing others. The soul must be surrounded by a pure, holy atmosphere, an atmosphere that will tend to quicken the spiritual life of all who inhale it. (SD 316:1).

What is more worthy to engross the mind than the plan of redemption? It is a subject that is exhaustless. The love of Jesus, the salvation offered to fallen man through His infinite love, holiness of heart, the precious, saving truth for these last days, the grace of Christ— these are subjects which may animate the soul

and cause the pure in heart to feel that joy which the disciples felt when Jesus came and walked with them as they traveled toward Emmaus. He who has centered his affections upon Christ will relish this kind of hallowed association and will gather divine strength by such intercourse; but he who has no relish for this kind of conversation, and who is best pleased to talk sentimental nonsense, has wandered far away from God and is becoming dead to holy and noble aspirations. The sensual, the earthly, is interpreted by such to be heavenly. When the conversation is of a frivolous character and savors of a dissatisfied reaching out after human sympathy and appreciation, it springs from lovesick sentimentalism, and neither the youth nor the men with gray hairs are secure. When the truth of God is an abiding principle in the heart, it will be like a living spring. Attempts may be made to repress it, but it will gush forth in another place; it is there and cannot be repressed. The truth in the heart is a wellspring of life. It refreshes the weary and restrains vile thought and utterance. (5T 600:2).

When a man dies, his influence does not die with him; it lives on, reproducing itself. The influence of the man who was good and pure and holy lives on after his death, like the glow of the descending sun, casting its glories athwart the heavens, lighting up the mountain peaks long after the sun has sunk behind the hill. So will the works of the pure and holy and the good reflect their light when they no longer live to speak and act themselves. Their works, their words, their example will forever live. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." (TM 429:1).

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. (1Pet. 3:8-17).

In this, our pilgrim home, things don't run smoothly. There are many and varied provocations to test and try us. We must pass through the refiners fire that we might come forth pure and holy, without "spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Even when things look their worst, when we have become the most hated and despised people on earth, when we have every reason to fear for our lives, the law of love and liberty must be in our mouths, the Christ of Calvary on our lips.

Trials are Christ's workmen to perfect the Christian graces.... These tests are not to sink the believers' faith, but raise it equal to the occasion, that unto all it may be made to appear more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire. Every trial permitted is designed to exalt the truth to a higher appreciation, that praise to God alone shall be upon the lips of the true disciple of Christ. And the growth in grace is to the honor and glory of God at the appearing of Jesus Christ, "whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" (1Pet. 1:8-10)....

The bright and cheerful side of our religion will be represented by all who are daily consecrated to God.... We do not want to dishonor God by the mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. **All trials that are received as educators will produce joy.** The whole religious life will be uplifting, elevating ennobling, fragrant with good words and works. The enemy is well pleased to have souls complaining and stumbling their way along, depressed, downcast, mourning, and groaning; because Satan wants just such impressions made as to the effects of our faith. God designs that the mind shall take no low level. (UL 324:4,5; emphasis supplied).

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.” My brethren and sisters, how are you employing the gift of speech? Have you learned so to control the tongue that it shall ever obey the dictates of an enlightened conscience and holy affections? Is your conversation free from levity, pride and malice, deceit and impurity? Are you without guile before God? Words exert a telling power. Satan will, if possible, keep the tongue active in his service. Of ourselves we cannot control the unruly member. Divine grace is our only hope. (5T 175:1).

Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Your words will declare, your acts will show, where your treasure is. If it is in this world, the little gain of earth, your anxieties will be manifested in that direction. If you are striving for the immortal inheritance with an earnestness, energy, and zeal proportionate to its value, then can you be a fair candidate for everlasting life, and heir of glory. You need a fresh conversion every day. Die daily to self, keep your tongue as with a bridle, control your words, cease your murmurings and complaints, let not one word of censure escape your lips. If this requires a great effort, make it; you will be repaid in so doing. (1T 698:3).

How important it is that we speak to those around us only those things which will give spiritual strength and enlightenment! Let us seek to lift souls to Jesus, whom having not seen we may love, and be filled with joy unspeakable and full of joy. (OHC 319:3).

When Jesus was on earth, and saw a scene of contention and strife, He would raise His voice in the notes of a melodious song, praising God. The presence of God would be felt; the hearts of those who had been contending would respond to the influences of the Spirit; and they would unite in the song. When some one comes to you with an evil report of some one else, do not take up the reproach and talk it over, either in the family or in the church. Do not add your complaints to those of others. (GCB 4/6/03, p.90).

If you live upon the plan of addition, adding grace to grace, God will multiply unto you His grace. While you add, God multiplies. If you cherish a habitual impression that God sees and hears all that you do and say, and keeps a faithful record of all your words and actions, and that you must meet it all, then in all you do and say you will seek to follow the dictates of an enlightened and wakeful conscience. Your tongue will be used to the glory of God and will be a source of blessing to yourself and to others. (4T 244:1).

Do you take Christ with you when you leave the closet of prayer? Does your religion stand guard at the door of your lips?... These questions you may answer to your own souls. Let your speech be seasoned with grace. (4T 521:3).

If you do not feel lighthearted and joyous, do not talk of your feelings. Cast no shadow upon the lives of others. A cold, sunless religion never draws souls to Christ. It drives them away from Him into the nets that Satan has spread for the feet of the straying. Instead of thinking of your discouragements, think of the power you can claim in Christ's name. Let your imagination take hold upon things unseen. Let your thoughts be directed to the evidences of the great love of God for you. Faith can endure trial, resist temptation, bear up under disappointment. Jesus lives as our advocate. All is ours that His mediation secures. (MH 488:1).

There are enough profitable subjects upon which to meditate and converse. The conversation of the Christian should be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour. Meditation upon heavenly things is profitable, and will ever be accompanied with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. (2T 317:2).

We are living and working at the end of time, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed in His saints. Now, more than ever, we “need a sanctified imagination, and a sanctified tongue.” (5MR 76). We must spread the three angels' messages far and near. We must be prepared to go to the ends of the earth as God's workmen. But only “when the brain-power and the talent of speech are sanctified, are we fitted for service.” (5MR 65).

If you will only follow on to *know the Lord*, and do his bidding, you will know by your experience that God will suggest thoughts to you as you attempt to speak words to those who are around you, to restrain them from doing wrong, and to point out to them the way of life. (5MR 332:1).

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make

them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart. (Ps. 36:7-10).

PRAISE YE THE LORD

And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. (Isa. 12)

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowledgements to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls. (DA 347:3).

To praise God in fulness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show to the world and to all the heavenly intelligences that we appreciate the wonderful love of God for fallen humanity and that we are expecting larger and yet larger blessings from His infinite fullness. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service would be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children. (COL 299:3).

I am so sorry for my Master, because He hears so little praise, so little thankfulness, for the love that He has bestowed upon us. Angels in heaven are praising God all the time, and here are mortals for whom Christ left the heavenly home, and suffered mockery, insult, and death, that He might lift us up to sit in heavenly places, and they offer no song of praise. (RH 8/5/90).

In all the earth there is not one man who should be praised and exalted, for our praises belong to our Saviour, our Father, and our Comforter in heaven. It is our privilege and our duty to praise God. We could not live without His moment-by-moment care for us. We need to lift our voices in song and prayer and testimony to our Lord for these are God's most effective means of reaching others with the gospel. As we gather together, our "religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary." (6BC 1078:1). There they are mingled with the cleansing drops of Christ's blood and presented to the Father.

Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned. (6BC 1078:1).

We may rejoice in hope. Our Advocate is in the heavenly sanctuary, pleading in our behalf. Through His merits we have pardon and peace. He died that He might wash away our sins, clothe us with His righteousness, and fit us for the society of heaven, where we may dwell in light forever. Dear brother, dear sister, when Satan would fill your mind with despondency, gloom, and doubt, resist his suggestions. Tell him of the blood of Jesus, that cleanses from all sin. You cannot save your self from the tempter's power, but he trembles and flees when the merits of that precious blood are urged. Then will you not gratefully accept the blessings Jesus bestows? Will you not take the cup of salvation that He presents, and call on the name of the Lord? Do not show distrust of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Do not for a moment pain the heart of the pitying Saviour by your unbelief. He watches with the most intense interest your progress in the heavenly way; He sees your earnest efforts; He notes your declensions and your recoveries, your hopes and your fears, your conflicts and your victories.

Shall all our devotional exercises consist in asking and receiving? Shall we be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive? Shall we be recipients of His mercies and never express our gratitude to God, never praise Him for what He has done for us? We do not pray any too much, but we are

too sparing in our giving of thanks. If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change your present order and mingle praise with your petitions. When you consider His goodness and mercies you will find that He will consider your wants. (5T 316:2-317:1).

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. By this means faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring for speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him. (MH 100:3).

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones. (Prov. 17:22).

Praise the Lord even when you fall into darkness. Praise Him even in temptation. “Rejoice in the Lord always,” says the apostle; “and again I say, Rejoice.” Will that bring gloom and darkness into your families? No, indeed; it will bring a sunbeam. You will thus gather rays of eternal light from the throne of glory and scatter them around you. Let me exhort you to engage in this work, scatter this light and life around you, not only in your own path, but in the paths of those with whom you associate. Let it be your object to make those around you better, to elevate them, to point them to heaven and glory, and lead them to seek, above all earthly things, eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, the riches which are imperishable. (2T 293:2).

How do we greet our friends when we see them on the street or at church? Do we relate our trials and woes, do we given them our latest “organ recital” or do we let them know that God is good?³

When someone asks you how you are feeling, do not complain and murmur and try to think of something mournful to tell them to gain their sympathy; but grasp them by the hand, saying, “Praise God! God is the Lord, and greatly to be praised! I love Him, because He first loved me.” Let your conversation be cheerful and hopeful. Do not talk discouragingly, telling your lack of faith and your sorrows and sufferings, for the devil delights to hear such words. When talking on gloomy subjects, you are glorifying the enemy. Talk faith and hope and courage, thus glorifying God. (UL 306:2).

Tell of the matchless power of Christ, and speak of His glory. All heaven is interested in salvation. The angels of God, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They guard us against evil and press back the powers of darkness that are seeking our destruction. Have we not reason to be thankful every moment, thankful even when there are apparent difficulties in our pathway? (MH 253:3).

My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth. (Ps. 57:7-11).

But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy. (Ps. 59:16,17).

Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. (Ps. 81:1,2).

O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph... Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. (Ps. 47:1,6,7).

Praising God in song is not an option but an obligation, a command. There is a beautiful promise in Isaiah that is

³ People who talk about their physical infirmities are referred to as giving “organ” recitals.

so peaceful when sometimes nights are long, or the pathway is rough, and the soul needs uplifting in a song, even if it must be sung silently. "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel." (Isa. 30:29). We should never be singing the "blues" but the praises of Him who first loved us.

Song is a weapon that we can always use against discouragement. As we thus open the heart to the sunlight of the Saviour's presence, we shall have health and His blessing. (MH 254:2).

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshipped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth" God. Ps. 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with "thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Isa. 51:3. (SC 104:1).

As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. If the child is taught to realize this, he will think more of the meaning of the words he sings and will be more susceptible to their power. (Ed 168:3).

When human beings sing with the spirit and the understanding, heavenly musicians take up the strain and join in the song of thanksgiving. He who has bestowed upon us all the gifts that enable us to be workers together with God, expects His servants to cultivate their voices so that they can speak and sing in a way that all can understand. It is not *loud* singing that is needed, but clear intonation, correct pronunciation, and distinct utterance. Let all take time to cultivate the voice so that God's praise can be sung in clear, soft tones, not with harshness and shrillness that offend the ear. The ability to sing is the gift of God; let it be used to His glory. (9T 143-4).

Music is of heavenly origin. There is great power in music. It was music from the angelic throng that thrilled the hearts of the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains and swept round the world. It is in music that our praises rise to Him who is the embodiment of purity and harmony. It is with music and songs of victory that the redeemed shall finally enter upon the immortal reward.

There is something peculiarly sacred in the human voice. Its harmony and its subdued and heaven-inspired pathos exceeds every musical instrument. Vocal music is one of God's gifts to men, an instrument that cannot be surpassed or equalled when God's love abounds in the soul. Singing with the spirit and the understanding also is a great addition to devotional services in the house of God. (5MR 197:2,3).

In the meetings held let a number be chosen to take part in the song service. And let the singing be accompanied with musical instruments skillfully handled. We are not to oppose the use of instrumental music in our work. This part of the service is to be carefully conducted, for it is the praise of God in song.

The singing is not always to be done by a few. As often as possible, let the entire congregation join. (9T 144-5).

Why not awake the voice of spiritual song in the days of our pilgrimage?... We need to study God's Word, to meditate and pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the notes of thanksgiving sung by the heavenly choir around the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assembly of the saints. Little disappointments and difficulties will be lost sight of.

The Lord is our helper.... No one ever trusted God in vain. He never disappoints those who put their dependence on Him. If we would only do the work that the Lord would have us do, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, our hearts would become sacred harps, every chord of which would send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sin of the world. (SD 198:3,4).

As the children of Israel, journeying through the wilderness, cheered their way by the music of sacred song, so God bids His children today gladden their pilgrim life. There are few means more effective for fixing His words in the memory than repeating them in song. And such song has wonderful power. It has power to subdue rude and uncultivated natures; power to quicken thought and to awaken sympathy, to promote harmony of action, and to banish the gloom and foreboding that destroy courage and weaken effort.

It is one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth. How often to the soul hard pressed and ready to despair, memory recalls some word of God's – the long-forgotten burden of a childhood song – and temptations lose their power, life takes on new meaning and new purpose, and courage and gladness are imparted to other souls! (MLT 90:3,4).

I saw we must be daily rising and keep the ascendancy above the powers of darkness. Our God is mighty. I saw singing to the glory of God often drove the enemy away, and praising God would beat him back and give us the victory. (5MR 193:1).

Our God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, declares: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." All heaven is praising God. Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist: "While I live will I Praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee." (5T 318:3).

This speck of a world was the scene of the incarnation and suffering of the Son of God. Christ did not go to worlds unfallen, but He came to this world, all seared and marred with the curse. The outlook was not favorable, but most discouraging. Yet "He shall not fail not be discouraged, till He have set judgement in the earth." Isa. 42:4. We must bear in mind the great joy manifested by the Shepherd at the recovery of the lost. He calls upon His neighbors: "Rejoice with Me; for I have found My sheep which was lost." And all heaven echoes the note of joy. *The Father Himself joys over the rescued one with singing.* What a holy ecstasy of joy is expressed in this parable! That joy it is your privilege to share. (6T 124:3, emphasis supplied).

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph. 5:19,20). Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. (James 5:13).

O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth. (Ps. 96).

When God's children gather for worship, and the word of God is spoken to them, they are to vocally acknowledge their agreement with the word spoken and give their assent to its truthfulness. This is also a part of the praise and worship of God that has been commanded.

Praise the Lord in the congregation of His people. When the word of the Lord was spoken to the Hebrews anciently, the command was: "And let all the people say, Amen." When the ark of the covenant was brought into the city of David, and a psalm of joy and triumph was chanted, "all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord." This fervent response was an evidence that they understood the word spoken and joined in the worship of God. (5T 318:1).

As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you receive the message as from heaven. This is very old-fashioned, I know; but it will be a thank offering to God for the bread of life given to the hungry soul. This response to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will be a strength to your own soul and an encouragement to others. It will give some evidence that there are in God's building living

stones that emit light. (6T 367:1).

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the Lord'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord. (Ps. 116:9-19).

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (Rev. 12:10,11).

The saints have a testimony, and they overcome by the word of their testimony. What is a testimony? "Christians who manifest a spirit of unselfish love for one another are bearing a testimony for Christ which unbelievers can neither gainsay nor resist." (5T 167:3). Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. "No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ." (COL 300:2). Unselfish love is manifested in our words, our conversation, our actions.

The Lord has shown me that great interest should be taken by Sabbathkeepers to keep up their meetings and make them interesting. There is great necessity of more interest and energy being manifested in this direction. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to another. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Some expect to overcome alone by the blood of the Lamb, without making any special effort of their own. I saw that God has been merciful in giving us the power of speech. He has given us a tongue, and we are accountable to Him for its use. We should glorify God with our mouth, speaking in honor of the truth and of His unbounded mercy, and overcome by the word of our testimony through the blood of the Lamb. (EW 114:2).

Nothing will so successfully defeat the devices of Satan and his emissaries, nothing will so build up the Redeemer's kingdom, as will the love of Christ manifested by the members of the church. Peace and prosperity can be enjoyed only as meekness and love are in active exercise. (5T 167:3).

Never entertain the thought that you can be Christians and yet withdraw within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the nature and quality of your experience will be largely determined by the experiences of those with whom you associate. Jesus says: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst." Matthew 18:20. Then let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together; and so much more as we see the day approaching. (7T 190:3).

We cannot safely forsake the assembly of the saints. It is in the assembly of the social meeting that we raise our voices to God in testimony of His blessings to us. A social meeting might be the prayer meeting; it may be part of the Sabbath services.

What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God, to instruct Him by telling Him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another's hopes and aspirations; and by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons and should be made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things. (2T 578:2).

The sermon should frequently be short, so that the people may express their thanksgiving to God. Gratitude-offerings glorify the name of the Lord. In every assembly of the saints holy angels listen to the praise offered to Jehovah in testimony, song, and prayer. (GW 171:1).

Make the social meetings of the church as interesting as possible. Let everyone present feel that he has a duty to perform in the meeting. Co-operate with the heavenly angels, who are trying to make a right impression on every worker. (7T 190:4).

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified must be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should have these special appointments for the purpose of keeping fresh in our thoughts everything which we receive from God, and of expressing our gratitude for His great love, and our willingness to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us. We should learn here to talk the language of Canaan, to sing the songs of Zion. By the mystery and glory of the cross we can estimate the value of man, and then we shall see and feel the importance of working for our fellowmen, that they may be exalted to the throne of God. (4T 462:1).

Gatherings for social intercourse may be made in the highest degree profitable and instructive when those who meet together have the love of God glowing in their hearts, when they meet to exchange thoughts in regard to the word of God, or to consider methods for advancing His work and doing good to their fellowmen. When nothing is said or done to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, but He is regarded as a welcome guest, then God is honored, and those who meet together will be refreshed and strengthened. (CT 338:3).

The prayer and social meeting should be a season of special help and encouragement. All should feel it a privilege to take part. Let every one who bears the name of Christ have something to say in the social meeting. The testimonies should be short, and of a nature to help others. Nothing will so completely kill the spirit of devotion as for one person to take up twenty or thirty minutes in a long testimony. This means death to the spirituality of the meeting. (GW 171:2).

One specific place and time has been given as a time when testimony meetings are to be held.

In our campmeeting services there should be singing and instrumental music. Musical instruments were used in religious services in ancient times. The worshipers praise God upon the harp and cymbal, and music should have its place in our services. It will add to the interest. And every day a praise meeting should be held, a simple service of thanksgiving to God. There would be much more power in our campmeetings if we had a true sense of the goodness, mercy, and long-suffering of God, and if more praise flowed forth from our lips to the honor and glory of His name. We need to cultivate more fervor of soul. The Lord says: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." Ps. 50:23. (6T 62:1).

The Spirit of Prophecy has several illustrations of social meetings and praise services that were held and the testimonies given. Many people would give short, simple testimonies in praise of God's blessings to them. Sometimes in these meetings there are people who are afraid to speak.

Some hold back in meeting because they have nothing new to say and must repeat the same story if they speak. I saw that pride was at the bottom of this, that God and angels witnessed the testimonies of the saints and were well pleased and glorified by their being repeated weekly. The Lord loves simplicity and humility, but He is displeased and angels are grieved when professed heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus suffer precious time to run waste in their meetings.

If the brethren and sisters were in the place they should be, they would not be at a loss to find something to say in honor of Jesus, who hung upon Calvary's cross for their sins. If they would cherish more of a realizing sense of the condescension of God in giving His only beloved Son to die a sacrifice for our sins and transgressions, and of the sufferings and anguish of Jesus to make a way of escape for guilty man, that he might receive pardon and live, they would be more ready to extol and magnify Jesus. They could not hold their peace, but with thankfulness and gratitude would talk of His glory and tell of His power. And blessings from God would rest upon them by so doing. Even if the same story were repeated, God would be glorified. The angel showed me those who ceased not day nor night to cry, "Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." "Continued repetition," said the angel, "yet God is glorified by it." Although we may tell the same story over and over, it honors God, and shows that we are not unmindful of His goodness and mercies to us. (EW 115-116).

Over and over, in reference after reference, Sister White informs us to "tell of His power." We need only a few

minutes to offer God our gratitude and praise for His many blessings and mercies in our behalf.

The voice of thanksgiving, praise, and rejoicing is heard in heaven. The voices of the angels in heaven unite with the voices of the children of God on earth as they ascribe honor and glory and praise to God and to the Lamb for the great salvation provided. (CT 246:1).

On Sunday morning there was a decided evidence that the Spirit of God was working great changes in the moral and spiritual condition of those assembled. There was a surrendering of the mind and heart to God, and precious testimonies were borne by those who had long been in darkness. One brother spoke of the struggle that he had experienced before he could receive the good news that Christ is our righteousness. The conflict was severe, but the Lord presented the truth before him in clear lines, revealing the fact that Christ alone is the source of all hope and salvation. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:4,14). (ISM 356:1).

As I presented the goodness, the love, the tender compassion of our heavenly Father, I felt that the Spirit of the Lord was resting not only upon me but upon the people. Light and freedom and blessing came to the hearers and there was hearty response to the words spoken. The social meeting that followed evidenced that the Word had found lodgment in the hearts of the hearers. Many bore testimony that this day was the happiest of their lives, and it was indeed a precious season for we knew the presence of the Lord Jesus was in the assembly and that to bless. I knew that the special revealing of the Spirit of God was for a purpose, to quell the doubts, to roll back the tide of unbelief which had been admitted into hearts and minds concerning Sister White and the work the Lord had given her to do. (1888 Ma. 207:1).

In the morning all nature seemed to be full of joyfulness. We assembled at half past five for social meeting. The Spirit of the Lord was in our midst. Many stated that they came to the meeting with hearts as hard as stone, but as soon as they opened their lips to confess their faith in the love of Jesus, the light came in and their hearts were melted and subdued with the love of Jesus. One brother said he would bear his testimony for he knew it to be right, but he had no feeling. But his heart was broken; he fell upon the Rock and he was so impressed with the love of Jesus that he wept aloud. Ministers bore testimony that when they came to the meeting they were cold and their hearts hard, but when by faith they confessed to God their backslidings they knew Jesus forgave their sins and they were happy, newly converted, and they now bear a testimony that is free and joyful. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." (1888 Ma 284:4).

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. (6T 368:3).

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. (Rev. 15:2-4).

There is a day just about to burst upon us when God's mysteries will be seen, and all His ways vindicated; when justice, mercy, and love will be the attributes of His throne. When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song of God's providence is sung, connecting the varying dispensations; for all is now seen without a veil between the legal, the prophetic, and the gospel. The church history upon the earth and church redeemed in heaven all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song, – Christ all and in all, – in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an

innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven. (TM 433:1).

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea. (Ex. 15:1-19).

Like the voice of the great deep, rose from the vase hosts of Israel that sublime ascription. It was taken up by the women of Israel, Miriam, the sister of Moses, leading the way, as they went forth with timbrel and dance. Far over the desert and sea rang the joyous refrain, and the mountains re-echoed the words of their praise – “Sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously.”

This song and the great deliverance which it commemorates, made an impression never to be effaced from the memory of the Hebrew people. From age to age it was echoed by the prophets and singers of Israel, testifying that Jehovah is the strength and deliverance of those who trust in Him. That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of all the foes of righteousness and the final victory of the Israel of God. The prophet of Patmos beholds the white-robed multitude that have “gotten the victory,” standing on the “sea of glass mingled with fire,” having “the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.” Rev. 15:2,3....

“Whoso offereth praise,” says the Creator, “glorifieth me.” Ps. 50:23. All the inhabitants of heaven unite in praising God. Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist, “While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.” “Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.” Ps. 146:2; Ps. 6:75. (PP 288:1-289-3).

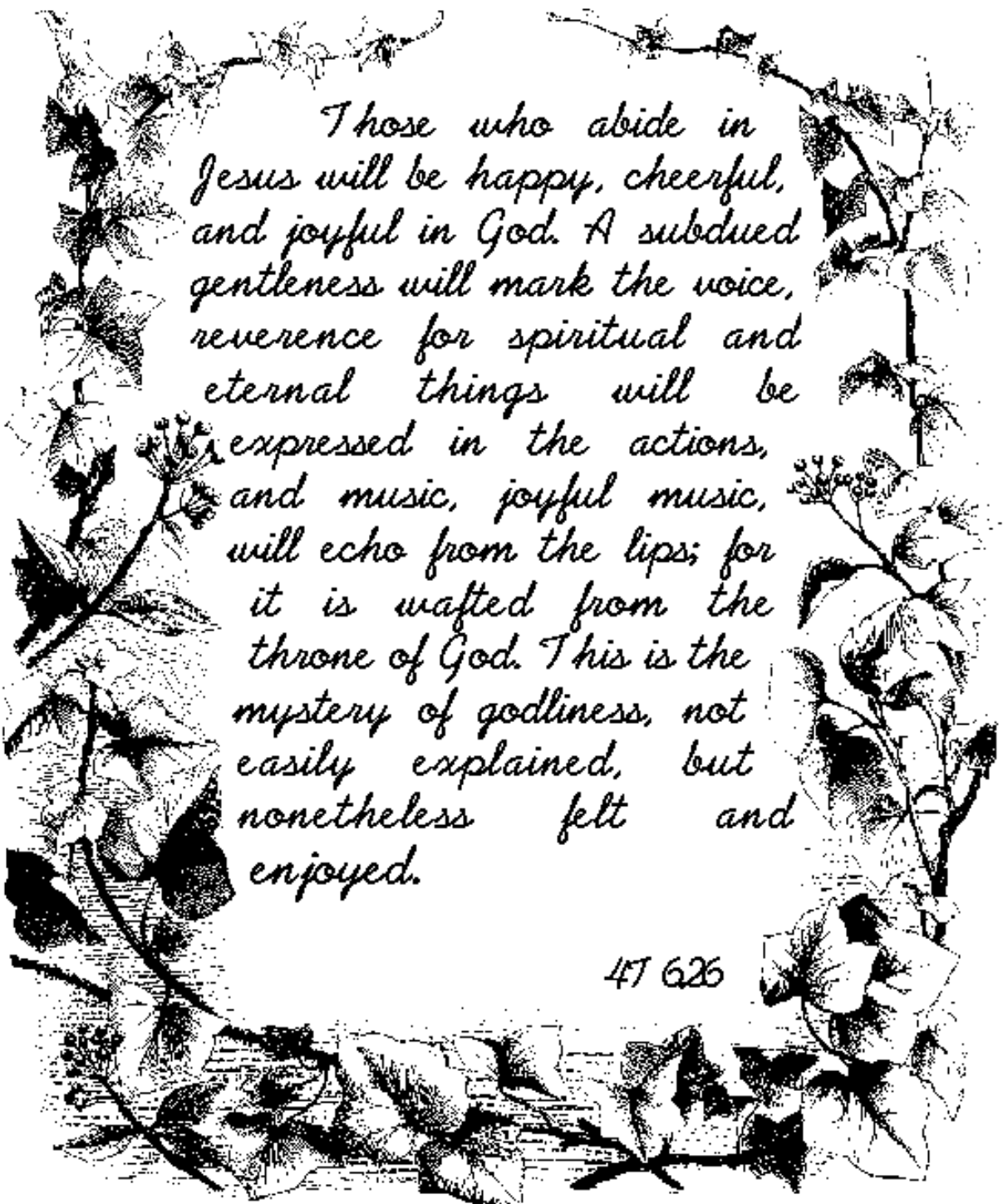
Praise the Lord; talk of His goodness; tell of His power. Sweeten the atmosphere that surrounds your soul.... Praise, with heart and soul and voice, Him who is the health of your countenance, your Saviour, and your God. (MLT 91:3).

As our Redeemer leads us to the threshold of the Infinite, flushed with the glory of God, we may catch the themes of praise and thanksgiving from the heavenly choir round about the throne; and as the echo of

the angels' song is awakened in our earthly homes, hearts will be drawn closer to the heavenly singers. Heaven's communion begins on earth. We learn here the keynote of its praise. (Ed 168:4).

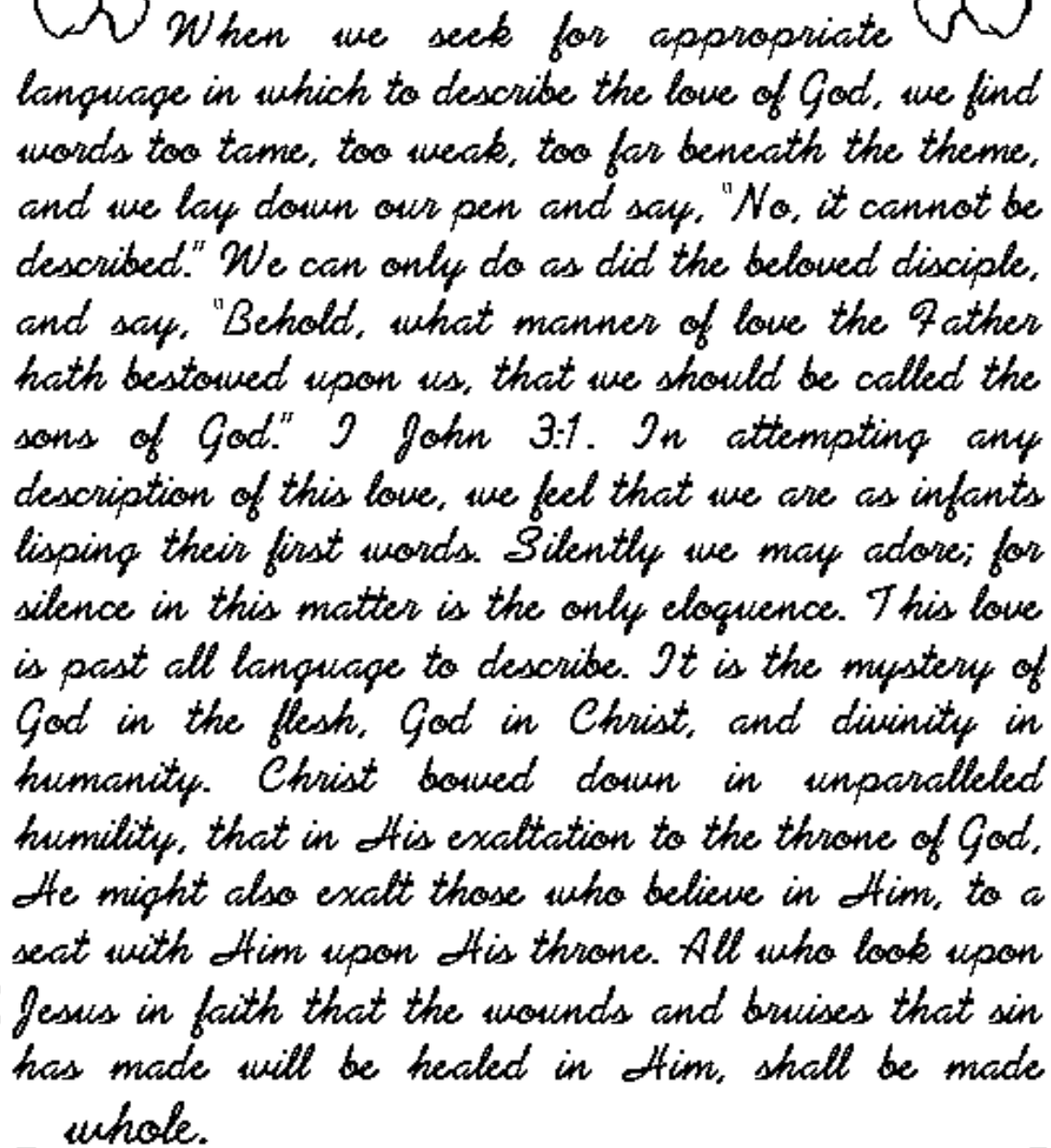
There are lessons to learn daily in regard to offering praise and thanksgiving to God. To praise God and glorify him in the fulness and sincerity of heart is as much the duty of those who love God as is prayer. We are to show to all the heavenly intelligences that we appreciate their ministrations, and that we are expecting and waiting for the goodness and mercy and large blessings of God. Never should we love sight of his wondrous love for the fallen human family. We are under obligations to God to offer thanksgiving. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth God. After a special outpouring of his Holy Spirit, our cheerfulness, our helpfulness, our joy in the Lord will be increased by recounting his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men. This will make the Christian courageous and yet simple and trustful as a little child. Read Matt. 18: 1-6. True humility will be evidenced by recounting the mercies of God. Think of his goodness and praise his name. The more we see and tell of the love and goodness and compassion of God, the more will gratitude spring up in our hearts. This will put a stop to grumbling. Distrust, censuring, jealousy, and evil surmising are never cherished in a heart that is thankful because of the mercies of God. True Christian life is that of higher and still higher education. Christian must grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. This is the character we must form if we have the wisdom of the Lord with us. (SPM 148:2).

What a song that will be when the ransomed of the Lord meet at the gate of the Holy City, which is thrown back on its glittering hinges, and the nations that have kept His word— His commandments— enter into the city, the crown of the overcomer is placed upon their heads, and the golden harps are placed in their hands! All heaven is filled with rich music, and with songs of praise to the Lamb. Saved, everlastingly saved, in the kingdom of glory! To have a life that measures with the life of God— that is the reward. (7BC 982:2).



Those who abide in Jesus will be happy, cheerful, and joyful in God. A subdued gentleness will mark the voice, reverence for spiritual and eternal things will be expressed in the actions, and music, joyful music, will echo from the lips; for it is wafted from the throne of God. This is the mystery of godliness, not easily explained, but nonetheless felt and enjoyed.

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When we seek for appropriate language in which to describe the love of God, we find words too tame, too weak, too far beneath the theme, and we lay down our pen and say, "No, it cannot be described." We can only do as did the beloved disciple, and say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. In attempting any description of this love, we feel that we are as infants lisping their first words. Silently we may adore; for silence in this matter is the only eloquence. This love is past all language to describe. It is the mystery of God in the flesh, God in Christ, and divinity in humanity. Christ bowed down in unparalleled humility, that in His exaltation to the throne of God, He might also exalt those who believe in Him, to a seat with Him upon His throne. All who look upon Jesus in faith that the wounds and bruises that sin has made will be healed in Him, shall be made whole.