

THE VOICE IN SPEECH AND SONG

Ellen G. White



Introduction

Ellen White's formal education ended when she was only nine years old, so she never had the privilege of studying under the speech or voice professionals of her day. Nevertheless, taught by the Lord, she became one of America's outstanding women preachers. For more than 70 years, long before the days of microphones and public address systems, she spoke to large audiences of up to 20,000 people.

Always ready to speak, especially on the subject of temperance, she declared, "When asked to speak on temperance, I have never hesitated" (MS. 31, 1911). Once she met the competition of Barnum's Circus in Battle Creek, Michigan, with a 90-minute temperance lecture delivered to 5,000 eager listeners. She spoke in a city hall in Haverhill, Massachusetts; in a prison in Salem, Oregon; on an improvised platform composed of beer tables in Norway; and at open-air meetings and in churches, halls, and tents on three continents. She was in constant demand as a camp

meeting speaker. Ellen White was a powerful evangelist.

Were it not for her books, Ellen White no doubt would be best remembered today for her pulpit ministry. But she did more than preach; she wrote--prolifically. Some 70 books currently carry her byline. Nearly all have sold in the tens of thousands, some even in the millions. The present work joins this long line of best sellers. It will be welcomed by ministers, teachers, musicians, and all others who are especially concerned with the use of the voice. The counsels published here are God-given; they are trustworthy and reliable. This volume is sent forth with the prayer that it will bring a blessing to all who seek to improve their voice talent for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity.

The Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate

Chapter 1

A Heavenly Talent

A Supreme Blessing for Good--The power of speech is a talent that should be diligently cultivated. Of all the gifts we have received from God, none is capable of being a greater blessing than this. With the voice we convince and persuade, with it we offer prayer and praise to God, and with it we tell others of the Redeemer's love. How important, then, that it be so trained as to be most effective for good.[1]

Voice and Tongue Divine Gifts--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.[2]

A Power in the Communication of

Knowledge--We may have knowledge, but unless we know how to use the voice correctly, our work will be a failure. Unless we can clothe our ideas in appropriate language, of what avail is our education? Knowledge will be of little advantage to us unless we cultivate the talent of speech; but it is a wonderful power when combined with the ability to speak wise, helpful words, and to speak them in a way that will command attention.[3]

Impression by Deep Feeling and Pathos--However great a man's knowledge, it is of no avail unless he is able to communicate it to others. Let the pathos of your voice, its deep feeling, make an impression on hearts.[4]

A Sacred Trust--The gift of speech is a valuable talent. Never despise or demit this gift. Thank God for entrusting it to you. It is a precious gift, to be sanctified, elevated, and ennobled. As a sacred trust, the voice should be used to honor God. It should never utter harsh, impure words or words of faultfinding. The gospel of Christ is to be proclaimed by the voice.

With the talent of speech we are to communicate the truth as we have opportunity. It should ever be used in God's service; but this talent is grievously abused. Words are spoken which do great harm. Christ declared, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matthew 12:36, 37)[5]

Holy Spirit's Power in the Cultivation of the Voice--Encourage all to use simple, pure, elevated language. Speech, pronunciation, and voice--cultivate these talents, not under any great elocutionist of the world, but under the power of the Holy Spirit of God.[6]

Courage, Cheer, and Hope--Talk of the goodness and love of Jesus. You and I have been granted the blessing of speech, which is a talent of great value. It is to be used in talking of those things which increase love for Jesus. Let us talk of His mercy, of the gracious words He spoke to

encourage and comfort, to bring hope and joy and love to our hearts.... Let us brighten the remaining years of our lives with words that bring courage and cheer and hope. The enemy will cast his shadow between Christ and our souls. He will tempt us to talk in a doubting, faithless way. But when disagreeable thoughts seek for utterance, do not give expression to them. Talk faith. Talk of the grace of our Lord and Saviour, of His love and mercy, of the beauty of His character. Let it become natural for the lips to give utterance to precious, inspiring thoughts.[7]

Conversion of the Tongue--The tongue is an unruly member, but it should not be so. It should be converted; for the talent of speech is a very precious talent. 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.[8]

A Means in the Advancement of His Kingdom--Speech is a talent, and can be used to honor or dishonor God. We are accountable for our

use of the talent of words. ... The talent of speech, of memory, of property, all are to accumulate for the glory of God, to advance His kingdom.[9]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 335.
2. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1159.
3. Testimonies for the Church 6:380.
4. Testimonies for the Church 7:268.
5. Manuscript 21, 1899.
6. Letter 83, 1898.
7. Letter 14, 1900.
8. Testimonies for the Church 6:173, 174.
9. Letter 44, 1900.

Chapter 2

Design for Communication

Words the Expression of Thought--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.[1]

Communication With God and Man--Speech is one of the great gifts of God. It is the means by which the thoughts of the heart are communicated. 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 may 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.

The tongue is a little member, but the words it frames have great power. The Lord declares, “The tongue can no man tame.” It has set nation against nation, and has caused war and bloodshed. Words have kindled fires that have been hard to quench. They have also brought joy and gladness to many hearts. And when words are spoken because God says, “Speak unto them My words,” they often cause sorrow unto repentance.

Of the unsanctified tongue the apostle James writes: “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.” Satan puts into the mind thoughts which the Christian should never utter. The scornful retort, the bitter, passionate utterance, the cruel, suspicious charge, are from him. How many words are spoken that do only harm to those who utter them and to those who hear! Hard words beat upon the heart, awaking to life its worst passions. Those who do evil with their tongues, who sow discord by selfish, jealous words, grieve the Holy Spirit; for they are working

at cross-purposes with God.[2]

A Power for Good--The apostle, seeing the inclination to abuse the gift of speech, gives direction concerning its use. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," he says, "but that which is good to the use of edifying." The word "corrupt" means here any word that would make an impression detrimental to holy principles 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. ...

Guard well the talent of speech; for it is a mighty power for evil as well as for good. 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 reveal the beauty, purity, and fragrance of a character molded and fashioned by His will. But if you are

under the guidance of the enemy of all good, your words will echo his sentiments.

The great responsibility bound up in the use of the gift of speech is plainly made known by the Word of God. “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned,” Christ declared. And the psalmist asks, “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. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved” (Psalm 15:1-5).

“Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile” (Psalm 34:13). The wild beast of the forest may be tamed, “but the tongue can no

man tame” (James 3:8). Only through Christ can we gain the victory over the desire to speak hasty, unChristlike words. When in His strength we refuse to give utterance to Satan’s suggestions, the plant of bitterness in our hearts withers and dies. The Holy Spirit can make the tongue a savor of life unto life.[3]

An Index of Character--Your words are an index of your character, and they will testify against you. Here we see the importance of carefulness in the employment of speech. This talent is a great power for good when it is used aright, but it is just as great a power for evil when the words spoken are poisonous. If this talent is abused, out of the heart proceed evil things. The words are either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. ...

Shall we not all, old and young, learn to converse in the language that is spoken by those who are translated into God’s kingdom? Shall not our words be such as will be heard with pleasure by our Heavenly Father?

As those who claim to be Christians, we are under solemn obligations to reveal the truth of our profession by our words. The tongue is a little member, but what an amount of good it can do if the heart is pure! If the heart is stored with good things, if it is stored with Christlike tenderness, sympathy, and politeness, this will be shown by the words spoken and the actions performed. The light shining from the Word of God is our guide. Nothing so weakens a church as a wrong use of the talent of speech. We dishonor our Leader when our words are not such as should come from the lips of a Christian.

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12, 13). The quality of our works is shown by our words. When our words and works harmonize in Christ, we show that we are consecrated to God, perfecting holiness in His fear. As we give ourselves, soul, body, and spirit, to Him, He works in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The love of Christ in the heart is revealed by the expression of praise. Those who are consecrated to God will show this by their sanctified conversation. If their hearts are pure, their words will be pure, showing an elevated principle working in a sanctified direction. The mind will be absorbed in holy contemplation, and there will be a sense of the presence of God.[4]

Means of Declaring God's Love--Speech is a talent. Of all the gifts bestowed on the human family, none should be more appreciated than the gift of speech. It is to be used to declare God's wisdom and wondrous love. Thus the treasures of His grace and wisdom are to be communicated.[5]

Words Seasoned With Wisdom and Purity--By our words we are to be justified or condemned. When in the final judgment we stand before the tribunal of God, it is our words that will justify or condemn us. Much more than we realize is involved in the matter of speech Let your lips be touched with a live coal from the divine altar. Utter

only words of truth. Watch and pray, that your words and deeds may ever confess Christ. Let your words be seasoned with wisdom and purity.[6]

Impartation of Christ's Grace--The riches of the grace of Christ which He is ever ready to bestow upon us, we are to impart in true, hopeful words. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." If we would guard our words, so that nothing but kindness shall escape our lips, we will give evidence that we are preparing to become members of the heavenly family. In words and works we shall show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Oh, what a reformative influence would go forth if we as a people would value at its true worth the talent of speech and its influence upon human souls!

Counsel, Encouragement, and Reproof--The talent of speech was given to us that we might speak, not words of faultfinding, but words of counsel, words of encouragement, words of reproof.[7]

Notes:

1. Sons and Daughters of God, 180.
2. The Review and Herald, May 12, 1910.
3. The Review and Herald, May 12, 1910.
4. The Review and Herald, January 18, 1898.
5. Counsels on Stewardship, 115.
6. Letter 283, 1904.
7. The Review and Herald, July 20, 1905.

Chapter 3

A Tool for Evangelism

Speech for Witnessing--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). But all who are called to be witnesses for Christ must learn of Him, that they may be efficient witnesses. As children of the heavenly King, they should educate themselves to bear testimony in a clear, distinct voice, and in such a manner that no one may receive the impression that they are reluctant to tell of the mercies of the Lord.[1]

Communication of the Truth--The gospel of Christ is to be proclaimed by the voice. With the talent of speech we are to communicate the truth as we have opportunity. It should ever be used in God’s service.[2]

Correct Language and Cultivated Voices--

Oh, that all might search diligently to know what is truth, to study earnestly that they might have correct language and cultivated voices, that they might present the truth in all its elevated and ennobling beauty.[3]

A Channel for the Knowledge of God--

The faculty of speech is a precious gift, and if the noblest of our faculties, reason, is set to the task of knowing God, then the gift of speech may become a means of grace to others, a channel through which the knowledge of God may be communicated.[4]

The Way to Present Christ--

God gave men eyes, that they might behold wondrous things out of His law. He gave them the hearing ear, that they might listen to His message, spoken by the living preacher. He gave men the talent of speech, that they might present Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is

made unto salvation.[5]

Means of Exalting Sacred Themes--He who teaches the Word of God should cultivate his powers of speech, that the sacred themes upon which he dwells may be presented in the very best manner, that the precious golden oil may cause his lamp to reflect clear and distinct rays. The truth should lose none of its power and attractive loveliness because of the channel through which it is communicated. We should seek to cultivate the purest, highest, noblest qualifications, that we may rightly represent the sacred, holy character of the work and cause of God.[6]

The Advancement of His Glory--Your speech is a talent, given you by God, not for your amusement, but for God's service, to be used for the advancement of His glory by being rightly employed.[7]

A Power in the Winning of Souls--There is great pathos and music in the human voice, and if the learner will make determined efforts, he will

acquire habits of talking and singing that will be to him a power to win souls to Christ.[8]

Privilege of Speech--Christians are to be Christlike in their earnest desire to save souls. They should regard it as the highest honor to be enlisted in Christ's army. They should thank God for the privilege of using the talent of speech to win souls to Christ. They should look upon no privilege as more precious than that of imparting to others the knowledge they have received.[9]

Salvation for Your Neighbors--Church members, let the light shine forth. Let your voices be heard in humble prayer, in witness against intemperance, the folly and the amusements of this world, and in the proclamation of the truth for this time. Your voice, your influence, your time--all these are gifts from God and are to be used in winning souls to Christ.

Visit your neighbors and show an interest in the salvation of their souls. Arouse every spiritual energy to action. Tell those whom you visit that the

end of all things is at hand. The Lord Jesus Christ will open the door of their hearts and will make upon their minds lasting impressions.... Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the Pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way.[10]

Purity of Language--As you seek to draw others within the circle of His love, let the purity of your language, the unselfishness of your service, the joyfulness of your demeanor, bear witness to the power of His grace. Give to the world so pure and righteous a representation of Him, that men shall behold Him in His beauty.[11]

Manner of Speaking a Representation of Christ--From the light I have had, the ministry is a sacred and exalted office, and those who accept this position should have Christ in their hearts and manifest an earnest desire to represent Him worthily before the people in all their acts, in their dress, in their speaking, and even in their manner of speaking.[12]

God's Mouthpiece--The messenger who bears the word of life to a perishing world is bound to speak the truth. The Lord Jesus is by his side, ready to enlarge the narrow confines of human knowledge, that all may see that the teacher is presenting the gift of imperishable wealth to all who will believe on Christ. There is power in Christ to redeem the mental and moral character, and to mold the man after the divine likeness.[13]

Need of Tact in Telling of the Saviour--Wherever we are, we should watch for opportunities of speaking to others of the Saviour. If we follow Christ's example in doing good, hearts will open to us as they did to Him. Not abruptly, but with tact born of divine love, we can tell them of Him who is the "Chiefest among ten thousand" and the One "altogether lovely." This is the very highest work in which we can employ the talent of speech. It was given to us that we might present Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour.[14]

Right Expression in Words of Truth--To

learn to tell convincingly and impressively that which one knows is of especial value to those who desire to be workers in the cause of God. The more expression we can put into the words of truth, the more effective these words will be on those who hear. A proper presentation of the Lord's truth is worthy of our highest effort.[15]

Hope to the Soul--He who is your neighbor is to be earnestly sought for and labored for. Is he ignorant? Let your communication make him more intelligent. Is he downcast and discouraged? Let your words speak hope to his soul... By the influence of words spoken from a heart full of love, the discouraged ones may become trophies of grace--heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.[16]

Thoughts Suggested by God--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.[17]

Tender Words, Not Harsh--Talk to souls in peril and get them to behold Jesus upon the cross, dying to make it possible for Him to pardon. Talk to the sinner with your own heart overflowing with the tender, pitying love of Christ. Let there be deep earnestness; but not a harsh, loud note should be heard from the one who is trying to win the soul to look and live. ...

Christ crucified--talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts. This is the power and wisdom of God to gather souls for Christ. Formal, set phrases, the presentation of merely argumentative subjects, is productive of little good.[18]

The Law of Kindness on Your Lips--Find access to the people in whose neighborhood you live. As you tell them of the truth, use words of Christlike sympathy.... Utter not one unkind word. Let the love of Christ be in your hearts, the law of kindness on your lips.[19]

Gentle Words As Still Showers--We need to have close communion with God lest self rise up, as it did in Jehu, and we pour forth a torrent of words that are unbefitting, that are not as dew, nor as the still showers, which revive the withering plants. Let our words be gentle as we seek to win souls. God will be wisdom to him who seeks for wisdom from a divine source. We are to seek opportunities on every hand. We are to watch unto prayer, and be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks a reason for the hope that is in us. Lest we shall impress unfavorably one soul for whom Christ has died, we should keep our hearts uplifted to God, so that when the opportunity presents itself, we may have the right word to speak at the right time.[20]

Deeds Combined With Words--God desires that the bounties He has freely given to His children be communicated to those who do not possess so many temporal blessings. By this communication, by the utterance of kindly words, accompanied with deeds of love, those who work

for God will find entrance to hearts, and win others to Christ. This part of religion we are not to forget; “for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”[21]

Notes:

1. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 243.
2. The Review and Herald, September 12, 1899.
3. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 256.
4. Letter 59, 1895.
5. The Adventist Home, 401.
6. The Review and Herald, April 20, 1897.
7. Letter 89, 1897.
8. Evangelism, 504.
9. The Review and Herald, December 24, 1901.
10. Testimonies for the Church 9:38.
11. The Ministry of Healing, 156.
12. Testimonies for the Church 2:615.
13. The Review and Herald, July 19, 1898.
14. Christ’s Object Lessons, 339.
15. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 217.
16. The Review and Herald, February 16, 1897.

17. Manuscript 61, 1907.
18. Testimonies for the Church 6:67.
19. Testimonies for the Church 9:41.
20. The Review and Herald, October 7, 1902.
21. The Review and Herald, February 18, 1902.

Chapter 4

Importance of Speech Education

Most Important Branch--The talent of speech is to be carefully studied and carefully guarded. This is the most important branch of education, but one which is sadly neglected in all our associations. The power to communicate to our associates may be a great blessing or a great curse.[1]

Essential Subject for Our Schools--The education of the speech must not be neglected in our schools. Those who go into society with a desire and a determination to be as Christ commanded them to be, will not condescend to unchristian conversation. They will seek to represent Christ by their spirit and words.[2]

Sanctified Conversation--The light given me by the word of God is that the speech needs to be converted and sanctified. The Lord requires that

education should be given in the science of conversation. This faculty has been much abused and perverted. It has not been held as a precious gift from God, to be used to glorify His name. The words are a power for good or evil, a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. Choice words must be spoken by those who would do service for Christ. Haphazard words, hasty, common words, talking for the sake of talking, when silence would be better, is a sin. Those who are the most wordy exercise no wholesome influence upon the society in which they live and move. Bible religion is not to be boastfully paraded, but quietly practiced in good words and works.[3]

Evil Speaking a Misdemeanor--Notice these words: “And let the peace of God rule in your heart.” If you do this, a flood of words that have in them no virtue or goodness, will not pour from your lips. “To the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful. Let the word of God 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.”

This is the education we need in our schools. The hasty, reckless use of the faculty of speech lies at the foundation of nearly all the church troubles that exist. Evilspeaking should be dealt with as a misdemeanor that is subject to church trial and separation from church membership if persisted in; for the church cannot be set in order in any other way.[4]

Science of Conversation As Related to the Study of God’s Word--Our education in regard to the science of conversation will be in every way improved if we make the Word of God our study. This branch of education has been woefully neglected. Many receive diplomas from colleges who have not earned them by gaining an allround education. Teachers and pupils are apt to skip the important matter of the education of speech. For want of training in this line, students lose much. They go from school to be deficient all through

their life experience.[5]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 77, 1897.
2. The Review and Herald, January 25, 1898.
3. Manuscript 74, 1897.
4. Manuscript 74, 1897.
5. Manuscript 74, 1897.

Chapter 5

The Role of Parents

Home a School for Speech Culture--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.[1]

The Parents’ Part and God’s Part--Fathers and mothers, you have a solemn work to do. The eternal salvation of your children depends upon your course of action. How will you successfully educate your children? Not by scolding, for it will do no good. Talk to your children as if you had

confidence in their intelligence. Deal with them kindly, tenderly, lovingly. Tell them what God would have them do. Tell them that God would have them educated and trained to be laborers together with Him. When you act your part, you can trust the Lord to act His part.[2]

The Teaching of Correct Speech Habits--Instruction is to be constantly given to encourage the children in the formation of correct habits in speech, in voice, in deportment.[3]

Sunshine or Shadows--It is important that children and youth should be trained to guard their words and deeds; for their course of action causes sunshine or shadow, not only in their own home, but also with all with whom they come in contact.[4]

Organs of Speech a Living Machinery--One of the finest and most elevating branches of education is that of knowing how to address members of the household, that the influence of the words spoken will be pure and incorruptible. The

proper conversation of a Christian is that which will enable him to interchange ideas. Loudvoiced words, that help and bless no one, might better be changed for words of good, elevated, enlightened common sense. This line of work is the greatest missionary enterprise in which any Christian can engage. Those who use the organs of speech as the living machinery of God, become living stones in His temple, emitting light and knowledge.

The warnings and instruction of the Word of God are least heeded on the subject of speech. If students would live according to the Bible rule, the glory of God would be their aim in the exercise of the God-given faculty of speech. They would diligently educate the tongue, so that it would not utter strange and perverse things. Thus they would indeed be overcomers in this exercise, which it is so difficult to practice. Great advancement would be made in garrisoning the citadel of the soul, that Satan should not enter to take possession.[5]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 337, 338.
2. Child Guidance, 33.
3. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 267.
4. The Adventist Home, 437.
5. Manuscript 74, 1897.

Chapter 6

The Role of Teachers

A Message of Eternal Import--Every Christian is called to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ; therefore he should seek for perfection in speech. He should present the Word of God in a way that will commend it to the hearers. God does not design that His human channels shall be uncouth. It is not His will that man shall belittle or degrade the heavenly current that flows through him to the world.

We should look to Jesus, the perfect Pattern; we should pray for the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in His strength we should seek to train every organ for perfect work.

Especially is this true of those who are called to public service. Every minister and every teacher should bear in mind that he is giving to the people a message that involves eternal interests. The truth spoken will judge them in the great day of final

reckoning. And with some souls the manner of the one delivering the message will determine its reception or rejection. Then let the word be so spoken that it will appeal to the understanding and impress the heart. Slowly, distinctly, and solemnly should it be spoken, yet with all the earnestness which its importance demands.[1]

Obedience to God's Word--In every line of instruction, teachers are to seek to impart light from the Word of God, and to show the importance of obedience to a "Thus saith the Lord." The education should be such that the students will make right principles the guide of every action. This is the education that will abide through the eternal ages.[2]

The Cleansed Life an Effective Example--The teacher whose soul is stayed upon Christ will speak and act like a Christian. Such a one will not be satisfied until the truth cleanses his life from every unessential thing. He will not be satisfied unless his mind is day by day molded by the holy influences of the Spirit of God. Then Christ can

speak to the heart, and His voice, saying, “This is the way; walk ye in it,” will be heard and obeyed.[3]

Encouraging Words--Show sympathy and tenderness in dealing with your pupils. Reveal the love of God. Let the words you speak be kind and encouraging. Then as you work for your students, what a transformation will be wrought in the characters of those who have not been properly trained in the home! The Lord can make even youthful teachers channels for the revealing of His grace, if they will consecrate themselves to Him.[4]

Force and Enthusiasm--The teacher should constantly aim at simplicity and effectiveness. He should teach largely by illustration, and even in dealing with older pupils should be careful to make every explanation plain and clear. Many pupils well advanced in years are but children in understanding.

An important element in educational work is enthusiasm. On this point there is a useful

suggestion in a remark once made by a celebrated actor. The archbishop of Canterbury had put to him the question why actors in a play affect their audiences so powerfully by speaking of things imaginary, while ministers of the gospel often affect theirs so little by speaking of things real. “With due submission to your grace,” replied the actor, “permit me to say that the reason is plain: It lies in the power of enthusiasm. We on the stage speak of things imaginary as if they were real, and you in the pulpit speak of things real as if they were imaginary.”

The teacher in his work is dealing with things real, and he should speak of them with all the force and enthusiasm which a knowledge of their reality and importance can inspire.[5]

A Few Words, Not Long Speeches--Those who instruct children should avoid tedious remarks. Short remarks and to the point will have a happy influence. If much is to be said, make up for briefness by frequency. A few words of interest now and then will be more beneficial than to have

it all at once. Long speeches burden the small minds of children. Too much talk will lead them to loathe even spiritual instruction, just as overeating burdens the stomach and lessens the appetite, leading even to a loathing of food. The minds of the people may be glutted with too much speechifying. Labor for the church, but especially for the youth, should be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Give minds time to digest the truths you feed them. Children must be drawn toward heaven, not rashly, but very gently.[6]

Every Word Distinctly Spoken--The teacher of truth is to take heed how he presents the truth. He is to speak every word plainly and distinctly, with that earnest conviction which carries conviction to hearts. If the words spoken are crowded upon each other, the impression that should be made is lost. The talent of speech needs to be cultivated, that the truth be spoken not excitedly, but slowly and distinctly, that not a syllable may be lost.[7]

Correct Use of Language--One of the most essential qualifications of a teacher is the ability to speak and read distinctly and forcibly. He who knows how to use the English language fluently and correctly can exert a far greater influence than one who is unable to express his thoughts readily and clearly.[8]

Intelligent Articulation--The teacher should cultivate his powers, cultivate his speech so as to speak distinctly, giving intelligent articulation.[9]

Simplicity of Christ's Words--The Pharisees scoffed at Christ; they criticized the simplicity of His language, which was so plain that the child, the aged, the common people heard Him gladly, and were charmed by His words. The Sadducees also derided Him because His discourses were so unlike anything delivered by their rulers and scribes. Those Jewish teachers spoke in monotonous tones, and the plainest and most precious scriptures were made uninteresting and unintelligible, buried under such a mass of tradition and learned lore that after the rabbis had spoken, the people knew less of the

meaning of the Scriptures than before they listened. There were many souls starving for the Bread of Life, and Jesus fed them with pure, simple truth. In His teaching He drew illustrations from the things of nature and the common transactions of life, with which they were familiar. Thus the truth became to them a living reality; the scenes of nature and the affairs of daily life were ever repeating to them the Saviour's precious teachings. Christ's manner of teaching was just what He desires His servants to follow.[10]

Kindness in Reproof--Let the teacher bring peace and love and cheerfulness into his work. Let him not allow himself to become angry or provoked. The Lord is looking upon him with intense interest, to see if he is being molded by the divine Teacher.

The child who loses his self-control is far more excusable than the teacher who allows himself to become angry and impatient. When a stern reproof is to be given, it may still be given in kindness. Let the teacher beware of making the child stubborn by

speaking to him harshly. Let him follow every correction with drops of the oil of kindness. He should never forget that he is dealing with Christ in the person of one of Christ's little ones.

Let it be a settled maxim that in all school discipline, faithfulness and love are to reign. When a student is corrected in such a way that he is not made to feel that the teacher desires to humiliate him, love for the teacher springs up in his heart.[11]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 336.
2. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 516.
3. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 526.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 152.
5. Education, 233.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:420.
7. The Southern Work, October 27, 1903.
8. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 216.

9. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 97.
10. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 242, 243.
11. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 212.

Chapter 7

Students and Speech

Speech As Influenced by the Truth Within--

If students will have the moral courage to live the truth day by day, its sanctifying power will have a wonderful influence on their speech. They may make some alteration in their ways and manners, but no fruit is produced until the speech is sanctified. They may hear the truth, but they will make no decided change unless they eat the Word of God. Until the truth becomes a part of them, they may assent to it till it is opposed, but they show by their speech that the Word is not to them the bread of life. God has given to everyone the opportunity and privilege of becoming a partaker of the divine nature, thus becoming one with Jesus Christ. But many show by their words that they do not feed on Jesus Christ, and therefore they cannot shine, they cannot communicate that which is not their meat and drink. Their use of the talent of speech shows that they have gathered only chaff.[1]

Cultivation of the Voice--Young men and women, has God placed in your hearts a desire to do service for Him? Then by all means cultivate the voice to the utmost of your ability, so that you can make plain the precious truth to others. Do not fall into the habit of praying so indistinctly and in so low a tone that your prayers need an interpreter. Pray simply, but clearly and distinctly. To let the voice sink so low that it cannot be heard, is no evidence of humility.[2]

Power to Communicate--The extent of a Christian's usefulness is measured by his power to communicate that which he has received, and which has become experience to him. Education falls short if students do not obtain a knowledge of how to use the faculty of speech, and how to use to the best advantage the education they have obtained. The youth are to commence when young to learn the proper manner of speech.[3]

Thorough Training in Correct Language--If your students, besides studying God's Word, learn

no more than how to use correctly the English language in reading, writing, and speaking, a great work will have been accomplished. Those who are trained for service in the Lord's cause should be taught how to talk properly in ordinary conversation and before congregations. Many a laborer's usefulness is marred by his ignorance in regard to correct breathing and clear, forcible speaking. Many have not learned to give the right emphasis to the words they read and speak. Often the enunciation is indistinct. A thorough training in the use of the English language is of far more value to a youth than a superficial study of foreign languages, to the neglect of his mother tongue.[4]

Reading and Speaking With Ease--A great injury is often done our young men by permitting them to commence to preach when they have not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures to represent our faith in an intelligent manner. Some who enter the field are mere novices in the Scriptures. In other things also they are incompetent and inefficient. They cannot read the Scriptures without hesitating, miscalling words, and jumbling them

together in such a manner that the Word of God is abused. Those who are not qualified to present the truth in a proper manner need not be perplexed with regard to their duty. Their place is that of learners, not teachers. Young men who wish to prepare for the ministry are greatly benefited by attending our college; but advantages are still needed that they may be qualified to become acceptable speakers. A teacher should be employed to educate the youth to speak without wearing the vocal organs. The manners also should receive attention.[5]

Perfection of Speech and Voice--The teachers in our schools should not tolerate in the students ungainly attitudes and uncouth gestures, wrong intonations in reading, or incorrect accents or emphasis. Perfection of speech and voice should be urged upon every student. Because of carelessness and bad training, habits are often contracted which are great hindrances in the work of a minister who has otherwise educated talent. The student must be impressed that he has it in his power, by combining grace with effort, to make himself a man. The

mental and physical capabilities with which God has adorned him may by cultivation and painstaking effort become a power to benefit his fellow men.[6]

Need of Improving Tones of the Voice-- Students, God has given you the talent of speech. He desires you to improve this talent. You can improve the tones of the voice. Be determined to make yourself, through the grace of God, as perfect as possible. If you are correct in speech and action, those who associate with you will be blessed by the association. Those who are hasty and impetuous in speech say a great many things they will not wish to meet in the judgment.

Do not let a word fall from your lips that will stir up strife in another heart. God desires your words to be of such a character that they will bring sunshine instead of gloom, harmony instead of animosity.[7]

Ability to Speak Plainly-- Unless students who are preparing for work in the cause of God are

trained to speak in a clear, straightforward manner, they will be shorn of half their influence for good. Whatever his calling is to be, the student should learn to control the voice. The ability to speak plainly and distinctly, in full, round tones, is invaluable in any line of work, and it is indispensable to those who desire to become ministers, evangelists, Bible workers, or canvassers.[8]

Watchfulness of Manner, Tone, and Language--The workman for God should make earnest efforts to become a representative of Christ, discarding all uncomely gestures and uncouth speech. He should endeavor to use correct language. There is a large class who are careless in the way they speak, yet by careful, painstaking attention these may become representatives of the truth. Every day they should make advancement. They should not detract from their usefulness and influence by cherishing defects of manner, tone, or language. Common, cheap expressions should be replaced by sound, pure words. By constant watchfulness and earnest discipline the Christian

youth may keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile.

We should be careful not to give an incorrect pronunciation of our words. There are men among us who in theory know better than to use incorrect language, yet who in practice make frequent mistakes.[9]

Speaking With Respect to All--The talent of speech is a very precious talent, and should in no case be perverted. The tongue is an unruly member, but it should not be so. That member which is improperly used in profane speech should be converted to utter praise to God. If all the students would make decided efforts to change their mode of thinking, of speaking, and of acting, in the family circle restraining all words that are not kind and courteous, and speaking with respect to all; if they would bear in mind that they are here preparing to become members of the family in heaven, what a reformatory influence would go forth from every home! ...

The natural inclinations followed will work out in inconsistencies of conduct, in wrong speech, in disregard of God's Word, in profane language, in the thoughts.[10]

Scale of Usefulness--The young men and women who join the church should have a special education in the work for which they are adapted. But if one continues to choose a low, common train of conversation, receive him not as a worker. He will do more than can be counteracted to spoil the other workers.... The words, the spirit, the attitude, determine the scale of usefulness.[11]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 74, 1897.
2. Gospel Workers, 89.
3. Manuscript 74, 1897.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 207, 208.
5. Testimonies for the Church 4:405, 406.
6. Evangelism, 668, 669.
7. Manuscript 65, 1901.

8. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 217.
9. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 238, 239.
10. Manuscript 77, 1897.
11. The Review and Herald, March 22, 1898.

Chapter 8

The Influence of Words

Tongue Control by Divine Grace--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.[1]

An Influence to Balance Souls--Words spoken in season, how good are they! How much strength a word of hope, courage, and determination in a right course will give one who is inclined to slide into habits that are demoralizing! The firm purpose you may possess in carrying out good principles will have an influence to balance souls in the right direction.[2]

Choice of Words in Light of the Judgment--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. But if you separate from God, as you have been doing, take heed lest your tongue shall prove a world of iniquity and bring upon you fearful condemnation; for souls will be lost through you.[3]

Links in the Chain of Human Events--You may think that what you do or say is of little consequence, when the most important results for good or evil are the consequence of our words and actions. The words and actions looked upon as so small and unimportant are links in the long chain of human events.[4]

Christ's Way--God's servants in this age have

been given most solemn truths to proclaim, and their actions and methods and plans must correspond to the importance of their message. If you are presenting the word in Christ's way, your audience will be deeply impressed with the truths you teach. The conviction will come to them that this is the word of the living God.[5]

Importance of Every Word--Every uttered word exerts an influence, every action involves a train of responsibility. No one can live to himself in this world, even if he would. Each one forms a part of the great web of humanity, and through our individual threads of influence, we are linked to the universe. Christ used His influence to draw men to God, and He has left us an example of the way in which we should speak and act. A person who is molded by the Spirit of God will know how to speak a "word in season to him that is weary," and will realize the highest human blessedness--the joy of imparting to others the precious treasures of the wisdom and grace of Christ. But those who permit themselves to be controlled by the enemy of all good will speak words which should never be

uttered.[6]

Impress of Every Word and Act--“We are laborers together with God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9. He will use you and me and each human being who enters His service, if we will submit to His guidance. Each one is to stand in his watchtower, listening attentively to that which the Spirit has to say to him, remembering that his every word and act makes an impression, not only on his own character, but on the characters of those with whom he is connected.[7]

Words of Love--Our duty is to live in the atmosphere of Christ’s love, to breathe His love deeply, and to reflect its warmth around us. Oh, what a sphere of influence is open before us! How carefully we should cultivate the garden of the soul, so that it may bring forth only pure, sweet, fragrant flowers! Words of love, tenderness, and charity sanctify our influence over others.[8]

A Savor of Life or Death--The words we utter today in the ears of the people, the works we are

doing, the spirit of the message we are bearing, will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.[9]

Blessing or Curse--Day by day we are sowing seeds for the future harvest. We cannot be too careful of the seed we sow by our words. Often words are carelessly spoken and forgotten, but these words, for good or ill, will bring forth a harvest. Sow one unkind, harsh word, and this seed, finding soil in the minds of the hearers, will spring up to bear fruit after its kind. Sow one seed in loving, gentle, Christlike words, and it will bring you rich returns. Let us guard ourselves, lest we speak words that are not a blessing, but a curse.[10]

Which Controlling Power?--You cannot be too careful of what you say, for the words you utter show what power is controlling your mind and heart. If Christ rules in your heart, your words will reveal the purity, beauty, and fragrance of a character molded and fashioned by His will. But since his fall, Satan has been an accuser of the brethren, and you must be on guard lest you reveal

the same spirit.[11]

Effective Living and Speaking--By the calmness of our conversation we can bear good witness for Him [God]. Correct living and correct speaking have a greater influence for good than all the sermons that can be preached.[12]

Righteous words and deeds have a more powerful influence for good than all the sermons that can be preached.[13]

Judicious Conversation--Judicious conversation and right actions exert an influence which is a power in the right direction. But generally those who talk most are those who do the least deep, earnest thinking, the least work for the Master. They think that by talking they can make up for their deficiencies. But it is doers of the Word that are justified before God.[14]

Connection Between Our Hearts and Our Words--We shall reveal what is in our hearts by the words we speak. The connection between the

heart and the words of our mouth is very intimate, and by our words we shall be individually judged in the last day.... Our thoughts produce our words, and our words react upon our thoughts.[15]

An Indication of Character--The words are more than an indication of character; they have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really believe; but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation. Having once expressed an opinion or decision, they are often too proud to retract it, and try to prove themselves in the right, until they come to believe that they are.

It is dangerous to utter a word of doubt, dangerous to question and criticize divine light. The habit of careless and irreverent criticism reacts upon the character in fostering irreverence and unbelief. Many a man indulging this habit has gone

on unconscious of danger until he was ready to criticize and reject the work of the Holy Spirit.[16]

Influence Outside the Church--The professed followers of Christ should realize that the influence of their words and acts not only has a bearing upon themselves, but extends outside the church. If they could see the mischief wrought by their careless words, the repetition of vague reports, the unjust censures, there would be far less talking and more praying when Christians assemble together.[17]

Impact on Nonbelievers--The life, the words, and the deportment are the most forcible argument, the most solemn appeal, to the careless, irreverent, and skeptical. Let the life and character be the strong argument for Christianity; then men will be compelled to take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus and have learned of Him.[18]

Influence Even After Death--There are few who realize how far-reaching is the influence of their words and acts. How often the errors of parents produce the most disastrous effects upon

their children and children's children, long after the actors themselves have been laid in the grave. Everyone is exerting an influence upon others, and will be held accountable for the result of that influence. Words and actions have a telling power, and the long hereafter will show the effect of our life here. The impression made by our words and deeds will surely react upon ourselves in blessing or in cursing. This thought gives an awful solemnity to life, and should draw us to God in humble prayer that He will guide us by His wisdom.[19]

A Thoughtless Word, a Soul's Eternal Destiny--Let none venture to speak lightly of the cautions given by those whose duty it is to guard their moral and spiritual welfare. The words may seem to be of little consequence, producing only a momentary impression on the minds of the hearers. But this is not all. In many cases these words find a response in the unsanctified hearts of youth who have never submitted to caution or restraint. The influence of a thoughtless word may affect a soul's eternal destiny. Every person is exerting an

influence upon the lives of others.[20]

Words Fitly Spoken--The world is indeed full of hurry, and of pride, selfishness, avarice, and violence; and it may seem to us that it is a waste of time and breath to be ever in season and out of season, and on all occasions to hold ourselves in readiness to speak words that are gentle, pure, elevating, chaste, and holy, in the face of the whirlwind of confusion, bustle, and strife. And yet words fitly spoken, coming from sanctified hearts and lips, and sustained by a godly, consistent Christian deportment, will be as apples of gold in pictures of silver. ...

You are not to wait for great occasions, or to expect extraordinary abilities, before you work in earnest for God. You need not have a thought of what the world will think of you. If your intercourse with them and your godly conversation are a living testimony to them of the purity and sincerity of your faith, and they are convinced that you desire to benefit them, your words will not be wholly lost upon them, but will be productive of

good.[21]

Behavior Consistent With Words--If we desire to reform others we must ourselves practice the principles which we would enforce upon them. Words, however good, will be powerless if contradicted by the daily life. Ministers of Christ, I admonish you: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Do not excuse sins in yourselves which you reprove in others. If you preach on meekness and love, let these graces be exemplified in your own life. If you urge others to be kind, courteous, and attentive at home, let your own example give force to your admonitions.[22]

Denial of Christ by Evil Speaking--He who would confess Christ must have Christ abiding in him. He cannot communicate that which he has not received. The disciples might speak fluently on doctrines, they might repeat the words of Christ Himself; but unless they possessed Christlike meekness and love, they were not confessing Him. A spirit contrary to the spirit of Christ would deny Him, whatever the profession. Men may deny

Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind.[23]

The Cause of Nine-Tenths of Church Difficulties--Unchristlike speech lies at the foundation of nine-tenths of all the difficulties that exist in the church. Satan's agents are industriously trying to get professed Christians to speak unadvisedly. When they succeed, Satan exults, because God's followers have hurt their influence.[24]

Disparaging Remarks--Many today feel at liberty to use the talent of speech recklessly, without thinking of the influence their words will have upon others. The Lord sends His messages by whom He will, and those who make disparaging remarks of the messengers and the message need to remember that they would speak in the same way of Christ if He should come to them as He came to the Jews, with a message that did not suit their unrenewed hearts. Those who use their speech to mimic the one who is speaking the words of God are charged with having done this to Christ; for it is

done to Him in the person of His saints.[25]

Influence of Angry Words--Oh, that those who are proclaiming the most solemn message ever given to the world would realize how greatly their influence is weakened when they are suspicious of their brethren, when they allow angry words to pass their lips! The displeasure of God rests upon everyone who speaks harsh, unkind words.[26]

Confidence in Brethren--By sowing evil in the minds of the weak, who have no vital connection with God, by telling them how little confidence you have in others, you tear away the hold their brethren have on them, because you destroy their confidence in them. But do not allow the enemy so to use your tongue; for at the day of final reckoning, God will call you to give an account of your words. Do not exert an influence that will break the hold of any trembling soul from God. Even though you are not treated as you think you should be, do not allow the root of bitterness to spring up; for thereby many will be defiled. By your words you may cause others to become

suspicious.[27]

Ruin of the Weak in the Faith--Do not allow the devil to use your tongue and your voice to ruin those weak in the faith; for at the day of final reckoning God will call upon you to give an account of your work.[28]

Permanent Effect of Foolish Words--As professed Christians, we should consider the influence our words have upon those with whom we come into association, whether they are believers or unbelievers. Our words are watched, and mischief is done by thoughtless utterances. No after association with believers or unbelievers will wholly counteract the unfavorable influence of thoughtless, foolish words. Our words evidence the manner of food upon which the soul feeds.[29]

Power of Example--When a crisis comes in the life of any soul, and you attempt to give counsel or admonition, your words will have only the weight of influence for good that your own example and spirit have gained for you.[30]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 5:175.
2. Messages to Young People, 125.
3. Testimonies for the Church 4:244.
4. Testimonies for the Church 3:542.
5. Testimonies for the Church 9:143.
6. The Review and Herald, February 16, 1897.
7. Testimonies for the Church 8:172.
8. Our High Calling, 175.
9. Testimonies for the Church 5:716.
10. Our High Calling, 294.
11. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:579, 580.
12. Manuscript 65, 1901.
13. My Life Today, 114.
14. Manuscript 53, 1899.
15. Letter 16a, 1895.
16. The Desire of Ages, 323.
17. The Review and Herald, October 19, 1886.
18. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 478.
19. Patriarchs and Prophets, 556.
20. Testimonies for the Church 4:654.

21. Testimonies for the Church 3:247.
22. Testimonies for the Church 5:160.
23. The Desire of Ages, 357.
24. The Review and Herald, November 24, 1904.
25. The Review and Herald, January 18, 1898.
26. The Review and Herald, July 21, 1903.
27. The Review and Herald, August 24, 1897.
28. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1161.
29. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1159, 1160.
30. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 127.

Chapter 9

Persuasion Through Speech

Sanctified Speech the Greatest Blessing--Of all the gifts which God has given to man, none is more noble or a greater blessing than the gift of speech, if it is sanctified by the Holy Spirit. It is with the tongue we convince and persuade; with it we offer prayer and praise to God; and with it we convey rich thoughts of the Redeemer's love.[1]

Peace in the Heart--We should show by our daily lives that we have peace and rest in God. His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power. Communion with God will impart a moral elevation to the character and to the entire course of action.[2]

Kindly, Cheerful Approach--Approach the people in a persuasive, kindly manner, full of cheerfulness and love for Christ.... No human tongue can express the preciousness of the

ministration of the Word and the Holy Spirit. No human expression can portray to the finite mind the value of understanding and by living faith receiving the blessing that is given as Jesus of Nazareth passes by.[3]

Persuasion for Soul Winning--The power of persuasion is a wonderful gift. It means much to those who would win souls to Christ.[4]

Power of the Personal Experience--When one has received the truth in the love of it, he will make this manifest in the persuasion of his manner and the tones of his voice. He makes known that which he himself has heard, seen, and handled of the word of life, that others may have fellowship with him through the knowledge of Christ. His testimony, from lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, is truth to the receptive heart, and works sanctification upon the character.[5]

Love and Sympathy--The most persuasive eloquence is the word that is spoken in love and sympathy. Such words will bring light to confused

minds and hope to the discouraged, brightening the prospect before them. The time in which we live calls for vital, sanctified energy; for earnestness, zeal, and the tenderest sympathy and love; for words that will not increase misery, but will inspire faith and hope. We are homeward bound, seeking a better country, even an heavenly. Instead of speaking words which will rankle in the breasts of those that hear, shall we not speak of the love wherewith God hath loved us? Shall we not try to lighten the hearts of those around us by words of Christlike sympathy?[6]

A Reservoir of Persuasion--A conscience void of offense toward God and man, a heart that feels the tenderest sympathy for human beings, especially that they may be won for Christ, will have the attributes that Christ had. All such will be imbued with His Spirit. They will have a reservoir of persuasion and a storehouse of simple eloquence.[7]

Weight of Evidence--God is presenting to the minds of men divinely appointed precious gems of

truth, appropriate for our time. God has rescued these truths from the companionship of error, and has placed them in their proper framework. When these truths are given their rightful position in God's great plan, when they are presented intelligently and earnestly, and with reverential awe, by the Lord's servants, many will conscientiously believe because of the weight of evidence, without waiting for every supposed difficulty which may suggest itself to their minds, to be removed.[8]

Greatest Rebuke to Error--People cannot be expected to see at once the advantage of truth over the error they have cherished. The best way to expose the fallacy of error is to present the evidences of truth. This is the greatest rebuke that can be given to error. Dispel the cloud of darkness resting on minds by reflecting the bright light of the Sun of Righteousness.[9]

Reasoning From the Scriptures--It is not excitement we wish to create, but deep, earnest consideration, that those who hear shall do solid

work, real, sound, genuine work that will be enduring as eternity. We hunger not for excitement, for the sensational; the less we have of this, the better. The calm, earnest reasoning from the Scriptures is precious and fruitful. Here is the secret of success, in preaching a living personal Saviour in so simple and earnest a manner that the people may be able to lay hold by faith of the power of the Word of life.[10]

One Point at a Time--While the teacher of truth should be faithful in presenting the gospel, let him never pour out a mass of matter which the people cannot comprehend because it is new to them and hard to understand. Take one point at a time, and make that one point plain, speaking slowly and in a distinct voice. Speak in such a way that the people shall see what is the relation of that one point to other truths of vital importance.[11]

The Sabbath School Worker--Sabbath school worker, which will you meet, the standard of Christ or that of the world? Oh, will you say, "I will lift the cross and follow Jesus"? Will you not cultivate

His tenderness in persuasion, His earnestness in exhortation, and exemplify the exalted principles of the truth, manifesting in life and character what the religion of Christ has done for you? Shall we not all heed the exhortation of the apostle, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof”?[12]

The Message, Not the Man--The minister who has learned of Christ will ever be conscious that he is a messenger of God, commissioned by Him to do a work both for time and eternity. It should not be any part of his object to call attention to himself, his learning, or his ability. But his whole aim should be to bring sinners to repentance, pointing them, both by precept and example, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Self should be hidden in Jesus. Such men will speak as those conscious of possessing power and authority from God, being a mouthpiece for Him. Their discourses will have an earnestness and fervor of persuasion that will lead sinners to see their lost condition, and take refuge in Christ.[13]

Notes:

1. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 316, 317.
2. Testimonies for the Church 6:47.
3. Evangelism, 444.
4. Letter 32, 1911.
5. The Desire of Ages, 142.
6. Our High Calling, 295.
7. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 120.
8. Evangelism, 122.
9. Evangelism, 170.
10. Evangelism, 170.
11. Evangelism, 202.
12. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 95.
13. Evangelism, 134.

Chapter 10

Misuse of the Gift

Influence of Harsh Words--Do you dislike to have harsh words spoken to you? Remember that when you speak such words others feel the sting. Let your praiseworthy example, your peaceable words and unselfish deeds, be a savor of life unto life.

The talent of speech was given to be used for the benefit of all. Pleasant, cheery words cost no more than unpleasant, moody words. Sharp words wound and bruise the soul. In this life everyone has difficulties with which to wrestle. Everyone meets with grievances and disappointments. Shall we not bring sunshine instead of gloom into the lives of those with whom we come in contact? Shall we not speak words that will help and bless? They will be just as much a blessing to us as to those to whom they are spoken.[1]

Provoking Words--Speech is a precious talent.

You can speak fretfully, or you can speak pleasantly. Remember that it will not hurt your influence to speak pleasantly, but that it will sweeten your influence. If provoking words are spoken to you, do not utter a word. The best rebuke you can give the one who has uttered the provoking word is to keep silent until you can speak in a calm, pleasant voice.[2]

Idle Words--With the talent of speech we are to communicate the truth as we have opportunity. It should ever be used in God's service. But this talent is grievously abused. Words are spoken that do great harm. Christ declared, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." [3]

Useless, Meaningless Chit-Chat--The talent of speech is a gift of God, and when we hear so much useless, meaningless chit-chat, we may be assured that those who thus use this precious gift are not Christians. They are not abiding in Christ, nor is

Christ abiding in them. Every tree is known by its fruits. “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” What a flood of evil and rubbish flows forth because of the talent of speech. And how many are denying Christ by their speech! Instead of making a good confession of Christ by their manner of conversation they say, “I know not the Man.” It is easy enough to have a form of godliness; but to make a whole-sided confession of our faith in Christ, means that our words, and dress, and spirit shall testify to the fact.[4]

Frivolous Conversation--Cultivate the precious gift of speech as an agency entrusted to you by God. Do not introduce frivolous, nonsensical subjects of conversation. Talk so that minds not of our faith will receive the impression that sound speech and sound principles have been brought into your education. “Ye are the light of the world.” Who are thus honored? All who have improved their opportunities to learn how to serve the Lord in the gift of speech.[5]

Jesting and Joking--It is the duty of the youth to encourage sobriety. Lightness, jesting, and joking will result in barrenness of soul and the loss of the favor of God. Many of you do not exert a bad influence upon others, and thus feel in a measure satisfied; but do you exert an influence for good? Do you seek in your conversation and acts to lead others to the Saviour, or, if they profess Christ, to lead them to a closer walk with Him?[6]

Cheap Talk--My young friends, will you begin your Christian life as those whose hearts are warmed with the love of Jesus? You will never know how much good you may do by speaking tenderly sensible, serious words regarding their souls' salvation to those who do not claim to be children of God. On the other hand, you may never know until the judgment how many opportunities to be Christ's witnesses you have left unimproved. You may never know in this world the mischief you have done to some soul by your little acts of frivolity, your cheap talk, your levity, which was wholly inconsistent with your holy faith.[7]

Scathing Remarks--An indwelling Saviour is revealed by the words. But the Holy Spirit does not abide in the heart of him who is peevish if others do not agree with his ideas and plans. From the lips of such a man there come scathing remarks, which grieve the Spirit away, and develop attributes that are satanic rather than divine. The Lord desires those connected with His work to 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 us an example in His life.

As Christians we should speak as Christ would speak were He in our place. We long to see reforms, but often because things do not move just as we wish them to move, an evil spirit puts drops of gall into our cup, and other souls are poisoned. By our ill-advised words they are chafed and stirred to rebellion. Make it your aim to speak the truth in love. Then the Lord Jesus by His Spirit will supply the force and power. Do not mingle self with anything done for God. Ever reveal the meek

and lowly spirit of the Master.[8]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 93, 1901.
2. The Review and Herald, July 6, 1905.
3. The Review and Herald, September 12, 1899.
4. Letter 19, 1897.
5. Manuscript 74, 1897.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:236, 237.
7. Messages to Young People, 201.
8. The Review and Herald, April 9, 1901.

Chapter 11

Nature of His Voice

Distinct Enunciation--Jesus is our example. His voice was musical, and was never raised in high, strained notes while He was speaking to the people. He did not speak so rapidly that His words were crowded one upon another in such a way that it made it difficult to understand Him. He distinctly enunciated every word, and those that heard His voice bore the testimony that “never man spake like this man.”[1]

A Calm, Earnest, Musical Voice--By loving words and by works of mercy, Christ bore down old traditions and man-made commandments, and presented the love of the Father in its exhaustless fullness. His calm, earnest, musical voice fell like balm on the wounded spirit.[2]

Love in His Tone--His tender compassion fell with a touch of healing upon weary and troubled hearts. Even amid the turbulence of angry enemies

He was surrounded with an atmosphere of peace. The beauty of His countenance, the loveliness of His character, above all, the love expressed in look and tone, drew to Him all who were not hardened in unbelief. Had it not been for the sweet, sympathetic spirit that shone out in every look and word, He would not have attracted the large congregations that He did.[3]

As Music to the Ear--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 a 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 of one who had authority.[4]

Natural Key--Had He raised His voice to an unnatural key, ... the pathos and melody of the human voice would have been lost, and much of the force of the truth destroyed.[5]

Sweet Melody in His Voice--In my younger days I used to talk too loud. The Lord has shown me that I could not make the proper impression upon the people by getting the voice to an unnatural pitch. Then Christ was presented before me, and His manner of talking; and there was a sweet melody in His voice. His voice, in a slow, calm manner, reached those who listened, and His words penetrated their hearts, and they were able to catch on to what He said before the next sentence was spoken. Some seem to think they must race right straight along or else they will lose the inspiration and the people will lose the inspiration. If that is inspiration, let them lose it, and the sooner the better.[6]

Christ a Speech Teacher for His Disciples--If the voice is toned right, if it has solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will produce

a much better impression. This was the tone in which Christ taught His disciples. He impressed them with solemnity; He spoke in a pathetic manner.[7]

Tears in His Voice--He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes.[8]

Voice As the Trump of God--Into the busy world, filled with the din of commerce and the altercation of trade, where men were trying selfishly to get all they could for self, Christ came; and above the confusion, His voice, like the trump of God, was heard: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[9]

Clear, Ringing Voice in the Temple--His eye sweeps over the multitude, taking in every individual. His form seems to rise above them in commanding dignity, and a divine light illuminates His countenance. He speaks, and His clear, ringing

voice--the same that upon Mount Sinai proclaimed the law that priests and rulers were transgressing--is heard echoing through the arches of the temple: "Take these things hence; make not My Father's house an house of merchandise." [10]

A Unique Voice--They beheld the hands and feet marred by the cruel nails. They recognized His voice, like no other they had ever heard. "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat?" [11]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, March 5, 1895.
2. The Review and Herald, March 5, 1901.
3. The Desire of Ages, 254.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 240.
5. Evangelism, 56.
6. Evangelism, 670.
7. Testimonies for the Church 2:615.
8. The Desire of Ages, 353.
9. Evangelism, 559.

10. The Desire of Ages, 158.

11. The Desire of Ages, 803.

Chapter 12

Effectiveness of Presentation

Every Word a Savor of Life--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.[1]

Christ's Speech As a Child--As soon as He could talk, Christ used the talent of speech, in the family circle and among friends and acquaintances, in a way that was without fault. Not one impure word escaped His lips.[2]

A Charm for the Learned--After Joseph and Mary had searched for Him [Jesus] for three days, they found Him in the court of the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. He asked His questions with a grace that charmed these learned men... His mother could not but mark His words, His spirit, His willing obedience to all her requirements.-[3]

His Audience Spellbound--Unlearned peasants and fishermen from the surrounding country; the Roman soldiers from the barracks of Herod; chieftains with their swords at their sides, ready to put down anything that might savor of rebellion; the avaricious tax-gatherers from their toll-booths; and from the Sanhedrin the phylactered priests--all listened [to John the Baptist] as if spellbound; and all, even the Pharisee and Sadducee, the cold, unimpressible scoffer, went away with the sneer silenced, and cut to the heart with a sense of their sins. Herod in his palace heard

the message, and the proud, sin-hardened ruler trembled at the call to repentance.[4]

Authority in His Voice--He could say to whom He pleased, "Follow Me," and the one addressed arose and followed Him. The spell of the world's enchantment was broken. At the sound of His voice the spirit of greed and ambition fled from the heart, and men arose, emancipated, to follow the Saviour.[5]

His Life an Example for His Words--What He taught, He lived. "I have given you an example," He said to His disciples, "that ye should do as I have done." "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 13:15; 15:10. Thus in His life, Christ's words had perfect illustration and support. And more than this; what He taught, He was. His words were the expression, not only of His own life experience, but of His own character.[6]

His Spirit a Revelation of His Teaching--Christ's teachings were not impressed upon His

hearers by any outward gestures, but by the words and acts of His daily life, by the spirit He revealed.[7]

Powerful and Attractive Teaching--There is an eloquence far more powerful than the eloquence of words in the quiet, consistent life of a pure, true Christian. What a man is has more influence than what he says.

The officers who were sent to Jesus came back with the report that never man spoke as He spoke. But the reason for this was that never man lived as He lived. Had His life been other than it was, He could not have spoken as He did. His words bore with them a convincing power, because they came from the heart pure and holy, full of love and sympathy, benevolence and truth.[8]

Gracious Words--The Pharisees were filled with a frenzy of hatred against Him, because they could see that His teaching had a power and an attractiveness that their words were utterly devoid of. They decided that the only way to cut off His

influence was to pass sentence of death upon Him, and therefore they sent officers to take Him. But when the officers came within hearing of His voice, and listened to His gracious words, they were charmed into forgetting their errand.[9]

Impression of His Appearance and Words--

The appearance and words of Jesus during His trial made a deep impression upon the minds of many who were present on that occasion.[10]

A Living Power--The Saviour's face was irradiated with a celestial brightness. He seemed to be in the very presence of the Unseen, and there was a living power in His words as of one who spoke with God.[11]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 338.
2. Welfare Ministry, 286, 287.
3. Sons and Daughters of God, 134.
4. Gospel Workers, 55.
5. The Ministry of Healing, 25.

6. Education, 78, 79.
7. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 399.
8. The Ministry of Healing, 469.
9. Manuscript 33, 1911.
10. Early Writings, 174.
11. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 102.

Chapter 13

Love, Sympathy, and Kindness

Tact, Not Severity--The Saviour never suppressed the truth, but He uttered it always in love. In His intercourse with others, He exercised the greatest tact, and He was always kind and thoughtful. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave unnecessary 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. He never made truth cruel, but ever manifested a deep tenderness for humanity.[1]

Words Like a Balm--Multitudes who were not interested in the harangues of the rabbis were attracted by His teaching. They could understand His words, and their hearts were warmed and comforted. He spoke of God, not as an avenging

judge, but as a tender father, and He revealed the image of God as mirrored in Himself. His words were like balm to the wounded spirit. Both by His words and by His works of mercy He was breaking the oppressive power of the old traditions and man-made commandments, and presenting the love of God in its exhaustless fullness.[2]

Sympathy in Both Speaking and Listening--

The life of Christ was filled with words and acts of benevolence, sympathy, and love. He was ever attentive to listen to and relieve the woes of those who came to Him. Multitudes carried in their own persons the evidence of His divine power. Yet after the work had been accomplished, many were ashamed of the humble yet mighty Teacher. Because the rulers did not believe on Him, the people were not willing to accept Jesus. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. They could not endure to be governed by His sober, self-denying life. They wished to enjoy the honor which the world bestows. Yet many followed the Son of God and listened to His instructions, feasting upon the words which fell so graciously from His lips.

His words were full of meaning, yet so plain that the weakest could understand them.[3]

Assurance of Truth--The words of the Master were clear and distinct, and were spoken in sympathy and tenderness. They carried with them the assurance that here was truth. It was the simplicity and earnestness with which Christ labored and spoke that drew so many to Him.[4]
Comfort and Tenderness--Even in His childhood He spoke words of comfort and tenderness to young and old.... He was an example of what all children may strive to be.... In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed.[5]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 117.
2. The Desire of Ages, 205.
3. Early Writings, 160.
4. Evangelism, 53.
5. Sons and Daughters of God, 151.

Chapter 14

Patient Calmness

No Hasty, Angry Words--Through the help that Christ can give, we shall be able to learn to bridle the tongue. Sorely as He was tried on the point of hasty and angry speech, He never once sinned with His lips. With patient calmness He met the sneers, the taunts, and the ridicule of His fellow workers at the carpenter's bench. Instead of retorting angrily, He would begin to sing one of David's beautiful psalms; and His companions, before realizing what they were doing, would unite with Him in the hymn. What a transformation would be wrought in this world if men and women today would follow Christ's example in the use of words![1]

Gentleness of Disposition--Love will do that which argument will fail to accomplish. But a moment's petulance, a single gruff answer, a lack of Christian politeness and courtesy in some small matter, may result in the loss of both friends and

influence. What Christ was on this earth, the Christian worker should strive to be. He is our example, not only in His spotless purity, but in His patience, gentleness, and winsomeness of disposition. His life is an illustration of true courtesy. He had ever a kind look and a word of comfort for the needy and the oppressed. His presence brought a purer atmosphere into the home. His life was as leaven working amid the elements of society.[2]

Notes:

1. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:936.
2. Gospel Workers, 121.

Chapter 15

Simplicity

Most Simple Language--Christ always used the most simple language, yet His words were received by deep, unprejudiced thinkers; for they were words that tested their wisdom. Spiritual things should always be presented in simple language, even though learned men are being addressed; for such are generally ignorant regarding spiritual things. The simplest language is the most eloquent. Educated and uneducated need to be addressed in the plainest, simplest manner, so that the truth may be comprehended, and find lodgment in the heart. So Christ addressed the vast crowds that thronged about Him; and all, learned and unlearned, were able to comprehend His lessons.[1]

Simplicity for Learned and Common People--The greatest Teacher the world ever knew was admired for His simplicity; for He presented divine truth in such a way that even children could

comprehend His words, and at the same time He drew the attention of the best educated and deepest thinkers of the world. By the use of familiar illustrations He made truth plain to the minds of the common people. In simplicity He sowed the seed of the gospel truth in the minds and hearts of His hearers, and it sprang up and yielded a harvest unto everlasting life.[2]

Appropriate Illustrations--He spoke to them in language so simple that they could not fail of understanding. By methods peculiarly His own, He helped all who were in sorrow and affliction. With tender, courteous grace He ministered to the sin-sick soul, bringing healing and strength.

The Prince of teachers, He sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He presented the truth in such a way that ever after it was to His hearers intertwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. He taught in a way that made them feel the completeness of His identification with their interests and happiness. His instruction was so

direct, His illustrations were so appropriate, His words so sympathetic and cheerful, that His hearers were charmed. The simplicity and earnestness with which He addressed the needy, hallowed every word.[3]

Spiritual Truth Simply Told--Christ never flattered men. He never spoke that which would exalt their fancies and imaginations, nor did He praise them for their clever inventions; but deep, unprejudiced thinkers received His teaching and found that it tested their wisdom. They marveled at the spiritual truth expressed in the simplest language.[4]

Truth Clear Even to a Child--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.[5]

Simplest Terms and Plainest Symbols--The

Saviour came “to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18). In His teaching He used the simplest terms and the plainest symbols. And it is said that “the common people heard Him gladly” (Mark 12:37). Those who are seeking to do His work for this time need a deeper insight into the lessons He has given.[6]

As the Balm of Gilead--The people listened to the words of mercy flowing so freely from the lips of the Son of God. They heard the gracious words, so simple and so plain that they were as the balm of Gilead to their souls.[7]

Forcible, but Simple Language--Christ reached the people where they were. He presented the plain truth to their minds in the most forcible, simple language. The humble poor, the most unlearned, could comprehend, through faith in Him, the most exalted truths. No one needed to consult the learned doctors as to His meaning. He did not perplex the ignorant with mysterious inferences or use unaccustomed and learned words, of which they had no knowledge. The greatest

Teacher the world has ever known, was the most definite, simple, and practical in His instruction.[8]

Great Moral Truths in Freshness and Power--Jesus, the great Teacher, laid open in the simplest language, the great moral truths, clothing them with freshness and power.[9]

Simple, Pointed Truths--He [Jesus] labored constantly for one object; all His powers were employed for the salvation of men, and every act of His life tended to that end. He traveled on foot, teaching His followers as He went. His garments were dusty and travelstained, and His appearance was uninviting. But the simple, pointed truths which fell from His divine lips soon caused His hearers to forget His appearance, and to be charmed, not with the Man, but with the doctrine He taught.[10]

Nothing Nonessential--Christ's words contain nothing that is nonessential. The Sermon on the Mount is a wonderful production, yet so simple that a child can study it without misunderstanding.

The mount of beatitudes is a symbol of the spiritual elevation on which Christ ever stood. Every word He uttered came from God, and He spoke with the authority of heaven. “The words that I speak unto you,” He said, “they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).[11]

No Parade of Eloquence--But in these words spoken by the greatest Teacher the world has ever known there is no parade of human eloquence. The language is plain, and the thoughts and sentiments are marked with the greatest simplicity. The poor, the unlearned, the most simple-minded, can understand them. The Lord of heaven was in mercy and kindness addressing the souls He came to save. He taught them as one having authority, speaking the words of eternal life.[12]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, May 18, 1897.
2. Sons and Daughters of God, 86.
3. The Ministry of Healing, 23, 24.
4. The Desire of Ages, 254.

5. Counsels on Health, 498, 499.
6. The Ministry of Healing, 443.
7. The Desire of Ages, 365.
8. Gospel Workers, 49, 50.
9. The Review and Herald, March 21, 1893.
10. Testimonies for the Church 4:373.
11. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 439.
12. Testimonies for the Church 5:254.

Chapter 16

Power, Authority, and Earnestness

Positive Authority--The practical truths He uttered had a convincing power, and arrested the attention of the people. Multitudes lingered at His side, marveling at His wisdom. His manner corresponded with the great truths He proclaimed. There was no apology, no hesitancy, not the shadow of a doubt or uncertainty that it might be other than He declared. He spoke of the earthly and the heavenly, of the human and the divine, with positive authority; and the people “were astonished at His doctrine; for His word was with power.”[1]

Authority Exclusively His Own--Christ taught with authority. The Sermon on the Mount is a wonderful production, yet so simple that a child can study it without being misled. The mount of beatitudes is an emblem of the high elevation on which Christ ever stood. He spoke with an

authority which was exclusively His own.[2]

Kingly Authority Over Temple Priests--

Christ spoke with the authority of a king, and in His appearance, and in the tones of His voice, there was that which they had no power to resist. At the word of command they realized, as they had never realized before, their true position as hypocrites and robbers.[3]

Irresistible Force--

With clearness and power He spoke the words that were to come down to our time as a treasure of goodness. What precious words they were, and how full of encouragement. From His divine lips there fell with fullness and abundant assurance the benedictions that showed Him to be the fountain of all goodness, and that it was His prerogative to bless and impress the minds of all present. ...

There were occasions when Christ spoke with an authority that sent His words home with irresistible force, with an overwhelming sense of the greatness of the Speaker, and the human

agencies shrunk into nothingness in comparison with the One before them. They were deeply moved; their minds were impressed that He was repeating the command from the most excellent glory. As He summoned the world to listen, they were spellbound and entranced, and conviction came to their minds. Every word made for itself a place, and the hearers believed and received the words that they had no power to resist. Every word He uttered seemed to the hearers as the life of God.[4]

Power Like a Mighty Tempest--Christ spoke with a power that swayed the people like a mighty tempest: "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." His voice sounded like a trumpet through the temple. The displeasure of His countenance seemed like consuming fire. With authority He commanded, "Take these things hence" (John 2:16).[5]

An Example for Father, a Pattern for Children--Jesus was the pattern for children, and

He was also the father's example. He spoke as one having authority, and His word was with power; yet in all His intercourse with rude and violent men He did not use one unkind or discourteous expression.[6]

Invitations Full of Compassion--There was marked authority in His requirements and promises, and His invitations were full of compassion and entreaty. How tenderly He said to the toiling people, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." ... With what power and compassion Jesus cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." [7]

No Hesitation nor Uncertainty--He spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes, in a hesitating, uncertain manner. With calmness and power He proclaimed the living principles of truth, making them more forcible by His manner of presenting them.[8]

No Shadow of Doubt--Christ came to unveil

divine truth to the world. He taught as one having authority. He spake as never man spoke. There was no hesitancy in His manner, not the shadow of a doubt in His utterances. He spake as one who understood every part of His subject.[9]

Christ's Personal Knowledge--Christ spoke with authority. Every truth essential for the people to know He proclaimed with the unfaltering assurance of certain knowledge. He uttered nothing fanciful or sentimental. He presented no sophistries, no human opinions. No idle tales, no false theories clothed in beautiful language, came from His lips. The statements that He made were truths established by personal knowledge. He foresaw the delusive doctrines that would fill the world, but He did not unfold them. In His teachings He dwelt upon the unchangeable principles of God's Word. He magnified the simple, practical truths that the common people could understand and bring into the daily experience.[10]

Zeal and Certainty--When Jesus spoke, it was not with hesitating uncertainty, with repetition of

words and familiar figures. The truth came from His lips clothed in new and interesting representations that gave it the freshness of a new revelation.

His voice was never pitched to an unnatural key, and His words came with an earnestness and assurance appropriate to their importance and the momentous consequences involved in their reception or rejection. When His doctrines were opposed, He defended them with so great zeal and certainty as to impress His hearers that He would die, if need be, to sustain the authority of His teachings.... When He taught, His words came with authority; for He spoke with positive knowledge of the truth.[11]

Truth With Freshness of a New Revelation--
Truth never languished on His lips, never suffered in His hands for want of perfect obedience to its requirements. “To this end was I born,” Christ declared, “and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” And the mighty principles of truth fell from His lips with

the freshness of a new revelation. The truth was spoken by Him with an earnestness proportionate to its infinite importance and to the momentous results depending on its success.[12]

Earnestness and Power--The words of Christ, though calmly spoken, were uttered with an earnestness and power that stirred the hearts of the people. They listened for a repetition of the lifeless traditions and exactions of the rabbis, but in vain.

They “were astonished at His teaching: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes” (Matthew 7:28, 29, R.V.).[13]

Encouragement in Love and Tenderness--They heard Him in love and tenderness speak encouragingly to the weak and afflicted. They also heard Him, in a voice of authority, rebuke the power of Satan and bid his captives go free. They listened to the words of wisdom that fell from His lips, and they were captivated; they could not lay hands on Him.[14]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, July 6, 1911.
2. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 407.
3. The Desire of Ages, 162.
4. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1084, 1085.
5. The Desire of Ages, 591.
6. The Desire of Ages, 515.
7. The Review and Herald, February 21, 1893.
8. The Review and Herald, August 20, 1903.
9. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 236, 237.
10. Testimonies for the Church 8:201.
11. The Review and Herald, January 7, 1890.
12. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1148.
13. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 46, 47.
14. Early Writings, 160.

Chapter 17

Words of Truth

Truth Clearly Defined--The only-begotten Son of God came to our world to reveal truth in contrast with error. This saving truth we are to reveal in our speech and in Christlike deportment. Truth never languished on the lips of Christ. It was clearly defined, in words, in works, in spirit.[1]

Tenderness in Tone of Voice--In all His teaching, Christ presented pure, unadulterated principles. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Constantly there flowed from His lips holy, ennobling truths. He spoke as never man spoke, with a pathos that touched the heart. He was filled with holy wrath as He saw the Jewish leaders teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and He spoke to them with the authority of true greatness. With terrible power He denounced all artful intrigue, all dishonest practices. He cleansed the temple from its pollution, as He desires to cleanse our hearts from everything bearing any

resemblance to fraud. The truth never languished on His lips. With fearlessness He exposed the hypocrisy of priest and ruler, Pharisee and Sadducee.[2]

Truth in Its Proper Light--The words of Christ were not new, and yet they came with the force of revelation; for they presented the truth in its proper light, and not in the light in which the teachers had set it before the people.[3]

Error Distinguished From Truth--He could have opened mysteries which patriarchs and prophets desired to look into, which human curiosity had been impatiently desirous of understanding. But when men could not discern the most simple, plainly-stated truths, how could they understand mysteries which were hid from mortal eyes? Jesus did not disdain to repeat old, familiar truths; for He was the author of these truths. He was the glory of the temple. Truths which had been lost sight of, which had been misplaced, misinterpreted, and disconnected from their true position, He separated from the companionship of

error; and showing them as precious jewels in their own bright luster, He reset them in their proper framework, and commanded them to stand fast forever.

What a work was this! It was of such a character that no finite man could comprehend or do it. Only the divine Hand could take the truth which, from its connection with error, had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man, and place it where it would glorify God, and be the salvation of humanity. The work of Christ was to give again to the world the truth in its original freshness and beauty.[4]

Notes:

1. Letter 222, 1908.
2. The Review and Herald, May 12, 1910.
3. The Review and Herald, November 28, 1893.
4. The Review and Herald, November 28, 1893.

Chapter 18

No Complicated Reasoning nor Argument

Right to the Point--Christ seldom attempted to prove that truth is truth. He illustrated truth in all its bearings, and then left His hearers free to accept or reject it, as they might choose. He did not force anyone to believe. In the Sermon on the Mount He instructed the people in practical godliness, distinctly outlining their duty. He spoke in such a manner as to commend truth to the conscience. The power manifested by the disciples was revealed in the clearness and earnestness with which they expressed the truth.

In Christ's teaching there is no long, far-fetched, complicated reasoning. He comes right to the point. In His ministry He read every heart as an open book, and from the inexhaustible store of His treasure house He drew things both new and old to illustrate and enforce His teachings. He touched the

heart, and awakened the sympathies.[1]

The Inquiring Mind--He did not present a great mass of truth, to be accepted all at once. He led the inquiring mind from truth to truth, from lesson to lesson, opening up the significance of the Scripture, as they were able to bear it. In every age the truth appropriate for the time, and essential to character and life, must be revealed in this manner.[2]

Obedience Not Claimed Through Argument--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.[3]

Notes:

1. Evangelism, 171.
2. The Review and Herald, October 14, 1890.
3. Testimonies for the Church 4:139.

Chapter 19

Christ's Study of Countenances

Facial Expressions--The world's Redeemer went about doing good. When before the people, speaking to them the words of eternal truth, with what earnestness He watched the changing countenances of His hearers! The faces that expressed deep interest and pleasure as they listened to His words, gave Him great satisfaction. And when the truth, plainly uttered, touched some cherished sin or idol, He marked the change of countenance, the cold, stern, forbidding look, which told that the truth was unwelcome.[1]

Christ an Example for Teachers--When Christ was teaching on earth, He watched the countenances of His hearers, and the kindling eye, the animated expression, told Him in a moment when one assented to the truth. Even so should the teachers of the people now study the countenances

of their hearers.[2]

Hopeful Subjects in His Kingdom--Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenances of His hearers. The faces that expressed interest and pleasure gave Him great satisfaction. As the arrows of truth pierced to the soul, breaking through the barriers of selfishness, and working contrition, and finally gratitude, the Saviour was made glad. When His eye swept over the throng of listeners, and He recognized among them the faces He had before seen, His countenance lighted up with joy. He saw in them hopeful subjects for His kingdom. When the truth, plainly spoken, touched some cherished idol, He marked the change of countenance, the cold, forbidding look, which told that the light was unwelcome. When He saw men refuse the message of peace, His heart was pierced to the very depths.[3]

Individual Reactions--Even the crowd that so often thronged His steps was not to Christ an indiscriminate mass of human beings. He spoke

directly to every mind and appealed to every heart. He watched the faces of His hearers, marked the lighting up of the countenance, the quick, responsive glance, which told that truth had reached the soul; and there vibrated in His heart the answering chord of sympathetic joy.[4]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 48.
2. Evangelism, 158.
3. The Desire of Ages, 255.
4. Education, 231.

Chapter 20

Adaptation to His Listeners

Truth As People Could Bear It--Christ drew the hearts of His hearers to Him by the manifestation of His love, and then, little by little, as they were able to bear it, He unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom. We also must learn to adapt our labors to the condition of the people--to meet men where they are.[1]

Varied Messages for Different Audiences--His [Jesus'] messages of mercy were varied to suit His audience. He knew "how to speak a word in season to him that is weary" (Isaiah 50:4); for grace was poured upon His lips, that He might convey to men in the most attractive way the treasures of truth. He had tact to meet the prejudiced minds, and surprise them with illustrations that won their attention. Through the imagination He reached the heart.[2]

Language of Common Life--Learn of Jesus.

He was the greatest teacher the world ever knew; yet He spoke in the language of common life. He met the necessities of all. He adapted His instruction to all times and places, to both the rich and the poor, the educated and the ignorant. He ever dwelt upon the grandest themes that can engage the attention; and He presented them in such a form, and used such illustrations, that the feeblest intellects could grasp His meaning, while the most intelligent minds were attracted and instructed.[3]

Access to All Classes of People--Christ met the case of every class in the subjects and manner of His teaching. He dined and lodged with the rich and the poor, and made Himself familiar with the interests and occupations of men, that He might gain access to their hearts. The learned and the most intellectual were gratified and charmed with His discourses, and yet they were so plain and simple as to be comprehended by the humblest minds.[4]

Lessons Adapted to Need--The respect shown

to Christ at the feasts He attended was in marked contrast to the manner in which the scribes and Pharisees were treated, and this made them envious. Christ gave lessons adapted for the needs of His hearers.[5]

No Abrupt Actions nor Prescribed Rules-- Jesus found access to minds by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He disturbed as little as possible their accustomed train of thought, by abrupt actions or prescribed rules. He honored man with His confidence, and thus placed him on his honor. He introduced old truths in a new and precious light.... The truth came from His lips beautiful in its simplicity, yet clothed with dignity and power.[6]

Various Methods to Gain Attention--From Christ's methods of labor we may learn many valuable lessons. He did not follow merely one method; in various ways He sought to gain the attention of the multitude, and, having succeeded in this, He proclaimed to them the truths of the gospel.[7]

Notes:

1. Evangelism, 57.
2. The Desire of Ages, 254.
3. The Review and Herald, July 22, 1884.
4. Testimonies for the Church 3:214.
5. Manuscript 19, 1899.
6. Evangelism, 140.
7. Counsels on Health, 387.

Chapter 21

Illustrations, Symbols, and Figures of Speech

Well-Chosen Illustrations--Jesus was the greatest teacher the world ever knew. He presented truth in clear, forcible statements, and the illustrations He used were of the purest and highest order. He never mingled cheap symbols and figures with His divine instruction, or sought to pander to curiosity or to gratify the class that will listen simply to be amused. He did not bring sacred truth down to the level of the common, and the comical illustrations that some ministers of the gospel use were never uttered by His divine lips. Christ did not employ illustrations that would create amusement and excite laughter.[1]

Nothing Comical for Mere Attention--In the instruction of the divine Teacher, there was no illustration used that would leave the least shadow upon the tablets of the soul. His words were of the

purest and most elevated character. He never stooped to utter that which was comical, in order that He might attract an audience.[2]

Illustrations of Common Things--Jesus illustrated the glories of the kingdom of God by the use of the experiences and occurrences of earth. In compassionate love and tenderness He cheered and comforted and instructed all who heard Him; for grace was poured upon His lips that He might convey to men in the most attractive way the treasures of truth.[3]

Spiritual Lessons From Nature--The Great Teacher brought His hearers in contact with nature, that they might listen to the voice which speaks in all created things; and as their hearts became tender and their minds receptive, He helped them to interpret the spiritual teaching of the scenes upon which their eyes rested. The parables, by means of which He loved to teach lessons of truth, show how open His spirit was to the influences of nature, and how He delighted to gather the spiritual teaching from the surroundings of daily life.

The birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the sower and the seed, the shepherd and the sheep--with these Christ illustrated immortal truth. He drew illustrations also from the events of life, facts of experience familiar to the hearers--the leaven, the hid treasure, the pearl, the fishing net, the lost coin, the prodigal son, the houses on the rock and the sand. In His lessons there was something to interest every mind, to appeal to every heart.[4]

Carefully Chosen Locales for Discourses--
The Redeemer of the world sought to make His lessons of instruction plain and simple, that all might comprehend them. He generally chose the open air for His discourses. No walls could enclose the multitude which followed Him; but He had special reasons for resorting to the groves and the seaside to give His lessons of instruction. He could there have a commanding view of the landscape and make use of objects and scenes with which those in humble life were familiar, to illustrate the important truths He made known to them.

With His lessons of instruction He associated the works of God in nature. The birds which were caroling forth their songs without a care, the flowers of the valley glowing in their beauty, the lily that reposed in its purity upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated land, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun, tinting and gilding the heavens--all these He employed to impress His hearers with divine truth. He connected the works of God's finger in the heavens and upon the earth with the words of life He wished to impress upon their minds, that, as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, His lessons might be fresh in their memories.[5]

From the Known to the Unknown--In His teaching, Christ drew His illustrations from the great treasury of household ties and affections, and from nature. The unknown was illustrated by the known; sacred and divine truths, by natural, earthly things, with which the people were most familiar. These were the things that would speak to their

hearts, and make the deepest impression on their minds.

The words of Christ placed the teachings of nature in a new aspect and made them a new revelation. He could speak of the things which His own hands had made, for they had qualities and properties that were peculiarly His own. In nature, as in the sacred pages of the Old Testament Scriptures, divine, momentous truths are revealed; and in His teaching, Jesus laid these open before the people, bound up with the beauty of natural things.[6]

Figures and Symbols--For His own wise purpose the Lord veils spiritual truths in figures and symbols. Through the use of figures of speech the plainest and most telling rebuke was often given to His accusers and enemies, and they could find in His words no occasion to condemn Him. In parables and comparisons He found the best method of communicating divine truth. In simple language, using figures and illustrations drawn from the natural world, He opened spiritual truth to

His hearers, and gave expression to precious principles that would have passed from their minds, and left scarcely a trace, had He not connected His words with stirring scenes of life, experience, or nature. In this way He called forth their interest, aroused inquiry, and when He had fully secured their attention, He decidedly impressed upon them the testimony of truth. In this way He was able to make sufficient impression upon the heart so that afterward His hearers could look upon the thing with which He connected His lesson, and recall the words of the divine Teacher.[7]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, August 6, 1895.
2. The Review and Herald, August 6, 1895.
3. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 240.
4. Education, 102.
5. Testimonies for the Church 2:579, 580.
6. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 178, 179.

7. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 236.

Chapter 22

The Worker's Model

Christ Our Example--What Christ was on this earth, the Christian worker should strive to be. He is our example, not only in His spotless purity, but in His patience, gentleness, and winsomeness of disposition. His life is an illustration of true courtesy. He had ever a kind look and a word of comfort for the needy and the oppressed. His presence brought a purer atmosphere into the home. His life was as leaven working amid the elements of society. Pure and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous; among unjust publicans, unrighteous Samaritans, heathen soldiers, rough peasants, and the mixed multitude. He spoke a word of sympathy here and a word there.[1]

A Representation of Heaven--The Saviour of the world would have His colaborers represent Him; and the more closely a man walks with God, the more faultless will be his manner of address,

his deportment, his attitude, and his gestures. Coarse and uncouth manners were never seen in our Pattern, Christ Jesus. He was a representative of heaven, and His followers must be like Him.[2]

An Exemplary Sermon--The Sermon on the Mount is an example of how we are to teach. What pains Christ has taken to make mysteries no longer mysteries, but plain, simple truths! There is in His instruction nothing vague, nothing hard to understand.

“He opened His mouth, and taught them” (Matthew 5:2). His words were spoken in no whispered tones, nor was His utterance harsh and disagreeable. He spoke with clearness and emphasis, with solemn, convincing force.[3]

Pattern for Every Worker--In His work of ministry for the sick and afflicted, Christ stands before the world as the greatest Medical Missionary the world has ever known, and the pattern for every Christian missionary worker. He knew the right word to speak to each sufferer, and

He spoke not only that which brought healing of body, but conviction of soul and spiritual enlightenment. He brought to the understanding of those who sought Him a knowledge of self, and of the soul's highest need.

Christ's discourses were the spiritual explanation of His ministry for the afflicted.[4]

No Mere Sermonizing--Christ is the minister's Model. How directly to the point, how well adapted to the purpose and circumstances, are Christ's words! How clear and forcible are His illustrations! His style is characterized by simplicity and solemnity. Throughout the teachings of Christ, there is nothing to justify the minister in the relation of humorous anecdotes in the pulpit. The lessons of Christ should be carefully studied, and the subjects, manner, and form of discourses should be modeled after the divine Pattern. Oratorical display, flashy rhetoric, and fine gestures do not constitute a fine discourse.... He did not sermonize as men do today. In intensely earnest tones He assured them of the truths of the life to

come, of the way of salvation.[5]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 121.
2. Testimonies for the Church 4:405.
3. Testimonies for the Church 7:269.
4. Medical Ministry 194.
5. The Review and Herald, June 23, 1891.

Chapter 23

Revelation of Christ

Our Saviour the Topic of Conversation--Do not talk of the iniquity and wickedness that are in the world, but elevate your minds and talk of your Saviour. When you see iniquity all around you, it makes you all the more glad that He is your Saviour and we are His children.[1]

Main Theme: Christ Crucified--Christ crucified--talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts. Set, formal phrases, the presentation of merely argumentative subjects, is productive of little good.[2]

Green Pastures for the Sheep of God's Fold--Many voices are advocating error; let your voice advocate truth. Present subjects that will be as green pastures to the sheep of God's fold. Do not lead your hearers into waste tracts, where they will be no nearer the fountain of living water than they were before hearing you. Present the truth as it is in

Jesus, making plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Present Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and tell of His power to save all who come to Him.[3]

Christ's Grace and Salvation--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.[4]

Stewards of Christ's Grace--Why are so many who profess to be children of God devoting their God-entrusted capabilities to selfish purposes? They are stewards of the grace of Christ, and should lift up Jesus before the world. They should talk of Christ. His praise should be on their lips because the Sun of Righteousness is shining in their hearts. Through them His holy name should be exalted in the earth.[6]

A More Healthy Channel--You should not talk so much about yourself, for this will strengthen no one. You should not make yourself a center, and imagine that you must be constantly caring for yourself and leading others to care for you. Get your mind off from yourself into a more healthy channel. Talk of Jesus, and let self go; let it be submerged in Christ, and let this be the language of your heart: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" [Galatians 2:20]. Jesus will be to you a present help in every time of need. He will not leave you to

battle with the powers of darkness alone. Oh, no; He has laid help upon One that is mighty to save to the uttermost.[6]

The Language of Canaan--We are to be witnesses for Christ; and this we shall be when we grow up daily into the full stature of men and women in Christ. It is our privilege to grow more and more like Him every day. Then we shall acquire the power to express our love for Him in higher, purer speech, and our ideas will enlarge and deepen, and our judgment become more sound and trustworthy, while our testimony will have more of life and assurance. We are not to cultivate the language of the earthy, and be so familiar with the conversation of men, that the language of Canaan will be new and unfamiliar to us.[7]

Machinery Guided by a Masterly Hand--Every heart that has been visited by the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will reveal the working of the Spirit of God in voice, mind, and character. The machinery will move as if oiled and guided by a masterly hand. There will be less

friction when the spirit of the worker receives the oil from the two olive branches. The holy influences will be imparted to others in words of kindness, tenderness, love, and encouragement.[8]

Seeds of Love and Kindness--Some are seen to come forth from their daily communion with God clothed with the meekness of Christ. Their words are not like a 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 than it is seen.

Kind, tender, compassionate words will flow from sanctified hearts and lips.[9]

Words of Solid Sense--Those who have this Spirit [of Christ] are earnest workers together with God; the heavenly intelligences cooperate with them, and they go weighted with the spirit of the message that they bear. They speak words of solid sense, and from the treasury of the heart bring forth

pure, sacred things, after the example of Christ.[10]

Simple, Straightforward Speech--Those who have learned of Christ will “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness” (Ephesians 5:11). In speech, as in life, they will be simple, straightforward, and true, for they are preparing for the fellowship of those holy ones in whose mouth is found no guile.[11]

A Subdued Gentleness--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.[12]

Notes:

1. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:582.
2. The Review and Herald, June 2, 1903.
3. Gospel Workers, 154.
4. Testimonies for the Church 5:600.

5. The Review and Herald, August 16, 1898.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:320, 321.
7. Sons and Daughters of God, 72.
8. Testimonies for the Church 7:195, 196.
9. Sons and Daughters of God, 180.
10. Gospel Workers, 288.
11. Prophets and Kings, 252.
12. Testimonies for the Church 4:626.

Chapter 24

Modesty, Truthfulness, and Discretion

Modest and Elevated Language--Our language should be modest and elevated. The spirit you have cherished within has left its impression upon the countenance. Christ, enthroned in the soul-temple, will efface that fretful, peevish, unhappy look; and as the cloud of witnesses look upon a man reflecting the image of Christ, they will realize that he is surrounded by a pleasant atmosphere.[1]

Ennobling Conversation--The conversation should be of that elevated, ennobling character which could afterward be called to remembrance with feelings of the highest pleasure.[2]

Divine Goodness--The conversation of each should be of an elevated character, calculated to lead other minds in the right channel. The little

mention that is made of divine goodness and the love of God shows marked ingratitude and that Christ is not enshrined in the heart.[3]

Pure Influence of Truth--The pure influence of truth will elevate the whole man. In his business deal with his fellow men he will have the fear of God before him, and will love his neighbor as himself, and will deal just as he would wish to be dealt by. His conversation will be truthful, chaste, and of so elevating a character that unbelievers cannot take advantage of it, or say evil of him justly, and are not disgusted with his uncourteous ways and unbecoming speech.[4]

Words With Spiritual Power--Even when sitting at the meal table, Christ taught truths that brought comfort and courage to the hearts of His hearers. When His love abides in the soul as a living principle, there will come forth from the treasure house of the heart words suitable to the occasion--not light, trifling words, but uplifting words, words of spiritual power.[5]

A Positive Testimony--It is our duty to be very jealous of the glory of God, and bring no evil report even by the sadness of the countenance or by ill-advised words, as though the requirements of God were a restriction upon our liberty. The whole person is privileged to bear a decided testimony in every line--in features, in temper, in words, in character--that the service of the Lord is good. This they proclaim: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Let your words be positive on the side of the Lord.[6]

Less Speaking, More Praying--Let us be careful of our words. Oh, there is so much speech that is not for the glory of God. Would it not be much better if we should talk less and pray more?[7]

Select Words--When engaged in labor, guard the mind, keep it stayed upon God, talk less, and meditate more. Remember: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Let your words be select; this will close a door against the adversary of

souls.[8]

Christ Is Voice Through You--Make a covenant with God that you will guard well your words. “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” James 3:2. Remember that a revengeful speech never makes one feel that he has gained a victory. Let Christ speak through you. Do not lose the blessing that comes from thinking no evil.[9]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 4:348.
2. Counsels on Diet and Foods, 88.
3. Testimonies for the Church 4:456.
4. Testimonies for the Church 1:415, 416.
5. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 554.
6. Manuscript 70, 1897.
7. Manuscript 39, 1908.
8. Testimonies for the Church 4:588.
9. Testimonies for the Church 7:243.

Chapter 25

Kinds of Negative Speaking

The Most Precious Seeds--Let us be careful what we say. The seed that drops from one mind into another should be the most precious seed, not a seed of murmuring and complaint.[1]

Wrong Impressions--You cannot be too careful of what you say, for the words you utter show what power is controlling your mind and heart. If Christ rules in your heart, your words will reveal the purity, beauty, and fragrance of a character molded and fashioned by His will. ...

The Lord demands that our words be of the very best quality; that our tongues be truthful at all times. Any vestige of prevarication is an offense to Him. Every word we speak needs the most careful consideration, lest it mislead those who are weak in the faith. From the light which God has given me, I know that by your unadvised words you have left wrong impressions on the minds of some in

Sydney, and much time will be needed to counteract the effects of these impressions. What you have thus expressed in words has not been true, but has been the result of your own imagination. No longer rely on a spurious spirituality.[2]

A Precious Inheritance--God would have His people, in words and in deportment, declare to the world that no earthly attractions or worldly possessions are of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of the heavenly inheritance. Those who are truly children of the light and of the day will not be vain or frivolous in conversation, in dress, or in deportment, but sober, contemplative, constantly exerting an influence to attract souls to the Redeemer. ...

God enjoins upon all His followers to bear a living testimony in unmistakable language by their conduct, their dress and conversation, in all the pursuits of life, that the power of true godliness is profitable to all in this life and in the life to come; that this alone can satisfy the soul of the

receiver.[3]

Pure Lives and Pure Speech--Not one word is to be spoken unadvisedly. No evil speaking, no frivolous talk, no fretful repining or impure suggestion, will escape the lips of him who is following Christ. The apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth" (Ephesians 4:29). A corrupt communication does not mean only words that are vile. It means any expression contrary to holy principles and pure and undefiled religion. It includes impure hints and covert insinuations of evil. Unless instantly resisted, these lead to great sin.

Upon every family, upon every individual Christian, is laid the duty of barring the way against corrupt speech. When in the company of those who indulge in foolish talk, it is our duty to change the subject of conversation if possible. By the help of the grace of God we should quietly drop words or introduce a subject that will turn the conversation into a profitable channel.[4]

Support of Law and Order--We are not required to defy authorities. Our words, whether spoken or written, should be carefully considered, lest we place ourselves on record as uttering that which would make us appear antagonistic to law and order. We are not to say or do anything that would unnecessarily close up our way. We are to go forward in Christ's name, advocating the truths committed to us.[5]

Right Things--Please read the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. Great light is given in this chapter. The earnest prayer from the humble, contrite heart will be heard and answered. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." This we have a right to expect if we cooperate with God by consecrating ourselves, soul, body, and spirit to His keeping. No foolish

talking or evilspeaking will then be heard. The tongue will utter right things.[6]

Gossip, the Enemy's Work--How careful we should be to have our words and actions in harmony with the sacred truths that God has committed to us! ... When you are associated with one another, be guarded in your words. Let your conversation be of such a nature that you will have no need to repent of it. ... If a word is dropped that is detrimental to the character of a friend or brother, never encourage this evilspeaking; for it is the work of the enemy. Remind the speaker that God's Word forbids this kind of conversation.[7]

Effects of Improper Conversation--The sin of foolish talk is common among those who claim to believe the most solemn truths ever given to our world. Because of this commonplace, frivolous talk, the Spirit of the Lord is grieved away. Improper conversation is the reason of such a lack of faith and power among the people of God.[8]

No Frivolity Nor Trifling--All frivolity, all

cheapness of conversation, all jesting and joking, weakens the soul, and weans the heart from prayer. Like Paul, the true followers of Christ will ever bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; they cannot keep in mind the sufferings of Christ for them, and yet be light and trifling.[9]

Foolish Talk--But few realize that they drive away the Spirit of God with their selfish thoughts and feelings, their foolish, trifling talk.... If the grace of Christ were planted in their hearts, and striking its roots down deep into good soil, they would bear fruit of an altogether different character. ... The converting power of God is alone sufficient to establish pure principles in the heart, so that the wicked one may find nothing to assail. ... Purity in speech, and true Christian courtesy should be constantly practiced.[10]

Account of Every Word--How many words are spoken in lightness and foolishness, in jesting and joking! This would not be so did the followers of Christ realize the truth of the words, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account

thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”[11]

Unsanctified Words--The soul will never free itself to come into the clear, deep knowledge of the love of God until the speech is converted. The counterworking power of unsanctified, faithless, cheap words is the great hindrance to our prayers. God will draw nigh to every soul that will draw nigh to Him. But the Spirit of God will depart from those who leave the presence of God, and enter into vain conversation, speaking many words that are of no weight or purpose. The spiritual experience of such will stop abruptly.[12]

A Stumbling Block to Sinners--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.[13]

Gossip and Nonsense--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.[14]

Vain Conversation--Listen to the vain, frivolous conversation; hear the laugh, the jesting, the joking. Is this imitating the Pattern? Still listen--is Jesus mentioned? Is the truth the theme of conversation? Are the speakers glorying in the cross of Christ?[15]

Exaggerated Speech--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.

The Word declares, “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:37). If our words act upon ourselves they act more powerfully upon others. There is great mischief done by words spoken. God alone knows and measures the result of a careless, exaggerated mode of speaking. There is much swearing done in spirit.[16]

Meaningless Phrases and Expletives--God’s Word condemns also the use of those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. It condemns the deceptive compliments, the evasions of truth, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. “Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.” (Matthew 5:37, R.V.)

“As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport?” (Proverbs

26:18, 19).

Closely allied to gossip is the covert insinuation, the sly innuendo, by which the unclean in heart seek to insinuate the evil they dare not openly express. Every approach to these practices the youth should be taught to shun as they would shun the leprosy.[17]

Judicial Oath--I saw that the words of our Lord, "Swear not at all," do not touch the judicial oath. "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." 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.[18]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 18, 1895.
2. Letter 69, 1896.
3. Testimonies for the Church 4:580, 581.
4. Christ's Object Lessons, 337.
5. The Acts of the Apostles, 69.
6. The Review and Herald, January 25, 1898.
7. The Review and Herald, February 25, 1904.
8. Letter 47, 1897.
9. Gospel Workers, 233, 1892 edition.
10. Sons and Daughters of God, 316.
11. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 4:1141.
12. Manuscript 74, 1897.
13. Evangelism, 641.
14. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 457.
15. Testimonies for the Church 1:505.
16. That I May Know Him, 137.
17. Education, 236.
18. Testimonies for the Church 1:201.

Chapter 26

Love and Kindness

Kind, Comforting Words--When poor, wounded, bruised souls come to you for words of hope, you are to speak to them the words of Christ. Do you refuse to give them pleasant, courteous, kind words? Those who speak as Christ spoke will never plant bitter words like barbed arrows in the wounded soul. "The Lord hearkened and heard." Will you bear in mind that the Lord hears the words we speak, and is acquainted with the spirit that prompts our actions? ... Is it not Christlike to speak kind words, comforting words, even though you feel inclined to do otherwise?[1]

Law of Kindness on Our Lips--Work disinterestedly, lovingly, patiently, for all with whom you are brought into contact. Show no impatience. Utter not one unkind word. Let the love of Christ be in your hearts, the law of kindness on your lips.[2]

Thoughtful Attentions--Every soul we meet is the purchase of the blood of Christ, and kind words and thoughtful attentions are due those who come among us. The youth need the help of kindly words and deeds.[3]

The Truth in Love--As the dew and the still showers fall upon the withering plants, so let words fall gently when seeking to win men from error. God's plan is first to reach the heart. We are to speak the truth in love, trusting in Him to give it power for the reforming of the life. The Holy Spirit will apply to the soul the word that is spoken in love.[4]

Less Criticism, Greater Influence for Good--In the work of helping others, we may gain most precious victories. We should devote ourselves with untiring zeal, with earnest fidelity, with selfdenial, and with patience, to the work of helping those who need to develop. Kind, encouraging words will do wonders. There are many who, if a constant, cheerful effort is put forth in their behalf, without faultfinding or chiding, will

show themselves susceptible of improvement. The less we criticize others, the greater will be our influence over them for good. To many, frequent, positive admonitions will do more harm than good. Let Christlike kindness be enjoined upon all.[5]

A Cure for Sickness and Grief--The Lord Jesus wants us to bear a pleasant countenance, and to speak kind, sympathetic words. Even if we are sick, or if we feel out of sorts, we need not tell others. If we will talk of the goodness of the Lord, this will act as a cure for sadness and grief.[6]

God's Word a Guide for Daily Speech--Our words, whether we are in the home or associating with those outside the home, will be kind and affectionate and pure. If we study the Word, and make it a part of our lives, as represented by the words, "Eating the Word," 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 work with the Word, that we may make no mistake.[7]

Outward Expression of Inward Grace--The chief requisite of language is that it be pure and kind and true--“the outward expression of an inward grace.” ... The best school for this language study is the home.

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 always with grace,” “that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”[8]

Courteous Christians--Christians are elevated in their conversation; and although they believe it to be sin to condescend to foolish flattery, they are courteous, kind, and benevolent. Their words are those of sincerity and truth.[9]

Pleasure Provided by God--God has provided for everyone pleasure that may be enjoyed by rich and poor alike--the pleasure found in cultivating

pureness of thought and unselfishness of action, the pleasure that comes from speaking sympathizing words and doing kindly deeds. From those who perform such service, the light of Christ shines to brighten lives darkened by many sorrows.[10]

Kindly Words and Loving Deeds--God desires that the bounties which He has freely given to His children shall be communicated to those who are in need. By this communication, by the utterance of kindly words, accompanied by deeds of love, those who work for God will find entrance to hearts, and will win others to Christ.[11]

A Meek and Lowly Spirit--As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love. Be careful in your manner. 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. Yet all these precious fruits need not hinder you from speaking in the most serious, solemn manner, as though angels were directing their eyes upon you, and you were acting in reference to the coming judgment.[12]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, May 26, 1896.
2. Welfare Ministry, 76.
3. Manuscript 33, 1911.
4. The Ministry of Healing, 157.
5. Medical Ministry 208, 209.

6. Manuscript 39, 1908.
7. Manuscript 3, 1906.
8. The Adventist Home, 435.
9. Messages to Young People, 349.
10. Testimonies for the Church 9:57.
11. The Review and Herald, December 14, 1897.
12. Testimonies for the Church 2:52.

Chapter 27

Effect of Words on Oneself

Careless and Irreverent Criticism--The habit of careless and irreverent criticism reacts upon the character, in fostering irreverence and unbelief. Many a man indulging this habit has gone on unconscious of danger, until he was ready to criticize and reject the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”[1]

Mental and Physical Health--Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessities of our fellow beings, given or done with an eye to God’s glory, will result in blessings to the giver. Those who are thus working are obeying a law of heaven and will receive the approval of God. The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes

through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health.[2]

Cheerfulness and Peace--While cheerfulness and a calm resignation and peace will make others happy and healthy, it will be of the greatest benefit to oneself. Sadness and talking of disagreeable things is encouraging the disagreeable scenes, bringing back upon oneself the disagreeable effect. God wants us to forget all these--not look down but up, up![3]

Help for Others, Help to Oneself--Many are in obscurity. They have lost their bearings. They know not what course to pursue. Let the perplexed ones search out others who are in perplexity, and speak to them words of hope and encouragement. When they begin to do this work, the light of heaven will reveal to them the path that they should follow. By their words of consolation to the afflicted they themselves will be consoled. By helping others, they themselves will be helped out of their difficulties. Joy takes the place of sadness and gloom. The heart, filled with the Spirit of God,

glows with warmth toward every fellow being. Every such an one is no longer in darkness; for his “darkness” is “as the noon day.”[4]

Sympathy for Others, Not for Self--The lives of some are without peace or gladness because they never get out of the range of self. They are ever reaching out for sympathy from others. If they would go to work to see how helpful they could be, and would speak words of love and courage, their souls, now dry and sorrowful, would become like a watered garden.[5]

Passionate Words--One passionate word will give Satan the advantage and often wound your own soul and turn others away from the light.[6]

Anger as Intoxication--When one once gives place to an angry spirit, he is just as much intoxicated as the man who has put the glass to his lips. Learn the eloquence of silence and know that God respects the purchase of the blood of Christ. Educate yourselves; we must learn every day. We must come up higher and higher and closer to God.

Clear the rubbish away from the King's highway. Make a way that the King may walk in our midst. Put away filthy communications out of your mouth (see Colossians 3:8).[7]

Vehemence a Self-Inflicted Wound--Severe tests will come to you. Put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that by vehemence you will wound yourself. If under all circumstances you will sit in heavenly places in Christ, your words will not be charged with bullets that wound hearts and that may destroy life.[8]

Idle and Evil Words--Closely connected with Christ's warning in regard to the sin against the Holy Spirit is a warning against idle and evil words. The words are an indication of that which is in the heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But the words are more than an indication of character; they have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do

not really believe; but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation. Having once expressed an opinion or decision, they are often too proud to retract it, and try to prove themselves in the right, until they come to believe that they are. It is dangerous to utter a word of doubt, dangerous to question and criticize divine light.[9]

Evilspeaking a Twofold Curse--Who does not love life and desire good days? Yet how few comply with the conditions, to refrain the tongue from evil and the lips from speaking guile. Few are willing to follow the Saviour's example of meekness and humility. Many ask the Lord to humble them, but are unwilling to submit to the needful discipline. When the test comes, when trials or even annoyances occur, the heart rebels, and the tongue utters words that are like poisoned arrows or blasting hail.

Evilspeaking is a twofold curse, falling more heavily upon the speaker than upon the hearer. He

who scatters the seeds of dissension and strife reaps in his own soul the deadly fruits. How miserable is the talebearer, the surmiser of evil! He is a stranger to true happiness.[10]

Notes:

1. The Desire of Ages, 323.
2. Testimonies for the Church 4:56.
3. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:662.
4. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 4:1151.
5. Sons and Daughters of God, 88.
6. The Review and Herald, May 3, 1887.
7. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:582.
8. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:578.
9. The Desire of Ages, 323.
10. Testimonies for the Church 5:176.

Chapter 28

Discernment in Reproof

Message of Truth--If ever a people needed to walk before God as did Enoch, Seventh-day Adventists need to do so now, showing their sincerity by pure words, clean words, words full of sympathy, tenderness, and love.

There are times when words of reproof and rebuke are called for. Those who are out of the right way must be aroused to see their peril. A message must be given that shall startle them from the lethargy which enchains their senses. Moral renovation must take place, else souls will perish in their sins. Let the message of truth, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cut its way to the heart. Make appeals that will arouse the careless and bring foolish, wandering minds back to God.[1]

Reproof in Love--In seeking to correct or reform others we should be careful of our words. They will be a savor of life unto life or of death

unto death. In giving reproof or counsel, many indulge in sharp, severe speech, words not adapted to heal the wounded soul. By these ill-advised expressions the spirit is chafed, and often the erring ones are stirred to rebellion. All who would advocate the principles of truth need to receive the heavenly oil of love. Under all circumstances reproof should be spoken in love. Then our words will reform but not exasperate. Christ by His Holy Spirit will supply the force and the power. This is His work.[2]

So-Called Frankness, a Form of Selfishness--

Some 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. These persons may have virtues; they may be liberal, and have kind impulses; but their discourteous manners render them almost insupportable. They criticize, they wound, they say disagreeable things. Will the character they are cultivating recommend them to Jesus? Will it fit them for the society of heaven? We do well to examine ourselves to see what manner of spirit we

are cherishing. Let us learn to speak gently, quietly, even under circumstances the most trying. Let us control not only our words, but our thoughts and imaginations. Let us be kind, be courteous in our words and deportment. There is a great neglect in this respect.[3]

Sour Christians--The good qualities which many possess are hidden, and instead of attracting souls to Christ they repulse them. If these persons could see the influence of their uncourteous ways and unkind expressions upon unbelievers, and how offensive is such conduct in the sight of God, they would reform their habits, for a lack of courtesy is one of the greatest stumbling blocks to sinners. Selfish, complaining, sour Christians bar the way, so that sinners do not care to approach Christ.[4]

Hard Words--Hard words beat upon the heart through the ear, awakening to life the worst passions of the soul and tempting men and women to break God's commandments.[5]

The Correcting of Children--Harsh, angry

words are not of heavenly origin. Scolding and fretting never help. Instead, they stir up the worst feelings of the human heart. When your children do wrong and are filled with rebellion, and you are tempted to speak and act harshly, wait before you correct them. Give them an opportunity to think, and allow your temper to cool.[6]

Rude Angles and Rough Points--The sharp, rude angles and rough points in our character, the manifestations of selfishness in unkind words and actions, tear away the delicate fabric of human love and happiness.[7]

Servants of the Wicked One--He who drinks in the spirit of Christ will let it flow forth in kind words, and be expressed in courteous deportment.... But those who profess the truth and at the same time are rough, and sour, and unkind in words and deportment, have not learned of Jesus; all these manifestations show that they are yet servants of the wicked one.[8]

Education of Our Lips--Let us make a

covenant with God that we will not speak one word of envy or unkindness. Let not your lips dishonor God by fretful words of complaint and dissatisfaction. Educate your lips to praise Him from whom all blessings flow.[9]

Unnecessary Disputing--Unless some question of vital importance is involved, be ready to yield your own opinion rather than to create a dispute. Even though you may by argument gain your point, yet you may place a burden upon someone else, far outweighing the advantage you think you will gain. It is hard to heal the wounds caused by harsh words.

Often you may preserve peace by guarding the tongue. Never introduce into your conversation matters that will create strife, hurting your own soul and the souls of others.[10]

Hasty, Impatient Speech--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 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.” (Proverbs 29:20) “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.” (Proverbs 25:28)

In one moment, by the hasty, passionate, careless tongue, 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![11]

A Well-Regulated Temper--It is the “soft answer” which “turneth away wrath.” Revenge has never conquered a foe. A well-regulated temper exerts a good influence on all around; but “he that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”[12]

Tirades and Swearing--A large share of life’s

happiness is dependent upon our manners and actions toward others. The sharp word must be left unspoken. The passionate words must be quenched in the love of Jesus Christ; for if this dross is not cleansed from the soul, there is no hope of eternal life. The selfish temper, and tirade of passionate words is placed in the same dark list with swearing.[13]

Evil Thinking and Speaking--There is nothing Christ needs so much as agents who feel the necessity of representing Him. Evil-speaking and evil-thinking are ruinous to the soul.[14]

No Words of Irritation--God desires your words to be lifegiving. Not a word of irritation is to be spoken. However provoked you may feel, keep back every word that would stir up the evil in another heart. Speech is a great talent; and God desires every one of you to reach the standard of Christlikeness. Let every word you speak bless and elevate.[15]

Criticism of Others--There is often a great

temptation to talk of things which do not profit the speaker or the hearer, but which bring evil and barrenness to both. Our probationary time is too brief to be spent in dwelling upon the shortcomings of others.[16]

Sanctified Lips--The truly converted man has no inclination to think or talk of the faults of others. His lips are sanctified, and as God's witness he testifies that the grace of Christ has transformed his heart.... Those only will enter heaven who have overcome the temptation to think and speak evil.[17]

Today's Cannibals--Slanderous speeches, which is in truth cannibalism, will not be spoken by those who are feeding on that which is the Bread of Life, the Word of the living God, and delighting themselves on the marrow and fatness of God's exceeding great and precious promises. Through Jesus Christ the soul is in communion with the heavenly angels, and can have no desire to indulge in foolish chit-chat conversation, to sit at the table with slanderers (cannibals). Jesus Christ

would have His children “laborers together with Him,” prayerful, kind, benevolent, and full of activity.[18]

Seeds of Suspicion and Distrust--Let those who fear God and believe the truth put a guard on their lips. Let them be determined not to speak words that will injure the cause of God, or give a wrong representation of the work being done in any of His institutions. Let them be careful not to speak words that will be a temptation to someone else to withhold the confidence and the words of courage that ought to be given to those who have been severely tried, and who, perhaps, have been working early and late to fulfill the many calls of duty coming to them, until it seems as if the mind would give way under the strain. Often, at such times, false impressions regarding such workers are made on minds by cruel words, full of surmisings. The seeds of suspicion and distrust, like thistledown, are carried far and wide, and can never be gathered up.[19]

Words the Holy Spirit Can Approve--The

love of God in the heart will always lead us to speak gentle words. “Charity (love) suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.”

Shall we not remember this? If the love of God is in our hearts, we shall not think evil, we shall not be easily disturbed, we shall not give loose reign to passion, but we will show that we are yoked up with Christ, and that the restraining power of His Spirit leads us to speak words that He can approve. The yoke of Christ is the restraint of the Holy Spirit, and when we become heated by passion, let us say, No; I have Christ by my side, and I will not make Him ashamed of me by speaking hot, fiery words.[20]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 7:155.

2. Christ's Object Lessons, 337.
3. The Review and Herald, April 29, 1884.
4. Our High Calling, 229.
5. The Adventist Home, 439.
6. Child Guidance, 246.
7. The Review and Herald, July 18, 1893.
8. Our High Calling, 238.
9. The Review and Herald, May 1, 1888.
10. Manuscript 60, 1903.
11. Education, 236, 237.
12. Testimonies for the Church 4:367, 368.
13. Letter 6a, 1893.
14. Manuscript 8a, 1888.
15. Manuscript 65, 1901.
16. Testimonies for the Church 4:135.
17. Sons and Daughters of God, 348.
18. Letter 14a, 1893.
19. Manuscript 94, 1904.
20. Manuscript 73, 1897.

Chapter 29

Praise and Thanksgiving

Expression of Praise to God--Brethren and sisters, the Lord is our God. If Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, we have a hope in God that it is impossible for us to keep to ourselves. We will praise Him. We do not praise Him as much as we should. Whoso offers praise glorifies God. Now instead of speaking doleful words, and telling of our trials and afflictions, let us thank God that we can speak at all, and resolve that we will endeavor to glorify His name.[1]

Continual Praise--Our voices should be oftener heard in praise and thanksgiving to God. His praise should continually be in our hearts and upon our lips.[2]

Precious Chapters in Our Experience--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.[3]

Rejoicing in Heaven--“They that feared the Lord,” writes the prophet Malachi, “spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.” Were the words spoken, words of complaint, of faultfinding, of self-sympathy? No; in contrast to those who speak against God, those who fear Him speak words of courage, of thankfulness, and of praise.... Such words make all heaven rejoice. Those who utter them may be poor in worldly possessions, but by faithfully giving to God the portion He claims, they acknowledge their indebtedness to Him. Self-serving does not make up the chapters of their life history. In love and gratitude, with songs of joy upon their lips, they bring their offerings to God, saying as did David, “Of Thine own we freely give Thee.”[4]

From the Treasure of Our Heart--If we enjoy

the love of God in our hearts, we will have something to say. From the treasure of our heart we will bring forth good things. We will render to God the fruit of our lips. Our words will be words of praise and thanksgiving.[5]

God's Mercy and Truth--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.[6]

Praise Better Than Complaint--It is better to praise the Lord than to complain. Let not our tongues utter words of which we shall be ashamed when Christ shall come in His glory with all the holy angels with Him. We must be clean in lips and in heart; we must be sanctified and refined, even as Christ was.[7]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 39, 1908.
2. The Review and Herald, May 22, 1900.
3. Christ's Object Lessons, 299, 300.
4. The Review and Herald, January 5, 1897.
5. Manuscript 74, 1897.
6. Early Writings, 114.
7. Manuscript 95, 1909.

Chapter 30

Care in Speaking of Others

Good Qualities in Others--Cultivate the habit of speaking well of others. Dwell upon the good qualities of those with whom you associate, and see as little as possible of their errors and failings. When tempted to complain of what someone has said or done, praise something in that person's life or character. Cultivate thankfulness. Praise God for His wonderful love in giving Christ to die for us.[1]

A Way of Salvation for the Tempted--No one is ever made better by denunciation and recrimination. To tell a tempted soul of his guilt in no way inspires him with a determination to do better. Point the erring, discouraged one to Him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. Show him what he may become. Tell him that there is in him nothing that recommends him to God, but that Christ died for him that he might be accepted in the Beloved.[2]

No Haughty or Accusing Words--Speech is a wonderful talent. How much more will God be glorified with pleasant speech of, or in regard to, His blood-bought heritage than with faultfinding. Clouds will come; wicked speech will come from those who are enemies of the truth, to oppress the righteous; but never let haughty and accusing words come from any believers against other believers. Have we not enough of God's tokens and blessings to keep our mouth filled with thanksgiving and praise, and glorify Him?

Will you be justified in uttering expressions of ill feeling and ill repute against those whom we suppose have erred? Have we never made any mistakes ourselves? Have we never been in the slough of despond? God help us to bear in mind how hard it is when tempted of the devil to have our own brethren step on the side of the devil, and try to hurt and destroy. When tempted to speak words of faultfinding, begin to sing, "Praise ye the Lord." [3]

Flattery As Mind Perversion--All flattery should be put away, for it is Satan's work to flatter. Poor, weak, fallen men generally think enough of themselves and need no help in this direction. Flattering your ministers is out of place. It perverts the mind and does not lead to meekness and humility; yet men and women love to be praised, and it is too frequently the case that ministers love it. Their vanity is gratified by it, but it has proved a curse to many. Reproof is more to be prized than flattery.[4]

Unrealized Hopes--Flattering words are sweet to the unconsecrated heart, and some who think they are standing firm, are dazed, allured, and intoxicated with hopes that will never be realized. A great wrong has been done in this way. All should think and speak modestly of their own capabilities, and should be careful not to encourage pride and self-esteem in others.[5]

Commendation a Danger--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. But the man who is injured is in a far less dangerous position than when fawned upon and extolled for a few of his efforts which appear successful. The commendation of apparent friends is more dangerous than reproach.

Every man who praises himself brushes the luster from his best efforts. A truly noble character will not stoop to resent the false accusations of enemies; every word spoken falls harmless, for it strengthens that which it cannot overthrow.[6]

Truth in the Heart, Truth on the Lips--How careful we should be, that our words and actions are all in harmony with the sacred truth that God has committed to us! ... When you are associated together, be guarded in your words. Let your conversation be of such a nature that you will have no need of repentance.... If the love of the truth is in your heart, you will talk of the truth. You will talk of the blessed hope that you have in Jesus. If

you have love in your heart, you will seek to establish and build up your brother in the most holy faith. If a word is dropped that is detrimental to the character of your friend or brother, do not encourage this evilspeaking. It is the work of the enemy. Kindly remind the speaker that the Word of God forbids that kind of conversation.[7]

Notes:

1. The Ministry of Healing, 492.
2. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:453.
3. Manuscript 129, 1901.
4. Testimonies for the Church 2:338.
5. Testimonies for the Church 5:478.
6. Testimonies for the Church 4:607.
7. The Review and Herald, June 5, 1888.

Chapter 31

Hope and Encouragement

A Healing Balm--There are souls who err, and who feel their shame and their folly. They are hungry for words of encouragement. They look upon their mistakes and errors until they are almost driven to desperation. Instead of ... reproof and condemning and taking away the last ray of hope that the Sun of Righteousness sheds into their hearts, let your words fall as healing balm upon the bruised soul. Be not like desolating hail that beats down and destroys the tender hope springing up in the hearts. Leave not the hungry, starving soul in his helplessness to perish because you fail to speak words of tenderness and encouragement.[1]

Encouragement for the Angels--Words of cheer and encouragement spoken when the soul is sick and the pulse of courage is low--these are regarded by the Saviour as if spoken to Himself. As hearts are cheered, the heavenly angels look on in pleased recognition.[2]

Brave, Hopeful Words--There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, almost ready to faint in the conflict with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. "None of us liveth to himself." Romans 14:7. By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged and repelled from Christ and the truth.[3]

No Doubt nor Discouragement--Make it a rule never to utter one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the life of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and holy cheer.[4]

Nothing Cheap nor Common--Let us educate the tongue to speak right words--words that will encourage and strengthen our fellow men. Let us talk of goodness, and mercy, and the love of God. Put away all unbelieving words, and all that is

cheap and common.[5]

Inspiration Through a Holy Boldness--Let the tongue be inspired with a holy boldness to speak words of encouragement, words that will arouse and strengthen souls to break the bands of indolence and security that bind them in uncertainty.[6]

Parrot-like Repetitions--You cannot reach hearts with a mere form of words, a parrot-like repetition of set phrases. What you say must be the expression of a personal experience. If you cheer hearts with words of courage and hope, it will be because the grace and love of God are to you a living reality. It is God's impress that these souls are to receive, not your own. But if the worker has not himself been refined, transformed, he cannot present the truth with a freshness, a force, a power, that awakens responsive feelings in those who hear the word of life.[7]

Words of Cheer--The wails of a world's sorrow are heard all around us. Sin is pressing its

shadow upon us, and our minds must be ready for every good word and work. We know that we have the presence of Jesus. The sweet influence of His Holy Spirit is teaching and guiding our thoughts, leading us to speak words that will cheer and brighten the pathway of others.[8]

Pleasant, Agreeable Tones--We are to speak words that will comfort and encourage. Brethren and sisters, train yourselves to speak in pleasant, agreeable tones. It does no harm, but good, to speak kindly, but to speak discourteously and roughly drives the holy angels away in sadness.[9]

As a Nail in a Sure Place--Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for piety and holiness, will find expression in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure.

Those with whom we associate day by day need our help, our guidance. They may be in such a condition of mind that a word spoken in season will be as a nail in a sure place.[10]

Seeds of Doubt a Service of Satan--Let us guard against speaking words that discourage. Let us resolve never to engage in evils¹⁰⁴ speaking and backbiting. Let us refuse to serve Satan by implanting seeds of doubt. Let us guard against cherishing unbelief, or expressing it to others. Many, many times I have wished that there might be circulated a pledge containing a solemn promise to speak only those words that are pleasing to God. There is as great need for such a pledge as there is for one against the use of intoxicating liquor. Let us begin to discipline the tongue, remembering always that we can do this only by disciplining the mind, for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” (Matthew 12:34)[11]

Presentation of the Saviour--Oh, let no word be spoken to cause deeper pain! To the soul weary of a life of sin, but knowing not where to find relief, present the compassionate Saviour. Take him by the hand, lift him up, speak to him words of courage and hope. Help him to grasp the hand of the Saviour.[12]

The Heavenly Ladder--He who comes to Jesus is setting his feet upon a ladder that reaches from earth to heaven. Teach it by pen, by voice, that God is above the ladder; the bright rays of His glory are shining upon every round of the ladder. He is looking graciously upon all who are climbing painfully upward, that He may send them help, divine help, when the hand seems to be relaxing and the foot trembling. Yes, tell it, tell it in words that will melt the heart, that not one who shall perseveringly climb the ladder will fail of an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; those who believe in Christ shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of His hand.

Tell the people in clear, hopeful language how they may escape the heritage of shame which is our deserved portion. But for Christ's sake do not present before them ideas that will discourage them, that will make the way to heaven seem very difficult.[13]

Remedy for Depression--We cannot afford to be in any way a hindrance to others. Each has his own peculiar temptations and trials, and we are to stand in a position where we can help and strengthen the tempted. We are to encourage, and, if possible, lift up those that are weak in the faith. By speaking of the promises of God, we may sometimes remove depression from the minds of those who are in trial and difficulty.[14]

Conversation About Heaven--When we can associate together to help one another heavenward, when the conversation is upon divine and heavenly things, then it amounts to something to talk; but when the conversation centers upon self and 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.[15]

Sour, Disagreeable Minds--It is Satan's work to talk of that which concerns himself, and he is delighted to have human beings talk of his power, of his working through the children of men. Through indulgence in such conversation the mind becomes gloomy and sour and disagreeable. We may become channels of communication for Satan, through which flow words that bring no sunshine to any heart. But let us decide that this shall not be. Let us decide not to be channels through which Satan shall communicate gloomy, disagreeable thoughts. Let our words be not a savor of death unto death, but of life unto life.[16]

Our Weakness Not a Subject of Discussion--It is not praiseworthy to talk of our weakness and discouragement. Let each one say, "I am grieved that I yield to temptation, that my prayers are so feeble, my faith so weak." [17]

No Virtue in Remembrance of Sins--Every time we talk darkness, it pleases the enemy, for he

does not want the joy of Christ to dwell in our hearts by faith. Christ is to us a never-failing fountain of refreshing joy. God does not regard it any virtue in us to keep looking at and talking of our mistakes and sins.[18]

Notes:

1. Our High Calling, 295.
2. The Ministry of Healing, 159.
3. Steps to Christ, 120.
4. Steps to Christ, 119, 120.
5. The Review and Herald, March 28, 1899.
6. Letter 151, 1903.
7. The Review and Herald, April 12, 1892.
8. Testimonies for the Church 6:115.
9. The Review and Herald, June 15, 1905.
10. Prophets and Kings, 348.
11. Our High Calling, 291.
12. The Ministry of Healing, 168.
13. Selected Messages 1:181, 182.
14. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:435.
15. Sons and Daughters of God, 166.
16. Testimonies for the Church 6:62, 63.

17. In Heavenly Places, 276.

18. Letter 42, 1896.

Chapter 32

Faith a Topic of Conversation

A Law of Nature--It is a law of nature that our thoughts and feelings are encouraged and strengthened as we give them utterance. 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 that 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.[1]

The Inevitable Harvest--Those who talk faith and cultivate faith will have faith; but those who cherish and express doubts will have doubts.[2]

The Source of Strength--If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the

blessings that we know we have--the great mercy, forbearance, and love of God--we would daily have greater strength. Have not the precious words spoken by Christ, the Prince of God, an assurance and power that should have great influence upon us, that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children?[3]

Seeds of Doubt, a Harvest of Unbelief--Let us take heed to our words. Let us talk faith, and we shall have faith. Never give place to a thought of discouragement in the work of God. Never utter a word of doubt. It is as seed sown in the heart of both speaker and hearers, to produce a harvest of discouragement and unbelief.[4]

Satan's Great Advantage--Even under temptation, our language may be that of faith and hope and courage. But no lightness, no trifling, should be indulged in; no low witticism should escape our lips, for these things give Satan great advantage.[5]

Windows Open Toward Heaven--The more you talk faith, the more faith you will have. The more you dwell upon discouragement, talking to others about your trials, and enlarging upon them, to enlist the sympathy which you crave, the more discouragements and trials you will have. Why mourn over that which we cannot avoid? God is inviting us to close the windows of the soul earthward and open them heavenward that He may flood our hearts with the glory which is shining across the threshold of heaven.[6]

Difficulties a Subject for Thanks--When someone asks how you are feeling, do not try to think of something mournful to tell in order to gain sympathy. Do not talk of your lack of faith and your sorrows and sufferings. The tempter delights to hear such words. When talking on gloomy subjects, you are glorifying him. We are not to dwell on the great power of Satan to overcome us. Often we give ourselves into his hands by talking of his power.

Let us talk instead of the great power of God to

bind up all our interests with His own. Tell of the matchless power of Christ, and speak of His glory. All heaven is interested in our 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?[7]

Notes:

1. The Ministry of Healing, 251-253.
2. Testimonies for the Church 5:302.
3. Selected Messages 2:243.
4. Evangelism, 633.
5. The Review and Herald, May 13, 1884.
6. Mind, Character, and Personality 2:579.
7. The Ministry of Healing, 253, 254.

Chapter 33

Simplicity in Our Speech

Secrets of Success for the Gospel--The success of the gospel message does not depend upon learned speeches, eloquent testimonies, or deep arguments. It depends upon the simplicity of the message and its adaptation to the souls that are hungering for the bread of life. “What shall I do to be saved?”--this is the want of the soul.[1]

Purity and Simplicity--Our work should be to embrace every opportunity to present the truth in its purity and simplicity where there is any desire or interest to hear the reasons of our faith.[2]

Work in the Cities--The Lord is speaking to His people at this time, saying, Gain an entrance into the cities, and proclaim the truth in simplicity and in faith. The Holy Spirit will work through your efforts to impress hearts. Introduce no strange doctrine into your message, but speak the simple words of the gospel of Christ, which young and old

can understand. The unlearned as well as the educated are to comprehend the truths of the third angel's message, and they must be taught in simplicity. If you would approach the people acceptably, humble your hearts before God and learn His ways.

Unlocking Closed Hearts--The true, honest words of a son or daughter of God, spoken in natural simplicity, will open the door to hearts that have long been locked.[3]

Simple Words May Open Locked Hearts--The most intellectual, those who are looked upon and praised as the world's most gifted men and women, are often refreshed by the simple words that flow from the heart of one who loves God and who can speak of that love as naturally as the worldling speaks of the things which his mind contemplates and feeds upon. Often the words well prepared and studied have little influence. But the true, honest words of a son or daughter of God, spoken in natural simplicity, will open the door to hearts that have long been locked.[4]

Too Much Proof--In this age, when pleasing fables are drifting upon the surface and attracting the mind, truth presented in an easy style, backed up with a few strong proofs, is better than to search and bring forth an overwhelming array of evidence; for the point then does not stand so distinct in many minds as before the objections and evidences were brought before them. With many, assertions will go further than long arguments. They take many things for granted. Proof does not help the case in the minds of such.[5]

Plain Mileposts--The world needs labor now. Calls are coming in from every direction like the Macedonian cry: "Come over and help us." Plain, pointed arguments, standing out as mileposts, will do more toward convincing minds generally than will a large array of arguments which cover a great deal of ground, but which none but investigating minds will have interest to follow.[6]

A Few Forcible Remarks--A few forcible remarks upon some point of doctrine will fasten it

in the mind much more firmly than if such a mass of matter were presented that nothing lies out clear and distinct in the mind of those ignorant of our faith. There should be interspersed with the prophecies practical lessons of the teachings of Christ.[7]

Seeds of Truth Too Deep--Some have cultivated the habit of too great concentrativeness. The power to fix the mind upon one subject to the exclusion of all others, is good to a limited degree, but those who put the whole strength of the mind into one line of thought are frequently deficient on other points. In conversation these become tedious, and weary the listener. Their writings lack a free, easy style. When they speak in public, the subject before them holds their attention, and they are led on and on, to go deeper and deeper into the matter. They seem to see knowledge and light as they become interested and absorbed, but there are few who can follow them.

There is danger that such men will plant the seed of truth so deep that the tender blade will

never find the surface. Even the most essential, manifest truths, those which are of themselves clear and plain, may be so covered up with words as to be made cloudy and indistinct.[8]

Christ's Words Understood--In view of all that lies before the believer, his piety should be "always abounding." He should labor for souls with all his intelligence and powers. Not for eloquence and honor is he to strive, but for simplicity of life and simplicity of speech. Christ had no need to explain any word that He made use of. All were simple, and all were understood by the most simple.[9]

A Great Variety of Minds--Human minds vary. The minds of different education and thought receive different impressions of the same words, and it is difficult for one mind to give to one of a different temperament, education, and habits of thought by language exactly the same idea as that which is clear and distinct in his own mind. Yet to honest men, right-minded men, he can be so simple and plain as to convey his meaning for all practical

purposes.[10]

The Highest Eloquence--You are to be the agent through whom God will speak to the soul. Precious things will be brought to your remembrance, and with a heart overflowing with the love of Jesus, you will speak words of vital interest and import. Your simplicity and sincerity will be the highest eloquence, and your words will be registered in the books of heaven as fit words, which are like apples of gold in pictures of silver.[11]

Light With Every Word--At the Queensland camp meeting in 1898, instruction was given me for our Bible workers. In the visions of the night, ministers and workers seemed to be in a meeting where Bible lessons were being given. We said, "We have the Great Teacher with us today," and we listened with interest to His words. He said: "There is a great work before you in this place. You will need to present truth in its simplicity. Bring the people to the waters of life. Speak to them the things which most concern their present

and eternal good. Let not your study of the Scriptures be of a cheap or casual order. In all that you say, know that you have something which is worthy of the time you take to say it, and of the time of the hearers to hear. Speak of those things which are essential, those things which will instruct, bringing light with every word.

“Learn to meet the people where they are. Do not present subjects that will arouse controversy. Let not your instruction be of a character to perplex the mind. Do not cause the people to worry over things which you may understand but which they do not see, unless these are of vital consequence to the saving of the soul. Do not present the Scriptures in a way to exalt self and encourage vainglory in the one who opens the Word. The work for this time is to train students and workers to deal with subjects in a plain, serious, and solemn manner.”[12]

Spiritual Disease--All the sang-froid which is so common, the theatrical gestures, all lightness and trifling, all jesting and joking, must be seen by

the one who wears Christ's yoke to be "not convenient"--an offense to God and a denial of Christ.

It unfits the mind for solid thought and solid labor. It makes men inefficient, superficial, and spiritually diseased.[13]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 231.
2. Testimonies for the Church 3:214.
3. Testimonies for the Church 6:115.
4. Testimonies for the Church 6:115.
5. Testimonies for the Church 3:36.
6. Testimonies for the Church 3:39.
7. Evangelism, 171, 172.
8. Gospel Workers, 169.
9. The Review and Herald, January 7, 1909.
10. Selected Messages 1:19.
11. Sons and Daughters of God, 274.
12. Testimonies for the Church 6:58, 59.
13. Evangelism, 644.

Chapter 34

Importance of the Subject

Efficiency As Workers for Christ--By diligent effort all may acquire the power to read intelligibly, and to speak in a full, clear, round tone, in a distinct and impressive manner. By doing this we may greatly increase our efficiency as workers for Christ.

Every Christian is called to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ; therefore he should seek for perfection in speech. He should present the Word of God in a way that will commend it to the hearers. God does not design that His human channels shall be uncouth. It is not His will that man shall belittle or degrade the heavenly current that flows through him to the world.

We should look to Jesus, the perfect Pattern; we should pray for the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in His strength we should seek to train every organ

for perfect work.

Especially is this true of those who are called to public service. Every minister and every teacher should bear in mind that he is giving to the people a message that involves eternal interests. The truth spoken will judge them in the great day of final reckoning. And with some souls the manner of the one delivering the message will determine its reception or rejection. Then let the word be so spoken that it will appeal to the understanding and impress the heart. Slowly, distinctly, and solemnly should it be spoken, yet with all the earnestness which its importance demands.

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.” (Psalm 45:2; Isaiah 50:4) And the Lord bids us, “Let your speech be alway with grace” (Colossians 4:6) “that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29)[1]

Neglect of Voice Culture--The culture and right use of the voice are greatly neglected, even by persons of intelligence and Christian activity. There are many who read or speak in so low or so rapid a manner that they cannot be readily understood. Some have a thick, indistinct utterance; others speak in a high key, in sharp shrill tones, that are painful to the hearers. Texts, hymns, and the reports and other papers presented before public assemblies are sometimes read in such a way that they are not understood and often so that their force and impressiveness are destroyed.[2]

Duty of the Teacher--Voice culture should be taught in the reading class; and in other classes the teacher should insist that the students speak distinctly and use words which express their thoughts clearly and forcibly. Students should be

taught to use their abdominal muscles in breathing and speaking. This will make the tones more full and clear.[3]

A Foundation Subject of Education--When voice culture, reading, writing, and spelling take their rightful place in our schools, there will be seen a great change for the better. These subjects have been neglected because teachers have not recognized their value. But they are more important than Latin and Greek. I do not say that it is wrong to study Latin and Greek, but I do say that it is wrong to neglect the subjects that lie at the foundation of education in order to tax the mind with the study of these higher branches.[4]

Melody of the Voice--Those who gain correct ideas on the subject of voice culture will see the necessity of educating and training themselves so that they may honor God and bless others. They will put themselves under patient, efficient teachers, and learn to read in a way that will preserve the melody of the voice. With an eye single to the glory of God they will make the most

of their natural abilities. Commanding their own powers, they will not be embarrassed by defects of speech, and their usefulness in the cause of God will be increased.[5]

Soft, Musical Cadence--The one who gives Bible readings in the congregation or in the family should be able to read with a soft, musical cadence which will charm the hearers.[6]

A Great Power--Let those who labor in word and doctrine strive to perfect themselves in the use of language. The voice is a great power, and yet many have not trained their voices in such a way that they may be used to their highest capacity.[7]

Clear Understanding for Everyone--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.[8]

Imperfect Utterance, a Dishonor to God--Let all make the most of the talent of speech. God calls

for a higher, more perfect ministry. He is dishonored by the imperfect utterance of the one who by painstaking effort could become an acceptable mouthpiece for Him. The truth is too often marred by the channel through which it passes.

The Lord calls upon all who are connected with His service to give attention to the cultivation of the voice, that they may utter in an acceptable manner the great and solemn truths He has entrusted to them. Let none mar the truth by defective utterance. Let not those who have neglected to cultivate the talent of speech suppose that they are qualified to minister, for they have yet to obtain the power to communicate.[9]

Defective Voices of Ministers--Ministers of the gospel should know how to speak with power and expression, making the words of eternal life so expressive and impressive that the hearers cannot but feel their weight. I am pained as I hear the defective voices of many of our ministers. Such ministers rob God of the glory He might have if

they had trained themselves to speak the word with power.

No man should regard himself as qualified to enter the ministry until by persevering effort he has overcome every defect in his utterance. If he attempts to speak to the people without knowing how to use the talent of speech, half his influence is lost, for he has little power to hold the attention of a congregation.[10]

Abuse of the Gift of Speech--The gift of speech has been greatly abused and widely perverted from its intended purpose; but let those who claim to be children of the heavenly King awake to their responsibility, and make the most of this talent. Let no one say, "It is of no use for me to try to pray; for others do not hear me." Rather let him say, "I will make earnest effort to overcome this God-dishonoring habit of speaking in a low, indistinct tone. I will put myself under discipline until my voice shall be audible even to those who are dull of hearing." [11]

Christ As Our Pattern--The teachings of Christ were impressive and solemn; His voice was melodious. And should not we, as well as Christ, study to have melody in our voices? He had a mighty influence, for He was the Son of God. We are so far beneath Him and so far deficient, that, [even if we] do the very best we can, our efforts will be poor. We cannot gain and possess the influence that He had; but why should we not educate ourselves to come just as near to the Pattern as it is possible for us to do, that we may have the greatest possible influence upon the people?

Our words, our actions, our deportment, our dress, everything, should preach. Not only with our words should we speak to the people, but everything pertaining to our person should be a sermon to them, that right impressions may be made upon them, and that the truth spoken may be taken by them to their homes. Thus our faith will stand in a better light before the community.[12]

Responsibility of Youth--Young men and

women, have you, as individuals, purchased at infinite cost, sought to study to show yourselves approved unto God, workmen which need not be ashamed? Have you brought to God the precious talent of your voice, and put forth painstaking effort to speak clearly, distinctly, and readily? However imperfect may be your manner of utterance, you may correct your faults, and refuse to allow yourself to have a nasal tone, or to speak in a thick, indistinct way. If your articulation is distinct and intelligible, your usefulness will be greatly increased. Then do not leave one defective habit of speech uncorrected.[13]

Correct Language and Cultivated Voice--

The great educating book is the Bible, and yet it is little read or practiced. Oh, that every individual would seek to make of himself all that he could, improving his opportunities to the very best of his ability, purposing to use every power which God has given him, not simply to advance his temporal affairs, but to advance his spiritual interests. Oh, that all might search diligently to know what is truth, to study earnestly that they might have

correct language and cultivated voices, that they might present the truth in all its elevated and ennobling beauty.

Let no one imagine that he will drift into some position of usefulness. If men would be used to work for God, let them put to the stretch their powers, and concentrate their minds in earnest application. It is Satan that would keep men in ignorance and inefficiency, that they may be developed in a one-sided way which they may never be able to correct. He would have men exercise one set of faculties to the exclusion of the exercise of another set, so that the mind will lose its vigor, and when there is a real necessity, be unable to rise to the emergency. God wants men to do their best, and while Satan is pulling the mind in one direction, Jesus is drawing it in another.[14]

Co-workers With the Holy Spirit--Some reason that the Lord will qualify a man by His Spirit to speak as He would have him; but the Lord does not propose to do the work which He has given man to do. He has given us reasoning

powers, and opportunities to educate the mind and manners. And after we have done all we can for ourselves, making the best use of the advantages within our reach, then we may look to God with earnest prayer to do by His Spirit that which we cannot do for ourselves.[15]

Notes:

1. Christ's Object Lessons, 335, 336.
2. Christ's Object Lessons, 335.
3. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 216.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 218.
5. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 247.
6. Testimonies for the Church 6:380.
7. The Review and Herald, March 5, 1895.
8. Testimonies for the Church 9:144.
9. Testimonies for the Church 6:382, 383.
10. Testimonies for the Church 6:381.
11. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 245, 246.

12. Testimonies for the Church 2:617, 618.
13. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 215.
14. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 256.
15. The Review and Herald, February 5, 1880.

Chapter 35

Clarity and Purity of Utterance

A Fitness for Speaking--By earnest prayer and diligent effort we are to obtain a fitness for speaking. This fitness includes uttering every syllable clearly, placing the force and emphasis where it belongs. Speak slowly. Many speak rapidly, hurrying one word after another so fast that the effect of what they say is lost. Into what you say put the spirit and life of Christ.[1]

Cultivation of the Voice--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.[2]

A Mouthpiece for God--The man who accepts the position of being mouthpiece for God should consider it highly essential that he present the truth with all the grace and intelligence he can, that the truth may lose nothing in his presentation of it to

the people. Those who consider it a little thing to speak with an imperfect utterance dishonor God.[3]

Overcome Indistinct Speech--In reading or in recitation the pronunciation should be clear. A nasal tone or an ungainly attitude should be at once corrected. Any lack of distinctness should be marked as defective. Many have allowed themselves to form the habit of speaking in a thick, indistinct way, as if their tongue were too large for their mouth. This habit has greatly hindered their usefulness.

If those who have defects in their manner of utterance will submit to criticism and correction, they may overcome these defects. They should perseveringly practice speaking in a low, distinct tone, exercising the abdominal muscles in deep breathing, and making the throat the channel of communication. Many speak in a rapid way and in a high, unnatural key. Such a practice will injure the throat and lungs. As a result of continual abuse, the weak, inflamed organs will become diseased, and consumption may result.[4]

Soft, Persuasive Tones--Be pure in speech. Cultivate a soft and persuasive, not a harsh and dictatorial, tone of voice. Give the children lessons in voice culture. Train their habits of speech, until no coarse or rough words will come spontaneously from their lips when any trial comes to them.[5]

Controlled Volume--They [ministers] should speak with reverence. Some destroy the solemn impression they may have made upon the people, by raising their voices to a very high pitch and hallooing and screaming out the truth. When presented in this manner, truth loses much of its sweetness, its force and solemnity. But if the voice is toned right, if it has solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will produce a much better impression.

This was the tone in which Christ taught His disciples. He impressed them with solemnity; He spoke in a pathetic manner. But this loud hallooing--what does it do? It does not give the people any more exalted views of the truth, and

does not impress them any more deeply. It only causes a disagreeable sensation to the hearers, and wears out the vocal organs of the speaker. The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear.[6]

Spiritless Speech--We have been pained as we have attended conference meetings, tract society meetings, and meetings of various kinds, where reports were read in an almost inaudible voice or in a hesitating manner or a muffled tone. One half the interest in a meeting is killed when the participants do their part in an indifferent, spiritless fashion. They should learn to speak in such a way that they can edify those who listen. Let everyone connected with missionary work qualify himself to speak in a clear, attractive way, enunciating his words perfectly.[7]

Home Instruction in Voice Culture--Instruction in vocal culture should be given in the home. Parents should teach their children to speak so plainly that the listeners can understand every word. They should teach them to read the Bible

with clear, distinct utterance in a way that will honor God. And let not those who kneel around the family altar put their faces in their hands close down to the chair when they address God. Let them lift up their heads and with holy awe speak to their heavenly Father, uttering their words in tones that can be heard.

Parents, train yourselves to speak in a way that will be a blessing to your children. Women need to be educated in this respect. Even the busy mothers, if they will, can cultivate the talent of speech and can teach their children to read and speak correctly. They can do this while they go about their work. It is never too late for us to improve. God calls upon parents to bring all the perfection possible into the home circle.[8]

Musical Voices--Those who open the oracles of God to the people should improve in their manner of communicating the truth, that it may be presented to the world in an acceptable way. Place proper emphasis upon the words that should be made impressive. Speak slowly. Let the voice be as

musical as possible.

God desires His ministers to seek for perfection, that they may be vessels unto honor. They are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit; and when they speak, they are to show an energy proportionate to the importance of the subject they are presenting. They are to show that the power about which they speak has made a change in their lives. When they are truly united with Christ, they will give the heavenly invitation with an earnestness that will impress hearts. As they manifest zeal in proclaiming the gospel message, a corresponding earnestness will be produced in the hearers, and lasting impressions for good will be made.[9]

Truth as Manna From Heaven--The truth should be spoken clearly, slowly, forcibly, that it may impress the hearer. When the truth in any line is presented it is essential for it to be understood, that all its precious food, the bread of life, the manna from heaven, may be received.[10]

Destruction of Body Organs--Many who might be useful men are using up their vital force and destroying their lungs and vocal organs by their manner of speaking. Some ministers have acquired a habit of hurriedly rattling off what they have to say, as though they had a lesson to repeat, and were hastening through it as fast as possible. This is not the best manner of speaking. By using proper care, every minister can educate himself to speak distinctly and impressively, not to hurriedly crowd the words together without taking time to breathe. He should speak in a moderate manner, that the people may get the ideas fixed in their minds as he passes along. But when the matter is rushed through so rapidly, the people cannot get the points in their minds, and they do not have time to receive the impression that it is important for them to have; nor is there time for the truth to affect them as it otherwise would.[11]

Danger of Excitable Speech--When some attempt to speak calmly, without excitement and excessive gesticulation, they become embarrassed, and feel a lack of freedom, because they are

restraining themselves from following their old habits. But let all such feelings, which are mere excitement, go to the four winds. That freedom of feeling that would result in your committing suicide is not sanctified.[12]

Passion of Delivery No Evidence of God's Power--The voice should be cultivated so as to promote its musical quality, that it may fall pleasantly upon the ear and impress the heart. ...

The Lord requires the human agent not to move by impulse in speaking, but to move calmly, speak slowly, and let the Holy Spirit give efficiency to the truth. Never think that in working yourselves up to a passion of delivery, speaking by impulse, and suffering your feelings to raise your voice to an unnaturally high key, that you are giving evidence of the great power of God upon you. ...

Your influence is to be far reaching, and your powers of speech should be under the control of reason. When you strain the organs of speech, the modulations of the voice are lost. The tendency to

rapid speaking should be decidedly overcome. God claims of the human instrumentality all the service that man can give.[13]

Proper Expression in Oral Reading--The science of reading correctly and with the proper emphasis, is of highest value. No matter how much knowledge you may have acquired in other lines, if you have neglected to cultivate your voice and manner of speech so that you can speak and read distinctly and intelligently, all your learning will be of but little profit; for without voice culture you cannot communicate readily and clearly that which you have learned.

To learn to tell convincingly and impressively that which one knows, is of special value to those who desire to become workers in the cause of God. The more expression you can put into words of truth, the more effective these words will be on those who hear. A proper presentation of the Lord's truth is worthy of our highest efforts. Let the students in training for the Master's service make determined efforts to learn to speak correctly

and forcibly, in order that when conversing with others in regard to the truth, or when engaged in public ministry, they may properly present the truths of heavenly origin.[14]

Distinctness in Every Word--When you speak, let every word be full and well-rounded, every sentence clear and distinct to the very last word. Many as they approach the end of a sentence lower the tone of the voice, speaking so indistinctly that the force of the thought is destroyed. Words that are worth speaking at all are worth speaking in a clear, distinct voice, with emphasis and expression.[15]

Angel Voices in Union With Human Voices--Let the voices of the followers of Christ be so trained that instead of crowding words together in a thick, indistinct way, their utterance may be clear, forcible, and edifying. Do not let the voice fall after each word, but keep it up so that each sentence will be full and complete. Will it not be worth disciplining yourself, if by so doing you are able to add interest to the service of God and to edify His

children? 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.[16]

Uncomely Gestures, Uncouth Speech--The workman for God should make earnest efforts to become a representative of Christ, discarding all uncomely gestures and uncouth speech. He should endeavor to use correct language. There is a large class who are careless in the way they speak, yet by careful, painstaking attention these may become representatives of the truth. Every day they should make advancement. They should not detract from their usefulness and influence by cherishing defects of manner, tone, or language. Common, cheap expressions should be replaced by sound, pure words. By constant watchfulness and earnest discipline the Christian youth may keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile.

We should be careful not to give an incorrect

pronunciation of our words. There are men among us who in theory know better than to use incorrect language, yet who in practice make frequent mistakes.[17]

The Spirit's Help in Distinctness of Speech--

The teacher of truth is to take heed how he presents the truth. He is to speak every word plainly and distinctly, with that earnest conviction which carries conviction to hearts. If the words spoken are crowded upon each other, the impression that should be made is lost. The talent of speech needs to be cultivated, that the truth be spoken not excitedly, but slowly and distinctly, that not a syllable may be lost. Rapidity of speech can and should be corrected.

If the words of truth are of sufficient importance to be spoken before an audience, they are of sufficient importance to be spoken distinctly. The guidance of the Spirit never leads to indistinctness of speech. The Spirit takes the things of God and presents them through the human instrument to the people. Then let them come from

our lips in the most perfect manner possible.[18]

Our Words a Channel for the Communication of Truth--We should receive the education essential in the line of conversation that we may know how to speak right words and how to speak in a proper tone, that our words may be a power for good. The truth is no truth to us unless it is brought into the inner courts of the soul. When this is done, our words are a channel through which truth is communicated to others. Sow the seed beside all waters, not knowing which shall prosper, either this or that. But be constantly educating yourself in how to use properly the faculty of speech. As you speak to others, lift your heart to God, praying that He will prepare their hearts to receive the heavenly seed. No man or woman can be that which they might be as laborers together with God in propagating the seed of truth without making earnest, painstaking effort in voice and word culture.[19]

Notes:

1. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 254, 255.
2. Testimonies for the Church 9:144.
3. Evangelism, 665.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 239.
5. The Adventist Home, 435.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:615.
7. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 246, 247.
8. Testimonies for the Church 6:381, 382.
9. The Review and Herald, January 14, 1902.
10. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 257.
11. Testimonies for the Church 2:615, 616.
12. The Review and Herald, February 5, 1880.
13. Evangelism, 668.
14. Evangelism, 666.
15. Testimonies for the Church 6:383.
16. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 246.
17. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,

238.

18. *The Southern Work*, October 27, 1903.

19. Manuscript 74, 1897.

Chapter 36

Importance of General Health

Good Blood, Healthy Lungs--In order to have good blood, we must breathe well. Full, deep inspirations of pure air, which fill the lungs with oxygen, purify the blood. They impart to it a bright color and send it, a life-giving current, to every part of the body. A good respiration soothes the nerves; it stimulates the appetite and renders digestion more perfect; and it induces sound, refreshing sleep.

The lungs should be allowed the greatest freedom possible. Their capacity is developed by free action; it diminishes if they are cramped and compressed. Hence the ill effects of the practice so common, especially in sedentary pursuits, of stooping at one's work. In this position it is impossible to breathe deeply. Superficial breathing soon becomes a habit, and the lungs lose their power to expand. A similar effect is produced by tight lacing. Sufficient room is not given to the

lower part of the chest; the abdominal muscles, which were designed to aid in breathing, do not have full play, and the lungs are restricted in their action.

Thus an insufficient supply of oxygen is received. The blood moves sluggishly. The waste, poisonous matter, which should be thrown off in the exhalations from the lungs, is retained, and the blood becomes impure. Not only the lungs, but the stomach, liver, and brain are affected. The skin becomes sallow, digestion is retarded; the heart is depressed; the brain is clouded; the thoughts are confused; gloom settles upon the spirits; the whole system becomes depressed and inactive, and peculiarly susceptible to disease.[1]

Constant Supply of Fresh Air--The lungs are constantly throwing off impurities, and they need to be constantly supplied with fresh air. Impure air does not afford the necessary supply of oxygen, and the blood passes to the brain and other organs without being vitalized. Hence the necessity of thorough ventilation. To live in close, ill-ventilated

rooms, where the air is dead and vitiated, weakens the entire system. It becomes peculiarly sensitive to the influence of cold, and a slight exposure induces disease.[2]

Oxygen in the Lungs--It is essential to health that the chest have room to expand to its fullest extent in order that the lungs may be enabled to take full inspiration. When the lungs are restricted, the quantity of oxygen received into them is lessened. The blood is not properly vitalized, and the waste, poisonous matter which should be thrown off through the lungs is retained. In addition to this the circulation is hindered, and the internal organs are so cramped and crowded out of place that they cannot perform their work properly.[3]

Voice Training a Part of Physical Culture--Next in importance to right position are respiration and vocal culture. The one who sits and stands erect is more likely than others to breathe properly. But the teacher should impress upon his pupils the importance of deep breathing. Show how the

healthy action of the respiratory organs, assisting the circulation of the blood, invigorates the whole system, excites the appetite, promotes digestion, and induces sound, sweet sleep, thus not only refreshing the body, but soothing and tranquilizing the mind. And while the importance of deep breathing is shown, the practice should be insisted upon. Let exercises be given which will promote this, and see that the habit becomes established.

The training of the voice has an important place in physical culture, since it tends to expand and strengthen the lungs, and thus to ward off disease. To ensure correct delivery in reading and speaking, see that the abdominal muscles have full play in breathing, and that the respiratory organs are unrestricted. Let the strain come on the muscles of the abdomen, rather than on those of the throat. Great weariness and serious disease of the throat and lungs may thus be prevented. Careful attention should be given to securing distinct articulation, smooth, well-modulated tones, and a not-too-rapid delivery. This will not only promote health, but will add greatly to the agreeableness and efficiency

of the student's work.[4]

Notes:

1. The Ministry of Healing, 272, 273.
2. The Ministry of Healing, 274.
3. The Ministry of Healing, 292.
4. Education, 198, 199.

Chapter 37

Proper Use of the Voice

Health Principles--The proper use of the vocal organs will bring benefit to the physical health and increase the usefulness and influence [of Christ's followers]. It is through falling into bad habits of speech that people become tedious readers and speakers, but those who are looked upon as intelligent enough to become missionary workers or to transact business ought to have intelligence enough to reform in their manner of speaking. By judicious exercise they may expand the chest and strengthen the muscles. By giving heed to proper instruction, by following health principles in regard to the expansion of the lungs and the culture of the voice, our young men and women may become speakers who can be heard; and the exercise necessary for this accomplishment will prolong life.[1]

Deep Breathing--If those who have defects in their manner of utterance will submit to criticism

and correction, they may overcome these defects. They should perseveringly practice speaking in a low, distinct tone, exercising the abdominal muscles in deep breathing, and making the throat the channel of communication. Many speak in a rapid way, and in a high, unnatural key. Such a practice will injure the throat and lungs. As a result of continual abuse, the weak, inflamed organs will become diseased, and consumption [tuberculosis] may result.[2]

Right Use of Abdominal Muscles--Voice culture is a subject that has much to do with the health of students. The youth should be taught how to breathe properly, and how to read in such a way that no unnatural strain shall come on the throat and lungs, but that the work shall be shared by the abdominal muscles. Speaking from the throat, letting the sound come from the upper part of the vocal organs, impairs the health of these organs and decreases their efficiency. The abdominal muscles are to do the heaviest part of the labor, the throat being used as a channel. Many have died who might have lived had they been taught how to

use the voice correctly. The right use of the abdominal muscles in reading and speaking will prove a remedy for many voice and chest difficulties, and the means of prolonging life.[3]

Preservation of Strength in Prayer--I saw that some of our ministers do not understand how to preserve their strength so as to be able to perform the greatest amount of labor without exhaustion. Ministers should not pray so loud and long as to exhaust their strength. It is not necessary to weary the throat and lungs in prayer. God's ear is ever open to hear the heartfelt petitions of His humble servants, and He does not require them to wear out the organs of speech in addressing Him. It is the perfect trust, the firm reliance, the steady claiming of the promises of God, the simple faith that He is, and that He is a rewarder of all those who diligently seek Him, that prevails with God.[4]

Influence of Right Teaching--Our institutions of learning should be provided with every facility for instruction regarding the mechanism of the human system. Students should be taught how to

breathe, how to read and speak so that the strain will not come on the throat and lungs, but on the abdominal muscles. Teachers need to educate themselves in this direction. Our students should have a thorough training, that they may enter upon active life with an intelligent knowledge of the habitation which God has given them. Teach them that they must be learners as long as they live. And while you are teaching them, remember that they will teach others. Your lesson will be repeated for the benefit of many more than sit before you day by day.[5]

Overexertion of Vocal Organs--Long and violent exercise of the vocal organs has irritated his [Brother D's] throat and lungs, and injured his general health, more than his precise round of rules for eating and resting have benefited him. One overexertion or strain of the vocal organs may not soon be recovered from, and may cost the life of the speaker. A calm, unhurried, yet earnest, manner of speaking, will have a better influence upon a congregation than to let the feelings become excited and control the voice and manners. As far

as possible the speaker should preserve the natural tones of the voice. It is the truth presented that affects the heart. If the speaker makes these truths a reality, he will, with the aid of the Spirit of God, be able to impress the hearers with the fact that he is in earnest, without straining the fine organs of the throat or the lungs.[6]

Channel for the Voice--Brother A, your love for reading and your dislike for physical taxation, while talking and exercising your throat, make you liable to disease of the throat and lungs. You should be guarded and should not speak hurriedly, rattling off what you have to say as though you had a lesson to repeat. You should not let the labor come upon the upper portion of the vocal organs, for this will constantly wear and irritate them, and will lay the foundation for disease. The action should come upon the abdominal muscles. The lungs and throat should be the channel, but should not do all the work.[7]

Exercise After Eating--There are men and women of excellent natural ability who do not

accomplish half what they might if they would exercise self-control in the denial of appetite.

Many writers and speakers fail here. After eating heartily, they give themselves to sedentary occupations, reading, study, or writing, allowing no time for physical exercise. As a consequence the free flow of thought and words is checked. They cannot write or speak with the force and intensity necessary in order to reach the heart; their efforts are tame and fruitless.[8]

Help for Patients--Plans should be devised for keeping patients out of doors. For those who are able to work, let some pleasant, easy employment be provided. Show them how agreeable and helpful this outdoor work is. Encourage them to breathe the fresh air. Teach them to breathe deeply, and in breathing and speaking to exercise the abdominal muscles.[9]

Correct Speaking a Healthful Exercise--The exercise of the voice in speaking is a healthful exercise. Teach and live carefully. Hold firmly to

the position that all, even our leading men, need to exercise good common sense in the care of their health, securing equal taxation of the body and the brain.[10]

Right Use of the Vocal Organs--Careful attention and training should be given to the vocal organs. They are strengthened by right use, but become enfeebled if used improperly. Their excessive use, as in preaching long sermons, will, if often repeated, not only injure the organs of speech, but will bring an undue strain upon the whole nervous system. The delicate harp of a thousand strings becomes worn, gets out of repair, and produces discord instead of melody.

It is important for every speaker so to train the vocal organs as to keep them in a healthful condition, that he may speak forth the words of life to the people. Everyone should become intelligent as to the most effective manner of using his God-given ability, and should practice what he learns. It is not necessary to talk in a loud voice or upon a high key; this does great injury to the speaker.

Rapid talking destroys much of the effect of a discourse; for the words cannot be made so plain and distinct as if spoken more deliberately, giving the hearer time to take in the meaning of every word.[11]

Preservation of Life--When a speaker talks in the proper way, taking deep, full inspirations, and throwing out the voice in clear, distinct tones, the whole being is benefited. The exercise of my lungs in deep breathing, as I have engaged in public speaking, has been a life-preserver to me.

Care is always to be taken not to strain the vocal organs. They are to be kept as smooth as possible. When you are speaking before a congregation, let the abdominal muscles have the hardest part of the work to do. The light given me for you is that you are to do more public speaking, and that you are to be sure, when speaking, to exercise the abdominal muscles. Your brain has been overstrained. Take heed to the things I write you, and you will see that my words are true. As you engage in the work the Lord points out for you,

the Spirit of God will impress minds through the words you speak. The spoken word will make a deeper impression on hearts than the printed word.[12]

Right Voice Culture No Idle Tale--The human agent must take himself in hand. God has given him physical and spiritual powers, and these need to be constantly cultivated and improved. In a great measure, physical weariness may be avoided by speaking slowly, calmly, unexcitedly.

In speaking, many have made a constant tax upon their vocal organs. The lungs have been injured, and premature death has ended their work. Nature will not always endure the abuse placed upon her laws. They are ignored by many, but eventually she will make her protest, and punish the transgressor. If these workers would but learn that God does not require this overtaxation, and that in overstraining the delicate vital organs and shortening the period of their usefulness, they are dishonoring Him, they would not cultivate habits which are injurious.

The excuse is made, “It is my habit; it is my way, and I cannot overcome it.” Will my brethren take heed how they use the organs of speech in the ministration of the Word? They are to follow God’s way, and not their own will. Christ has given them no such example in His manner of teaching. His followers are to make strenuous efforts to overcome their habits of long, loud speaking. This greatly injures the melody of the human voice.

God means that those who minister in word and doctrine shall be educators in the correct manner of teaching. They must stand before the people as God’s representatives, showing that they appreciate the precious gifts given them of God. They are to use, but not abuse, their organs. They are not to make the blind, foolish excuse, “This is my habit; I cannot overcome these defects.” They will not continue to abuse the powers given them of God for the highest cultivation, and by their imperfect habits, detract from the good they might do. The Lord will help all who will determine to overcome these wrong traits when presenting His message to

the world.

This matter has been treated too much like an idle tale. It is a most solemn consideration, and should deepen the sense of responsibility upon every man who is a mouthpiece for God, holding forth the word of life to the people. The ministers of God should study to show themselves approved of God in the presentation of sacred truth, workmen that need not to be ashamed.

The truth spoken, whether spoken in a manner to please or displease, will judge the hearer in the great day of final reckoning. It is a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. Under any circumstances the speaker will be criticized by those who turn their ears away from the truth, but every effort should be made to reach the people. The minister is the teacher of sacred, solemn truth, and he should seek for perfection in character, in address, giving as little cause as possible for criticism. Man is honored in being a laborer together with God, and he must work in Christ's lines, receiving the truth in its purity from the

Word of God, and presenting it in a manner that will commend it to the hearer.[13]

Notes:

1. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 247.
2. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 239.
3. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 297.
4. Testimonies for the Church 1:645.
5. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 147, 148.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:672.
7. Testimonies for the Church 3:311.
8. The Ministry of Healing, 308, 309.
9. The Ministry of Healing, 264, 265.
10. Medical Ministry 264, 265.
11. Evangelism, 667.
12. Letter 92, 1910.
13. Manuscript 4, 1897.

Chapter 38

Love and Kindness

Eloquence of God's Love--The most persuasive eloquence is the word that is spoken in love and sympathy. Such words will bring light to confused minds and hope to the discouraged, brightening the prospect before them. The time in which we live calls for vital, sanctified energy; for earnestness, zeal, and the tenderest sympathy and love; for words that will not increase misery, but will inspire faith and hope. We are homeward bound, seeking a better country, even a heavenly. Instead of speaking words which will rankle in the breasts of those that hear, shall we not speak of the love wherewith God hath loved us? Shall we not try to lighten the hearts of those around us by words of Christlike sympathy? Shall we not tell of the prospective rest in store for the people of God? "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." [1]

Barriers of Pride and Selfishness--The spirit

of Jesus should pervade the soul of the worker; it is the pleasant, sympathetic words, the manifestation of disinterested love for their souls, that will break down the barriers of pride and selfishness, and show to unbelievers that we have the love of Christ.[2]

Divine Enlightenment and Wisdom--Those who labor in word and doctrine have a great work before them to tear from the minds of those for whom they labor the fatal deceptions of Satan, and to impress them with the importance of aiming to reach God's great standard of righteousness. They should pray earnestly for divine enlightenment, and for wisdom to present the truth as it is in Jesus. Sympathy, tenderness, and love, woven into their discourses and manifested in their lives, would disarm opposition, weaken prejudice, and open the way to many hearts.[3]

Imitation of Christ in His Labors--It is to be regretted that many do not realize that the manner in which Bible truth is presented has much to do with the impressions made upon minds, and with

the Christian character afterward developed by those who receive the truth. Instead of imitating Christ in His manner of labor, many are severe, critical, and dictatorial. They repulse instead of winning souls. Such will never know how many weak ones their harsh words have wounded and discouraged.[4]

Too Many Sermons--The sermons should come, not from a mechanical heart, but from a heart that is filled with the love of God, and is subdued and softened by His grace; that when you speak the angels of God are enlisted on your side, and Christ is on your side, and it is Christ that makes the impression. Now these things have been neglected at our camp meetings. We have lost two-thirds of all that the camp meetings were designed to accomplish. The idea seems to be woven into the minds of some that all they have to do is to sermonize, sermonize. While sermons are good in their place, there is sermon after sermon given to the people that they cannot retain in their minds--it is an impossibility for them to do it--and they are just wearied out with sermons.[5]

Ministers Shod With Gospel Shoes--Let every minister learn to wear the gospel shoes. He who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace will walk as Christ walked. He will be able to speak right words, and to speak them in love. He will not try to drive home God's message of truth. He will deal tenderly with every heart, realizing that the Spirit will impress the truth on those who are susceptible to divine impressions. Never will he be vehement in his manner. Every word spoken will have a softening, subduing influence. ...

In speaking words of reproof, let us put all the Christlike tenderness and love possible into the voice. The higher a minister's position, the more circumspect should he be in word and act.[6]

Lasting Impressions Through Love--In His providence God impresses people to attend our tent meetings and church services. Some come from curiosity, others to criticize or ridicule. Often they are convicted of sin. The word spoken in the spirit of love makes a lasting impression on them. How

carefully, then, should these meetings be conducted. The words spoken should be of authority, that the Holy Spirit can impress them on minds. The speaker who is controlled by the Spirit of God has a sacred dignity, and his words are a savor of life unto life. Let not unsuitable illustrations or anecdotes be introduced into the discourse. Let the words spoken be for the edification of the hearers.[7]

Cutting by the Truth, Not by Our Words--In the presentation of unpopular truth, which involves a heavy cross, preachers should be careful that every word is as God would have it. Their words should never cut. They should present the truth in humility, with the deepest love for souls and an earnest desire for their salvation, and let the truth cut.[8]

Reformation, Not Exasperation--God is calling for reformers who will speak strong, uplifting words from our pulpits. It is when men speak their own words in their own strength, instead of preaching the Word of God in the power

of the Spirit, that they are hurt and offended when their words are not received with enthusiasm. It is then that they are tempted to speak words that will arouse a spirit of bitterness and opposition in their hearers. My brethren, be advised. Such words are not to come from the lips of Christ's ambassadors. Sanctified lips will speak words that reform, but do not exasperate. The truth is to be presented in the meekness and love of Christ.[9]

From Broken, Contrite Hearts--My brethren, let your hearts become broken and contrite. Let expressions of sympathy and love, which will not blister the tongue, flow from your lips.[10]

Spirituality in Preaching--Brother B's preaching has not been marked by the sanction of God's Spirit. He can talk fluently and make a point plain, but his preaching has lacked spirituality. His appeals have not touched the heart with a new tenderness. There has been an array of words, but the hearts of his hearers have not been quickened and melted with a sense of a Saviour's love.[11]

For Teachers, the Gentleness of Christ--I have an earnest desire that you shall every day be learning of the Great Teacher. If you will first draw nigh to God and then to your students, you can do a very precious work. If you are diligent and humble, God will daily give you knowledge and an aptitude to teach. Do your very best to impart to others the blessings He has given you.

With a deep, earnest interest to help your students, carry them over the ground of knowledge. Come as close to them as you can. Unless teachers have the love and gentleness of Christ abounding in their hearts, they will manifest too much of the spirit of a harsh, domineering schoolmaster. “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” (Jude 1:21-23)[12] **No Passionate Word or Gesture--**In educating the children and youth, teachers should not allow one passionate word or gesture to mar their work, for in so doing they

imbue the students with the same spirit which they themselves possess.[13]

No Irritation by Teachers--Instructors who are under the discipline of God receive grace and truth and light through the Holy Spirit to communicate to the children. They are under the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, and how unbecoming it would be for them to have an unkind spirit, a sharp voice, full of irritation! In this they would perpetuate their own defects in the children.[14]

No Lack of Kindness, Even to Evildoers--If the teacher, through the grace of Christ, is self-controlled, and holds the lines with a steady, patient hand, he will quell the boisterous element, keep his self-respect, and command the respect of his students. When once order is restored, let kindness, gentleness, and affection be manifested. It may be that rebellion will rise again and again, but let not the hasty temper appear. Do not speak sharply to the evildoer, and discourage a soul who is struggling with the powers of darkness.[15]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, February 16, 1897.
2. Evangelism, 636.
3. Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 121.
4. Evangelism, 168.
5. Manuscript 19b, 1890.
6. Evangelism, 174.
7. Evangelism, 207, 208.
8. Testimonies for the Church 3:218.
9. Selected Messages 1:159.
10. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1164.
11. Testimonies for the Church 3:31.
12. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 253.
13. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 170.
14. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 171.
15. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 173.

Chapter 39

Simplicity and Clarity

Words, Few but Earnest--A true educator will carry the minds of his hearers with him. His words will be few but earnest. Coming from the heart, they will be full of sympathy, and warm with the love for precious souls.[1]

Dangers of Long Words--In every school the instruction given should be as easy to understand as was that given by Christ. The use of long words confuses the mind and eclipses the beauty of the thought presented. There is need of teachers who will come close to their students and who will give clear, definite instruction, illustrating spiritual things by the things of nature and by the familiar events of everyday experience.[2]

Use of the Gospel Net--The Lord wishes you to learn how to use the gospel net. Many need to learn this art. In order for you to be successful in your work, the meshes of your net--the application

of the Scriptures--must be close, and the meaning easily discerned. Then make the most of drawing in the net. Come right to the point. Make your illustrations self-evident. However great a man's knowledge, it is of no avail unless he is able to communicate it to others. Let the pathos of your voice, its deep feeling, make its impression on hearts. Urge your students to surrender themselves to God. ...

Make your explanations clear; for I know that there are many who do not understand many of the things said to them. Let the Holy Spirit mold and fashion your speech, cleansing it from all dross. Speak as little children, remembering that there are many well advanced in years who are but little children in understanding.[3]

Close Application and Hard Study--To learn how to open the Scriptures to others in an acceptable manner, means close application and hard study. This is necessary in order to give a connected discourse in a clear, forcible way, making all the important points stand out so clear

as not to be misunderstood.[4]

Logical Sequence of Ideas--Some minds are more like an old curiosity shop than anything else. Many odd bits and ends of truth have been picked up and stored away there; but they know not how to present them in a clear, connected manner. It is the relation that these ideas have to one another that gives them value. Every idea and statement should be as closely united as the links in a chain. When a minister throws out a mass of matter before the people for them to pick up and arrange in order, his labors are lost; for there are few who will do it.[5]

A Few Essential Points at a Time--The truth is so different in its character and work from the popular errors that are preached from the pulpit, that as it is brought before the people it almost takes away their breath and senses. It is strong meat and should be dealt out judiciously; then those who listen, if you stop when you should, will be eager to hear more.

God has made His messengers the depositaries of His truth, weighty and important with eternal results. Light is to shine forth amid the moral darkness to reveal sin and error. The truth must be given point after point. It must be spoken distinctly and with clear utterance making a few essential points; then it will be as a nail fastened in a sure place by the Master of assemblies.

The preacher should labor to carry the understanding and sympathies of the people with him. Do not place the crib too high where the people cannot follow. This would not be wise generalship in teaching the truth.[6]

Things New and Old From God's Treasure House--Ministers need to have a more clear, simple manner in presenting the truth as it is in Jesus. ... Those who neglect this part of the work need to be converted themselves before venturing to give a discourse. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Jesus, with the precious truths of His Word, will be able to draw from the treasure house of God things new and old. They will not

find time to relate anecdotes; they will not strain to become orators, soaring so high that they cannot carry the people with them; but in simple language, with touching earnestness, they will present the truth as it is in Jesus.[7]

Futility of Intellectual Discourses--Ministers should present the truth in a clear, simple manner. There are among their hearers many who need a plain explanation of the steps requisite in conversion. The great masses of the people are more ignorant on this point than is supposed. Among graduates from college, eloquent orators, able statesmen, men in high positions of trust, there are many who have given their powers to other matters, and have neglected the things of greatest importance. When such men form part of a congregation, the speaker often strains every power to preach an intellectual discourse, and fails to reveal Christ. He does not show that sin is the transgression of the law. He does not make plain the way of salvation. That which would have touched the hearts of his hearers, would have been to point them to Christ dying to bring redemption

within their reach.[8]

Importance of Obedience to God's Commands--So plainly is the truth to be presented that no transgressor, hearing it, shall be excusable in failing to discern the importance of obedience to God's commands.[9]

Well-Defined, Clear Sermons--If you have the quickening grace of Christ to energize your movements, you will put earnestness into your sermons. Your subject will be clear and well-defined in your mind. You will not be lengthy in your remarks, neither will you speak hesitatingly, as though you did not yourself believe what you were saying. You must overcome slow hesitation, and undecided, sluggish movements, and learn to be minute men.

The subjects which many of our ministers present before the people are not half as connected and as clear and strong in argument as they should be.[10]

No Artificial Embellishments--God calls upon the ministers of the gospel not to seek to stretch themselves beyond their measure by bringing forward artificial embellishments, striving for the praise and applause of men, being ambitious for a vain show of intellect and eloquence....The more clearly ministers discern Christ, and catch His spirit, the more forcibly will they preach the simple truth of which Christ is the center.[11]

Praying Too Little, Studying Too Much--They [ministers] injure the work, injure the effect of the truth that they would advocate, by crowding into one discourse so much and making so many points that minds cannot always appreciate or follow them. More success would attend their labors if they riveted one or two points in the minds of the hearers and make these points of vital importance, press them home and urge upon them the danger of rejecting the light upon those points. Let the minds of the hearers distinctly understand the bearing of every point and then urge to a decision.

I was shown that the time that is consumed in so much reading and study is often worse than thrown away. A large portion of the time spent over books and in studying should be spent before God imploring Him for heavenly wisdom and for strength and power to let the truth, which they do fully understand, shine out before the people in its clearness and harmonious beauty. There is too little time spent in secret prayer and in sacred meditation. The cry of God's servants should be for the holy unction and to be clothed with salvation, that what they preach may reach hearts. Time is so short and ministers of these last days are so few that they should throw all their energies into the work, and should be in close connection with God and holy angels, that a tremendous power may be in their preaching--a compelling power, to draw every soul who is honest and loves the truth right along to embrace it.[12]

Teachings of the Chief Shepherd--On Sunday, at 11 a.m., Brother Wilson of New Zealand gave a most profitable discourse, beautiful in its simplicity, and in no way savoring of

cheapness. The more plain and simple a discourse is, the more do the teachings of the undershepherds represent the teaching of the Chief Shepherd.[13]

Danger of Soaring Too High--The preacher should endeavor to carry the understanding and sympathies of the people with him. Do not soar too high, where they cannot follow, but give the truth point after point, slowly and distinctly, making a few essential points, then it will be as a nail fastened in a sure place by the Master of assemblies. If you stop when you should, giving them no more at once than they can comprehend and profit by, they will be eager to hear more, and thus the interest will be sustained.[14]

Vital Subjects Easily Understood--Our ministers should seek to make the most favorable presentation of truth. So far as possible, let all speak the same things. Let the discourses be simple, and treating upon vital subjects that can be easily understood.[15]

Ample Facilities for Reaching People--

Ministers, in your discourses do not climb up so high that the people cannot understand what you say. I have been instructed that we get altogether too high in our representation of Bible truth. We lose much by not coming to the simplicity of true godliness. God has given us all we need to enable us to reach the souls around us, yet the reformations that were made in Christ's day as the result of the presentation of the gospel, are rare today. We need the converting power of God in our hearts to teach us simplicity in words and works.[16]

God's Word, Not Man's--Preach the truth with the meekness of simplicity, remembering that it is not your words, but the Word of God that is to cut its way to the heart.[17]

Meat in Due Season--Present the truth as it is in Jesus, with all meekness and lowliness, which means with simplicity and in sincerity, giving meat in due season, and to every man his portion of meat.[18]

Simplicity of God's Children--Men and women are wandering in the mist and fog of error. They want to know what is truth. Tell them, not in high-flown language, but with the simplicity of the children of God.[19]

Notes:

1. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 167.
2. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 261.
3. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 253, 254.
4. Letter 185, 1899.
5. Evangelism, 648, 649.
6. Letter 7, 1885.
7. Selected Messages 1:157.
8. Gospel Workers, 170.
9. Gospel Workers, 148.
10. The Review and Herald, April 6, 1886.
11. Evangelism, 181.
12. Manuscript 7, 1863.
13. Letter 82, 1895.
14. Evangelism, 177.

15. Selected Messages 1:167.
16. Manuscript 85, 1909.
17. The Review and Herald, June 13, 1912.
18. Evangelism, 432.
19. Colporteur Ministry, 72.

Chapter 40

Pure Language

Lips Touched by the Lord--To those who make so full a consecration that the Lord can place His touch upon their lips, the word is spoken, Go forth into the harvest-field. I will cooperate with you.

The minister who has received this preparation will be a power for good in the world. His words will be right words, pure and true, fraught with sympathy and love; his actions will be right actions, a help and a blessing to the weak. Christ will be to him an abiding presence, controlling thought, word, and deed.[1]

Circumspect in Word and Deed--Of all men, those who have been trusted and honored by the Lord, those who have been given special service to perform, should be circumspect in word and deed. They should be men of devotion, who, by works of righteousness and pure, true words, can lift their

fellow men to a higher level.[2]

Word Purification by the Holy Spirit--It is the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God. ... They will practice true Christian courtesy, bearing in mind that Christ, their Companion, cannot approve of harsh, unkind words or feelings. Their words will be purified. The power of speech will be regarded as a precious talent, lent them to do a high and holy work. The human agent will learn how to represent the divine Companion with whom he is associated. To that unseen Holy One he will show respect and reverence because he is wearing His yoke and is learning His pure, holy ways. Those who have faith in this divine Attendant will develop. They will be gifted with power to clothe the message of truth with a sacred beauty.[3]

Wise and Holy Words--When the Lord's voice calls, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" the Divine Spirit puts it into hearts to respond: "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8. But

bear in mind that the live coal from the altar must first touch your lips. Then the words you speak will be wise and holy words. Then you will have wisdom to know what to say and what to leave unsaid. You will not try to reveal your smartness as theologians. You will be careful not to arouse a combative spirit or excite prejudice by introducing controverted points of doctrine. You will find enough to talk about that will not excite opposition, but that will open the heart to desire a deeper knowledge of God's Word.[4]

No Haphazard Words--God's representatives upon earth should be in daily communion with Him. Their words should be select, their speech sound. The haphazard words frequently used by ministers who preach not the gospel in sincerity should be forever discarded.[5]

Sound Speech--It becomes every minister of Christ to use sound speech, which cannot be condemned.[6]

Students' Preparation as Public Speakers--

Students should be qualified to speak in an acceptable manner before congregations; and they should therefore train themselves to use pure, simple language, and to follow the best methods of speaking. Much attention should be given to the practice of reading with full, clear voice and distinct utterance, giving the proper emphasis to each word. ...

All can communicate, if they will, the grand yet simple truths regarding the mission and work of Christ. If they seek the Lord daily in earnest prayer, they will understand how to meet the people as Christ met them, adapting the instruction to their varied circumstances and understanding. The spiritual lessons regarding the kingdom of God, they should illustrate by the natural things with which their hearers are familiar. Then, as these natural objects are seen, day by day, the lesson of truth will be repeated to the mind.[7]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 23.

2. Gospel Workers, 124.
3. Testimonies for the Church 6:322.
4. Testimonies for the Church 6:325.
5. Testimonies for the Church 2:707.
6. Testimonies for the Church 2:709.
7. The Review and Herald, October 4, 1898.

Chapter 41

Earnestness and Assurance

Assurance in Presenting Precious Truth--

The Word of God must be administered with spirit and with life. It means life eternal to all who receive it. A tame, uncertain delivery will do no good. Improve in manner, voice, earnestness, and assurance, as if you knew what you were handling. Oh, faith must be grasped more, much more than it is now. We can have the most precious truths, and deliver them in such a tame, uncertain, lifeless manner in the interpretation, as to crush out from the precious meaning all the power to impress hearts and awaken consciousness, because our own hearts do not take in the solemn admonitions. Do we believe the Bible? If we do, we will reveal it.[1]

Animation in Preaching and Praying--

Bear in mind that to be a minister does not mean that you must do much preaching. Brethren, I entreat of you to keep your own souls in the love of God, and never let the wellsprings dry. A cold, joyless

discourse will kill the church. Bring animation into your words and prayers. There must be no cheap, faithless sermons given. The truth abiding in the heart, sanctifying the soul, will give you an appetite to feed on Christ, the Bread of Life, and as you partake of the heavenly manna, you will be able to say, “Come and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” Let all your energies be consecrated ability. The Lord wants you to represent the truth as it is in Jesus. Let there be nothing like striving for supremacy.[2]

Certainty Born of Heart Conviction--Do not present the truth in a formal manner, but let the heart be vitalized by the Spirit of God, and let your words be spoken with such certainty that those who hear may know that the truth is a reality to you. Your manner may be educated, and your words may be of that character that they will voice the words of Peter: “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.” With just as much assurance you may declare the

message of God's truth. Those who believe sacred, eternal truth, must put their whole soul into their efforts. We must be stirred to the very heart as we behold the fulfilling of prophecy in the closing scenes of this earth's history. As our vision extends still further into the glories of eternity--the coming of Christ with power and great glory, and the scenes of the great day of judgment--we should not remain tame and unmoved. "I saw the dead," John says, "stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." [3]

Enthusiasm in Things Real and Imaginary--

On a certain occasion, when Betterton, the celebrated actor, was dining with Dr. Sheldon, archbishop of Canterbury, the archbishop said to him, "Pray, Mr. Betterton, tell me why it is that you actors affect your audiences so powerfully by speaking of things imaginary."

"My lord," replied Betterton, "with due

submission to Your Grace, permit me to say that the reason is plain: It all lies in the power of enthusiasm. We on the stage speak of things imaginary as if they were real, and you in the pulpit speak of things real as if they were imaginary.”[4]

The Minister a Messenger from God--The minister who has learned of Christ will ever be conscious that he is a messenger of God, commissioned by Him to do a work the influence of which is to endure throughout eternity. It should not be any part of his object to call attention to himself, his learning, or his ability. His whole aim should be to bring sinners to repentance, pointing them, by both precept and example, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He should speak as one conscious of possessing power and authority from God. His discourses should have an earnestness, a fervor, a power of persuasion, that will lead sinners to take refuge in Christ.[5]

Irresistible Power to Move Hearts--The very tones of the voice, the look, the words, should

possess an irresistible power to move hearts and control minds. Jesus should be found in the heart of the minister. If Jesus is in the words and in the tones of the voice, if they are mellow with His tender love, it will prove a blessing of more value than all the riches, pleasures, and glories of the earth; for such blessings will not come and go without accomplishing a work.[6]

Living Earnestness--It is living earnestness that God requires. Ministers may have little learning from books; but if they do the best they can with their talents, if they work as they have opportunity, if they clothe their utterances in the plainest and most simple language, if they are humble men who walk in carefulness and humility, seeking for heavenly wisdom, working for God from the heart, and actuated by one predominating motive--love for Christ and the souls for whom He has died--they will be listened to by men of even superior ability and talents. There will be a charm in the simplicity of the truths they present. Christ is the greatest Teacher that the world has ever known.[7]

Energy in the Presentation of the Bible--We must cultivate an abiding sense of our own inefficiency and helplessness and rely wholly on Jesus. This should keep us individually calm and steadfast in words and deportment. Excitement in the speaker is not power but weakness. Earnestness and energy are essential in presenting Bible truth, the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation.[8]

Size of Audience Not Most Important--Remember that you are cooperating with divine agencies--agencies that never fail. Speak with as much earnestness, faith, and interest as if there were thousands present to listen to your voice.[9]

Decided, Stirring Tones--To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of pardon through Christ are to be carried. Not with tame, lifeless utterances is the message to be given, but with clear, decided, stirring utterances. Hundreds are waiting for the warning to escape for their lives.[10]

Positive Presentations--Cultivate earnestness and positiveness in addressing the people. Your subject matter may be excellent, and just what the people need, but you would do well to mingle a positiveness with persuasive entreaties. ...

Present the plain “Thus saith the Lord” with authority, and exalt the wisdom of God in the written Word. Bring the people to a decision; keep the voice of the Bible ever before them. Tell them you speak that which you do know, and testify that which is truth, because God has spoken it. Let your preaching be short and right to the point, and then at the proper time call for a decision. Do not present the truth in a formal manner, but let the heart be vitalized by the Spirit of God, and let your words be spoken with such certainty that those who hear may know that the truth is a reality to you.[11]

Harm in Tame Preaching--An unconsecrated minister, presenting the truth in an unimpassioned manner, his own soul unmoved by the truths he speaks to others, will do only harm. Every effort he

makes only lowers the standard.[12]

Listlessness of Manner--Some preach these truths, of such weighty importance, in so listless a manner that they cannot affect the people. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." [13]

The Belittling of God's Message--More ability, tact, and wisdom are needed in presenting the Word and feeding the flock of God than many suppose. A dry, lifeless presentation of the truth belittles the most sacred message that God has given to men. [14]

Consumers, Not Producers--Those who preach the gospel without putting the whole being, heart, mind, soul, and strength, into the work, are consumers and not producers. God calls for men who realize that they must put forth earnest effort, men who bring thought, zeal, prudence, capability, and the attributes of Christ's character into their work. The saving of souls is a vast work, which calls for the employment of every talent, every gift

of grace. Those engaged in this work should constantly increase in efficiency. They should be filled with an earnest desire to have their power for service strengthened, realizing that they will be weak without a constantly increasing supply of grace. They should seek to attain larger and still larger results in their work. When this is the experience of our workers, fruit will be seen. Many souls will be brought into the truth.[15]

No Sleepy Message at This Time--At Christ's first advent the angels broke the silence of the night with acclamations of praise, and proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth; good will toward men." He is soon to come again with power and great glory. Those who are not wedded to the world will realize that the time demands something more than a weak, faint, methodical discourse. They will see that there must be earnestness and power accompanying the Word, which will arouse the powers of hell to oppose the warnings. God designs to come to the people to awaken men out of their carnal security, that they may prepare themselves for the great event right

upon us. The promise is, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” God will accept no sleepy, tame message at this time.[16]

Notes:

1. Letter 1a, 1896.
2. Letter 1a, 1896.
3. Letter 8, 1895.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 255.
5. Gospel Workers, 172, 173.
6. Testimonies for the Church 3:32.
7. Selected Messages 2:152.
8. Selected Messages 2:59.
9. Gospel Workers, 167.
10. Gospel Workers, 29.
11. Evangelism, 296.
12. Testimonies for the Church 2:344.
13. Testimonies for the Church 2:504.
14. Testimonies for the Church 6:47, 48.

15. Manuscript 90, 1904.

16. Letter 27, 1894.

Chapter 42

Conversational Manner

Less Preaching, More Teaching--It is not preaching alone that must be done. Far less preaching is needed. More time should be devoted to patiently educating others, giving the hearers opportunity to express themselves. It is instruction that many need, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.[1]

Words From Hearts Warm With Love--Let not your zeal be of that order to preach, but to minister. Speak words from hearts warmed with the love of Jesus.[2]

Co-Laborers With Jesus Christ--You need at camp meetings to labor to teach in different lines as Christ did. Few sermons were preached by Christ. He was the great Teacher, and crowds gathered wherever He went to listen to His instruction, and He taught as one having authority, and knew that He was teaching the truth. He spake as never man

spake.

Ministers must be educated to work after the divine Model. Many of you love to teach, but you have not taken up the work of teaching in the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. The people will listen to sermons which often are double the length they should be, and they can retain but few points of the discourse because their minds have been all the time on temporal, earthly things. Therefore they hear with such earthly thoughts that the truth of God does not make any impression. It does not reach to the very depths of the soul, and the plowshare of truth does not go deep enough. Then they go from the meeting and fall back where they were before. The sermons being often double the length they ought to be, the words lose their force upon the minds of the hearers. Other things come in to choke the seeds of truth.

The truth of God must be made impressive point by point. It is for their eternal interest to know. So deeply must the seed of truth be planted that it will become firm, and bear fruit to the glory

of God. ...

Now when the truth is being presented, there are applications that need to be made and appeals to press it right home for a decision, for an important decision. Who is there when this truth is being presented? Somebody besides you. The devil and his angels are there to catch away the seeds of truth. Are these all? Angels of God and Jesus Christ are on the ground. Then what? When you seek to impress the truth upon the heart, you will be a co-laborer with Jesus Christ.[3]

Not Sermonizing, but Instructing--People are suffering for want of the knowledge of truth. They do not understand what they must do to be saved. Unless the gospel is preached clearly, simply, over and over again, line upon line, precept upon precept, Satan will cast his shadow between the sinner and God. God will be represented as a stern, unforgiving Judge. Christ did not sermonize. He gave instruction as a divine Teacher. He taught in simplicity, and thus His ambassadors are to present the truth, making everything connected with the

salvation of the soul plain and easy to be understood. The message must be given to the world that the way of repentance and faith is now made plain through Him who had power to lay down His life and to take it again. “He that believeth on Me,” Christ declared, “though he were dead, yet shall he live.”[4]

Conversational Bible Study at Camp Meetings--[This impromptu dialogue between Ellen White and her son, W. C. White, took place while she was giving a talk to the General Conference Committee at Lake Goguac, near Battle Creek, Michigan, July 14, 1890.] Elder White: “I have heard you say, Mother, that we should have more teaching and less preaching; less preaching and more teaching. Speaking of the matter of getting the people together and having Bible readings.”

Ellen White: “That was the way in Christ’s day. He would speak to the people, and they would call out a question as to what that meant. He was a teacher of the people.”

Elder White: “Then at one time I remember very distinctly about your saying that, ‘as we approach nearer the end I have seen our camp meetings with less preaching and more Bible study; little groups all over the ground with their Bibles in their hands, and different ones leading out in a free, conversational study of the Scriptures.’”

Ellen White: “That is the work that has been shown me, that our camp meetings would increase in success and interest. There are those that want more definite light. There are some that take [a] longer time to get hold of things and get what you really mean. If they could have the privilege of having it made a little plainer they would see that, and would catch hold of that. And it would be like a nail fastened in a sure place, and it would be written on the tablets of their hearts.

“When the great throngs would gather about Christ, He gave His lessons of instruction. Then the disciples in different places and different positions after the discourse would repeat what Christ had

said. The people had misapplied Christ's words; and the disciples would tell the people what the Scriptures said, and what Christ said the Scriptures said. They were learning to be educators. They were next to Christ, getting lessons from Him and giving them to the people.”[5]

Instruction in the People's Homes--God's servants have a great work to do in addition to preaching in the pulpit. In the work of the ministry there is altogether too much preaching, and too little real teaching the lessons of the Bible. Our ministers should visit the members of the church more than they do, to talk and pray with them. Their hearts need to be drawn out to those in their charge.

When our ministers are visiting in 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.

Often a minister is obliged to speak in a crowded, overheated room. The listeners become drowsy, their senses are half paralyzed, and it is almost impossible for them to grasp the subjects presented. If instead of preaching to them, the speaker would try to teach them, asking them questions, and speaking in a conversational tone, their minds would be aroused to activity, and they would be able more clearly to comprehend the truths opened before them. Their understanding would take hold of the living reality of the truths necessary for the quickening of the perception and for growth in knowledge. As he goes over his discourse, point by point, allowing his hearers to ask questions and make suggestions, he will himself obtain a better idea of his subject. Unless the great truths of God's Word are clearly opened before the understanding, they cannot be comprehended by the mind, or put into practice in the life.[6]

Notes:

1. Evangelism, 338.
2. Letter 1a, 1896.
3. Manuscript 11, 1891.
4. Manuscript 147, 1897.
5. Manuscript 19b, 1890.
6. Manuscript 41, 1903.

Chapter 43

No Harsh Words nor Debating Spirit

Use of Truth As a Scourge--In the past you have presented the truth in a fierce way, using it as if it were a scourge. This has not glorified the Lord. You have given the people the rich treasures of God's Word, but your manner has been so condemnatory that they have turned from them. You have not taught the truth in the way that Christ taught it. You present it in a way that mars its influence. ... Your heart needs to be filled with the converting grace of Christ.[1]

No Help by Harshness--Preach the truth, but restrain the words which show a harsh spirit; for such words cannot help or enlighten anyone.[2]

Effect of One Drop of Gall--Every sermon you preach, every article you write, may be all true; but one drop of gall in it will be poison to the

hearer or the reader. Because of that drop of poison, one will discard all your good and acceptable words. Another will feed on the poison; for he loves such harsh words; he follows your example, and talks just as you talk. Thus the evil is multiplied.[3]

Our Tongue As the Pen of a Ready Writer--

Be careful that you do not rail once. We want the Holy Spirit of God to be life and voice for us. Our tongue should be as the pen of a ready writer, because the Spirit of God is speaking through the human agent. When you use that twit and fling, you have stirred in some of yourself, and we do not want anything of that mixture.[4]

On Guard Every Moment--Young preachers, and men who have once been ministers, who have been coarse and rough in their manners, making expressions in their conversation which were not perfectly modest and chaste, are not fit to engage in this work until they give evidence of an entire reform. One word spoken unadvisedly may do more harm than a series of meetings held by them

will do good. They leave the standard of truth, which should be ever exalted, lowered to the dust before the community. Their converts generally come up no higher than the standard raised for them by the ministers. Men who are standing between the living and the dead should be just right. The minister should not be off his guard for a single moment. He is laboring to elevate others by bringing them up upon the platform of truth. Let him show to others that the truth has done something for him. He should see the evil of these careless, rough, vulgar expressions, and should put away and despise everything of this character. Unless he does this, his converts will pattern after him.[5]

Closed and Locked Doors--Let everyone bear in mind that we are in no case to invite persecution. We are not to use words that are harsh and cutting. Keep them out of every article written, drop them out of every address given. Let the Word of God do the cutting, the rebuking; let finite men hide and abide in Jesus Christ. Let the Spirit of Christ appear. Let all be guarded in their words, lest they

place those not of our faith in deadly opposition against us, and give Satan an opportunity to use the unadvised words to hedge up our way. “Do nothing before the time.” When God gives a close, cutting message it will be His work, not prompted by the impulse of finite beings. Man’s cutting and slashing with the two-edged sword will hedge up our way, so that we shall find doors closed and locked against us.[6]

No Reference to Opponents’ Claims--The Holy Spirit will apply the word that is spoken in love to the soul. But let it be understood that no good is accomplished when the voice or the pen expresses that which is harsh, or even expresses the truth in a harsh manner. Let the region of human passion be passed by, lest the truth be misapprehended, misinterpreted, and misconstrued. The truth will have quickening power that is spoken under the full influence of the grace of Christ. God’s plan is first to reach the heart. Speak the truth and let Him carry forward the reformatory power and principle; but let us not work according to our own individual impulse.

What matter of good can be accomplished for souls who are in darkness by castigating them with denunciations? Those who have not a knowledge of the truth, who are blinded and warped in judgment, do not understand what it means. Speak the truth in love. Let the tenderness of Christ come in to the soul. Make no special reference to what opponents say, but let the truth alone be spoken--“It is written.” The truth will cut to the quick. Let not your own spirit and passions mingle with the truth as common fire with the sacred flame. Plainly unfold the Word in all its impressiveness.

Many who are now the bitterest opponents of truth are acting up to their honest convictions of duty, but they will yet see the truth, and become its warm advocates. Those who now treat them with ridicule, who manifest a harsh spirit toward them, will fall under temptation, and bring reproach upon the cause of God, and cause the loss of souls through their indiscretion. Many who go into the field at the call made at the eleventh hour, will through the grace of Christ so present the truth, that

they will be accounted first.

We are not to voice inconsistency. It is our work to advance the light, to inculcate ideas in the spirit of meekness and dependence upon God. Let us seek to become overcomers, and thus receive the overcomers' reward. Do all in your power to reflect light, to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, but abstain from speaking irritating and provoking words. Present the truth in its simplicity, for it must be confessed before man as it involves their eternal interest.[7]

No Combative Armor--The combative armor, the debating spirit, must be laid off. If we would be Christlike we must reach men where they are.[8]

Inappropriate Debate--We have the most solemn message of truth ever borne to the world. This truth is more and more respected by unbelievers because it cannot be controverted. In view of this fact, our young men become self-confident and self-inflated. They take the truths which have been brought out by other minds, and

without study or earnest prayer meet opponents and engage in contests, indulging in sharp speeches and witticisms, flattering themselves that this is doing the work of a gospel minister. In order to be fitted for God's work, these men need as thorough a conversion as Paul experienced. Ministers must be living representatives of the truth they preach. They must have greater spiritual life, characterized by greater simplicity.[9]

More Argument, More Opposition--Often, as you seek to present the truth, opposition will be aroused; but if you seek to meet the opposition with argument, you will only multiply it, and that you cannot afford to do. Hold to the affirmative.[10]

Limitations of Debate--Never should you enter a discussion where so much is at stake, relying upon your aptness to handle strong arguments. If it cannot be well avoided, enter the conflict, but enter upon it with firm trust in God and in the spirit of humility, in the spirit of Jesus, who has bidden you learn of Him, who is meek and

lowly in heart. And then in order to glorify God and exemplify the character of Christ, you should never take unlawful advantage of your opponent. Lay aside sarcasm and playing upon words. Remember that you are in a combat with Satan and his angels, as well as with the man.[11]

No Sign of Self-Sufficiency--Speak no word, do no deed, that will confirm any in unbelief.

If anyone shall seek to draw the workers into debate or controversy on political or other questions, take no heed to either persuasion or challenge. Carry forward the work of God firmly and strongly, but in the meekness of Christ and as quietly as possible. Let no human boasting be heard. Let no sign of self-sufficiency be made. Let it be seen that God has called us to handle sacred trusts; preach the Word, be diligent, earnest, and fervent.[12]

Debating Ministers Not Good Shepherds--Some ministers who have been long in the work of preaching present truth have made great failures in

their labors. They have educated themselves as combatants. They have studied out argumentative subjects for the object of discussion, and these subjects which they have prepared they love to use. The truth of God is plain, clear, and conclusive. It is harmonious and, in contrast with error, shines with clearness and beauty. Its consistency commends it to the judgment of every heart that is not filled with prejudice. Our preachers present the arguments upon the truth, which have been made ready for them, and, if there are no hindrances, the truth bears away the victory. But I was shown that in many cases the poor instrument takes the credit of the victory gained, and the people, who are more earthly than spiritual, praise and honor the instrument, while the truth of God is not exalted by the victory it gained.

Those who love to engage in discussion generally lose their spirituality. They do not trust in God as they should. They have the theory of the truth prepared to whip an opponent. The feelings of their own unsanctified hearts have prepared many sharp, close things to use as a snap to their whip to

irritate and provoke their opponent. The Spirit of Christ has no part in this. While furnished with conclusive arguments, the debater soon thinks that he is strong enough to triumph over his opponent, and God is left out of the matter. Some of our ministers have made discussion their principal business. When in the midst of the excitement raised by discussion, they seem nerved up, and feel strong and talk strong; and in the excitement many things pass with the people as all right, which in themselves are decidedly wrong and a shame to him who was guilty of uttering words so unbecoming a Christian minister.

These things have a bad influence on ministers who are handling sacred, elevated truths, truths which are to prove as a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, to those who hear them. Generally the influence of discussions upon our ministers is to make them self-sufficient and exalted in their own estimation. This is not all. Those who love to debate are unfitted for being pastors to the flock. They have trained their minds to meet opponents and to say sarcastic things, and

they cannot come down to meet hearts that are sorrowing and need to be comforted.

They have also dwelt so much upon the argumentative that they have neglected the practical subjects that the flock of God need. They have but little knowledge of the sermons of Christ, which enter into the everyday life of the Christian, and they have but little disposition to study them. They have risen above the simplicity of the work. When they were little in their own eyes, God helped them; angels of God ministered unto them and made their labors highly successful in convincing men and women of the truth. But in the training of their minds for discussion they frequently become coarse and rough. They lose the interest and tender sympathy which should ever attend the efforts of a shepherd of Christ.

Debating ministers are generally disqualified to help the flock where they most need help. Having neglected practical religion in their own hearts and lives, they cannot teach it to the flock. Unless there is an excitement, they do not know how to labor;

they seem shorn of their strength. If they try to speak, they do not seem to know how to present a subject that is proper for the occasion. When they should present a subject which will feed the flock of God, and which will reach and melt hearts, they go back to some of the old stereotyped matter and go through the arranged arguments, which are dry and uninteresting. Thus, instead of light and life, they bring darkness to the flock and also to their own souls.[13]

Notes:

1. Evangelism, 173, 174.
2. Evangelism, 575, 576.
3. Testimonies for the Church 6:123.
4. Evangelism, 172.
5. Testimonies for the Church 1:445, 446.
6. Manuscript 95, 1894.
7. Letter 36, 1895.
8. Evangelism, 249.
9. Testimonies for the Church 4:446.
10. Testimonies for the Church 9:147.
11. Testimonies for the Church 1:626.

12. Testimonies for the Church 6:122.
13. Testimonies for the Church 3:215, 216.

Chapter 44

Brevity

Shorter Sermons, More Ministering--Long sermons fail to do good, for both the speaker and the hearer become weary. Discourses should be shortened, and the physical and mental powers of the minister should be preserved for ministering, and a far greater work could be accomplished.[1]

Tenfold Greater Results--If our ministers would preach short discourses, right to the point, and then educate the brethren and sisters to work, and lay the burden upon them, the ministers themselves would be saved from exhaustion, the people would gain spiritual strength by the effort put forth, and the result would be tenfold greater than now is seen.[2]

Sermons Shorter by Half--Ministers give too much time to preaching, and exhaust their vital forces....It is the many long discourses that weary. One half of the gospel food presented would tell to

much better advantage.[3]

Bodily Organs Overtaxed by Long Speeches--

- There is one matter about which I wish to caution you. In addressing a congregation, do not speak for too long a time; for thus you put a heavy strain on the delicate organs brought into action. I have to pledge myself not to speak too long; for I know that if I do, stomach and lungs and kidneys will be overtaxed, and suffering will result.[4]

Pleasant Incense to God--Let the power and glow of the truth find expression in appropriate words. Express the joy and gratitude that well up from the heart as you see of the travail of your soul in the conversion of sinners. But in speaking to the people, remember to stop in season. Do not weary yourself so that you become nervous and debilitated, for the work you will need to do in addition to the preaching, requires tact and ability. It will be a potent agency for good, as pleasant incense rising to God.[5]

A Reserve of Physical and Mental Power--

Never use up all your vitality in a discourse so long and wearisome that you have not a reserve of physical and mental power to meet inquiring minds, and patiently seek to remove their doubts, and to establish their faith. Make it manifest that we are handling weighty argument which you know cannot be controverted. Teach by precept and example that the truth is precious; that it brings light to your understanding and courage to your heart. Keep a cheerful countenance. You will do this if you present the truth in love. Ever bear in mind that eternal interests are at stake, and be prepared to engage in personal labor for those who desire help. ...

In plain, simple language, tell every soul what he must do to be saved.[6]

Long Sermons a Trial to Speaker and Hearers--Those who shall be mouthpieces for God should know that their lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar, and present the truth in the demonstration of the Spirit. But lengthy discourses are a taxation to the speaker and a

taxation to the hearers who have to sit so long. One half the matter presented would be of more benefit to the hearer than the large mass poured forth by the speaker. That which is spoken in the first hour is of far more value if the sermon closes then than the words that are spoken in an added half hour. There is a burying up of the matter that has been presented.

This subject has been opened to me again and again that our ministers were making mistakes in talking so long as to wear away the first forcible impression made upon the hearers. So large a mass of matter is presented, which they cannot possibly retain and digest, that all seems confused.[7]

Short Sermon, Testimony Service--The preaching service should generally be short so that an opportunity may be given to those who love God to express their gratitude and adoration. Prayer and praise offered to God by His believing children honor and glorify His name.[8]

Short Messages, Often Repeated--Let the

message for this time be presented, not in long, labored discourses, but in short talks, right to the point. Lengthy sermons tax the strength of the speaker and the patience of his hearers. If the speaker is one who feels the importance of his message, he will need to be especially careful lest he overtax his physical powers, and give the people more than they can remember.

Do not think, when you have gone over a subject once, that your hearers will retain in their minds all that you have presented. There is danger of passing too rapidly from point to point. Give short lessons, in plain, simple language, and let them be often repeated. Short sermons will be remembered far better than long ones. Our speakers should remember that the subjects they are presenting may be new to some of their hearers; therefore the principal points should be gone over again and again.[9]

The Losing of a Religious Interest--Long discourses and tedious prayers are positively injurious to a religious interest and fail to carry

conviction to the consciences of the people. This propensity for speech-making frequently dampens a religious interest that might have produced great results.[10]

A Little at a Time--Present the truth to the people in its true importance and sacredness, and be careful not to give them too large a portion in one discourse. It will be lost upon them if you do. Lengthy speeches detract from the efficiency of your labors. To those who are ignorant of the truth, your teaching is new and strange, and they do not readily apprehend it. There is danger of pouring into their minds a mass of matter which they cannot possibly digest. "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." We need to study His method of teaching. We have the most important and decided testimony for the world, and we must give the people short discourses, in plain and simple language. Do not think, because you have gone over a subject once, that you can pass right on to other points, and the hearers retain all that has been

presented.[11]

More Emphasis on Bible Reading--Avoid lengthy sermons. The people cannot retain one half of the discourses which they hear. Give short talks and more Bible readings. This is the time to make every point as plain as mileposts.[12]

Pure Wheat Thoroughly Winnowed--Preach the truth in its simplicity, but let your discourses be short. Dwell decidedly on a few important points.... Keep decidedly to a few points. Give the people pure wheat thoroughly winnowed from all chaff. Do not let your discourses embrace so much that weakness shall be seen in the place of solid argument. Present the truth as it is in Jesus, that those who hear may receive the very best impression.[13]

Effect of Dry Words--Many make a mistake in their preaching in not stopping while the interest is up. They go on speechifying until the interest that had risen in the minds of the hearers dies out and the people are really wearied with words of no

special weight or interest. Stop before you get there. Stop when you have nothing of special importance to say. Do not go on with dry words that only excite prejudice and do not soften the heart. You want to be so united to Christ that your words will melt and burn their way to the soul. Mere prosy talk is insufficient for this time. Arguments are good, but there may be too much of the argumentative and too little of the spirit and life of God.[14]

Better Preparation, Shorter Discourses--The discourses given upon present truth are full of important matter, and if these discourses are carefully considered before being presented to the people, if they are condensed and do not cover too much ground, if the Spirit of the Master goes with the utterances, no one will be left in darkness, no one will have cause to complain of being unfed. The preparation, both in preacher and hearer, has very much to do with the result.

I will here quote a few words that have come under my notice just now: "I always know by the

length of Cannon's sermon whether he has been much from home during the week," said one of his flock. "When carefully studied, his discourses are of a moderate length, but it is almost impossible for his hearers to forget the teachings conveyed in them. When he has had no time for preparation, his sermons are unreasonably long, and it is equally impossible to get anything out of them which will stick to the memory."

Another able minister was asked how long he was accustomed to preach. "When I prepare thoroughly, half an hour; when only partially, an hour; but when I enter the pulpit without previous preparation, I go on for any length of time you like; in fact, I never know when to stop."

Here is another forcible statement: "A good shepherd," says a writer, "should always have abundance of bread in his scrip, and his dog under command. The dog is his zeal, which he must lead, order, and moderate. His scrip full of bread is his mind full of useful knowledge, and he should ever

be in readiness to give nourishment to his flock.”[15]

Needless Expenditure of Vitality--Some pray too long and too loud, which greatly exhausts their feeble strength and needlessly expends their vitality; others frequently make their discourses onethird or one-half longer than they should. In so doing they become excessively weary, the interest of the people decreases before the discourse closes, and much is lost to them, for they cannot retain it. One-half that was said would have been better than more. Although all the matter may be important, the success would be much greater were the praying and talking less lengthy. The result would be reached without so great weariness. They are needlessly using up their strength and vitality, which, for the good of the cause, it is so necessary to retain. It is the long-protracted effort, after laboring to the point of weariness, which wears and breaks.[16]

Long Prayers Not a Part of the Gospel--The long prayers made by some ministers have been a

great failure. Praying to great length, as some do, is all out of place. They injure the throat and vocal organs, and then they talk of breaking down by their hard labor. They injure themselves when it is not called for. Many feel that praying injures their vocal organs more than talking. This is in consequence of the unnatural position of the body, and the manner of holding the head. They can stand and talk, and not feel injured. The position in prayer should be perfectly natural. Long praying wearies, and is not in accordance with the gospel of Christ. Half or even quarter of an hour is altogether too long. A few minutes' time is long enough to bring your case before God and tell Him what you want; and you can take the people with you and not weary them out and lessen their interest in devotion and prayer. They may be refreshed and strengthened, instead of exhausted.

A mistake has been made by many in their religious exercises in long praying and long preaching, upon a high key, with a forced voice, in an unnatural strain and an unnatural tone. The minister has needlessly wearied himself and really

distressed the people by hard, labored exercise, which is all unnecessary. Ministers should speak in a manner to reach and impress the people. The teachings of Christ were impressive and solemn; His voice was melodious. And should not we, as well as Christ, study to have melody in our voices?[17]

Specific Nature of Public Prayer--The prayers offered by ministers previous to their discourses are frequently long and inappropriate. They embrace a whole round of subjects that have no reference to the necessities of the occasion or the wants of the people. Such prayers are suitable for the closet, but should not be offered in public. The hearers become weary and long for the minister to close. Brethren, carry the people with you in your prayers. Go to your Saviour in faith, tell Him what you need on that occasion. Let the soul go out after God with intense longing for the blessing needed at that time.[18]

Longer Secret Prayers, Short Public Prayers--Long prayers are tiring to those who

hear, and do not prepare the people to listen to the instruction that is to follow.

It is often because secret prayer is neglected that long, tedious prayers are offered in public. Let not ministers go over in their petitions a week of neglected duties, hoping to atone for their neglect and to pacify conscience. Such prayers frequently result in bringing others down to a low level of spirituality.[19]

For Children, Frequency Better Than Length--Those who instruct children should avoid tedious remarks. Short remarks and to the point will have a happy influence. If much is to be said, make up for briefness by frequency. A few words of interest now and then will be more beneficial than to have it all at once. Long speeches burden the small minds of children. Too much talk will lead them to loathe even spiritual instruction, just as overeating burdens the stomach and lessens the appetite, leading even to a loathing of food. The minds of the people may be glutted with too much speechifying. Labor for the church, but especially

for the youth, should be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Give minds time to digest the truths you feed them. Children must be drawn toward heaven, not rashly, but very gently.[20]

Only the Best Quality--Teacher, weed from your talks all that is not of the highest and best quality. Keep before the students those sentiments only that are essential. Never should the physician, minister, or teacher prolong his talks until the alpha is forgotten in long-drawn-out assertions that are not of the least benefit. When this is done, the mind is swamped with a multitude of words that it cannot retain. Let the talks given be short and right to the point.[21]

Teachers' Words Few and Well Chosen--Teachers, meet with your classes. Pray with them, and teach them how to pray. Let the heart be softened, and the petitions short and simple, but earnest. Let your words be few and well chosen; and let them learn from your lips and your example that the truth of God must be rooted in their hearts

or they cannot stand the test of temptation. We want to see whole classes of young people being converted to God, and growing up useful members of the church.[22]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, September 2, 1890.
2. The Signs of the Times, May 17, 1883.
3. Evangelism, 658.
4. Letter 75, 1904.
5. SpT Series A, No. 7, Page 12.
6. SpT Series A, No. 7, Page 8.
7. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 256.
8. Manuscript 32a, 1894.
9. Gospel Workers, 167, 168.
10. Testimonies for the Church 4:261.
11. SpT Series A, No. 7, Pages 6, 7.
12. Evangelism, 439.
13. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 310.
14. Testimonies for the Church 3:419.
15. Evangelism, 175, 176.

16. Testimonies for the Church 2:116, 117.
17. Testimonies for the Church 2:617.
18. Testimonies for the Church 5:201.
19. Gospel Workers, 176.
20. Testimonies for the Church 2:420.
21. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,
403.
22. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 125.

Chapter 45

Speed and Tone

Correction of Rapid Speech--Rapidly of speech can and should be corrected. The teacher must learn daily in the school of Christ, that he may speak in such a way as to make the best and most lasting impression upon his hearers. The appointed guardian of truth, he must conscientiously guard the sacred treasures. He is not to gather only a limited number of surface truths, but is to purchase the field, that he may possess the treasure it contains. He is to seek to improve in methods of labor, and make the very best use of the organs of speech. If the words of truth are of sufficient importance to be spoken before an audience, they are of sufficient importance to be spoken distinctly. The guidance of the Spirit never leads to indistinctness of speech. The Spirit takes the things of God and presents them through the human instrument to the people. Then let them come from our lips in the most perfect manner possible.[1]

Errors of Volume and Speed--The Lord designs that every minister shall reach perfection in his work, overcoming everything in voice, in attitude, in manner of address, which would lessen his influence. This it is his duty to do. "Be ye therefore perfect," Christ says, "even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

It is natural for us to expect more from the ministration of the man whose manner of address and tone of voice is attractive than from him whose ways do not please. Two men may handle the same Scriptures and bear a full gospel testimony; one, because he has been careful to overcome his defective pronunciation, because he has learned to control his voice, not allowing it to swell to a high key, may be a most successful worker; the other may have a knowledge of the Word, yet he leaves an impression upon his audience that is not agreeable. He appears excited, and all who hear him wish that he would calm down and talk earnestly, but calmly and unexcitedly. By talking in

a high key, the speaker detracts considerably from his usefulness. There are others who talk so low that their words can scarcely be heard. Another laborer will speak hurriedly, rushing his words one upon another. Half that he says is lost, for the hearer cannot take in the precious words coming from his lips. These are defects which should be overcome.

The habit should be acquired of speaking slowly, yet earnestly and solemnly, with all the assurance which the Word of God can give. Then the hearer gets the benefit of every sentence. Every word is spoken distinctly, and makes its impression upon the minds. Rapid speaking and pitching the voice to a high key is an imperfection which every one should overcome if he would make the most favorable impression when bearing the message from God to the world. Let the Word of God come as a savor of life unto life.

If God's servants will consider this matter rationally, if they will place themselves under the control of sound reason and good judgment, they

will see that these errors need not be perpetuated. They will see that such defects can be overcome, and their efforts in the pulpit be of far greater advantage to the hearers, and far less taxing to themselves. Every minister should bear in mind that he is giving to the people the message which God has given him, and that this word involves eternal interests.[2]

Truth at Half Value--Speak the truth in love and in pity for those who turn the truth to fables. Bear in mind the fact that the Lord Jesus is present in your assemblies. He would have you manifest dignity, calmness, and composure of spirit. When you rush one word right upon another, half the power is taken out of your discourse.[3]

Ellen White's Voice Instruction From God--I have words of caution to give you, which I am repeating to you in the night season. I was saying this: "I have a message for you from the Lord. Cultivate your vocal organs. This is your privilege and duty. The voice is a most precious treasure. You often speak too hurriedly. Words are crowded

too quickly upon words, and your utterance lacks the clear distinctness that it should have.”

Speaking to large congregations as you do, it is your duty to give your vocal organs all the relief possible. When speaking, take deep, full inspirations of air. Use the muscles of the abdomen, and thus put upon them the burden you are now placing upon the throat and lungs.

The Lord would not have you injure your vocal organs by a long, continuous strain. Your words will be much more forcible if you give your lungs more air and speak fewer words. When you are speaking, you need to give time to taking full, deep inspirations. Bring the muscles of the abdomen into action. Stand straight, breathe deep, and speak your words with as much force as you please.

I was taught this lesson when my throat and lungs were so much affected that I could not breathe without suffering. No human friend gave me any hint of what to do in order to improve, but the great Medical Missionary, whom I love and

obey, told me what to do. The directions given me, I give you. The importance of voice culture was impressed upon me, and ever since I have tried to impress this upon others. Let our ministers speak slowly, taking in full inspirations of air, and there will be a melody in their voices that is now heard in the voices of but few, because it is hard to change wrong habits for right ones.

God would have His workers treat their vocal organs with special care, as a precious gift from Him. These organs are not to be abused by overtaxation. Let great care be shown in their use. Then the discourses given will be more impressive, and those who speak will be enabled to do more work for the Master. There are men who have gone down to the grave because they did not take pains to be in harmony with nature's laws in their use of the vocal organs.

The Lord would have His messengers guard sacredly their health and strength. They are not to sacrifice their God-given organs by misusing them. One organ is not to be overstrained, made to bear a

burden of abuse that will bring disease and cut short the usefulness of the workers.

The Lord would have you improve in speech by placing the burden where it belongs, upon the muscles of the chest and abdomen. The throat is only the channel for the words. Speak slowly and breathe deeply. This will enable you to throw out your words with distinctness and volume, while the throat and lungs, instead of being injured, will be strengthened to resist consumptive tendencies.

It is your privilege to take lessons in voice culture, if possible. Voice culture is a study that should find a place in every institution for the education of the youth. Especially is this study essential for those who are preparing themselves to labor as teachers or ministers. In every study the importance of speaking slowly and distinctly, and of placing the burden upon the muscles of the abdomen, should be made prominent. This line of work should be made a specialty in every school. The students should be taught to stand straight, to breathe deeply, and to give the proper emphasis to

important words and sentences. ...

Think of these suggestions. Give them due attention, for the preservation of your life demands this. The human agent is to do all in his power to preserve his health and strength. The minister of the gospel should give the organs of speech special care, giving the throat every advantage, so that it shall not become irritated. He must take time to rest. Then his vocal organs will not be so overworked that they will become diseased beyond remedy.

I must urge you to exercise discretion. You talk hurriedly, and the throat and lungs become wearied and irritated. Elder D was a man of great ability. I did my best to persuade him to be careful of his health, but he would not follow my advice. He said that he could not enjoy freedom in speaking if he kept the rules which he knew to be essential to the health of his vocal organs. The force of habit was so strong that he did not change. When he was dying, he sent for my husband and me to come and pray for him. While we were with him, he said,

“Oh, Sister White, I need not now be dying had I heeded the warnings that you gave me.”[4]

Noise and Hurry No Evidence of God’s Presence--Some ministers have fallen into the error that they cannot have liberty in speaking unless they raise their voices to a high pitch and talk loud and fast. Such should understand that noise and loud, hurried speaking are not evidence of the presence of the power of God. It is not the power of the voice that makes the lasting impression. Ministers should be Bible students, and should thoroughly furnish themselves with the reasons of our faith and hope, and then, with full control of the voice and feelings, they should present these in such a manner that the people can calmly weigh them and decide upon the evidences given. And as ministers feel the force of the arguments which they present in the form of solemn, testing truth, they will have zeal and earnestness according to knowledge.[5]

False Inspiration--Some seem to think they must race right straight along or else they will lose

the inspiration and the people will lose the inspiration. If that is inspiration, let them lose it, and the sooner the better.[6]

Distraction by Physical Antics--There are also fanatical ministers, who, in attempting to preach Christ, storm, halloo, jump up and down, and pound the desk before them, as if this bodily exercise profited anything. Such antics lend no force to the truths uttered, but, on the contrary, disgust men and women of calm judgment and elevated views. It is the duty of men who give themselves to the ministry to leave all coarseness and boisterous conduct outside the desk at least.[7]

Whining Tone Not Proof of Humility--There is another class that address the people in a whining tone. Their hearts are not softened by the Spirit of God, and they think they must make an impression by the appearance of humility. Such a course does not exalt the gospel ministry, but brings it down and degrades it. Ministers should present the truth warm from glory. They should speak in such a manner as rightly to represent

Christ and preserve the dignity becoming His ministers.[8]

Inaudible Prayers a Joy to Satan--In the social meeting there is special need of clear, distinct utterance, that all may hear the testimonies borne and be benefited by them. Difficulties are removed and help is given as in social meeting God's people relate their experiences. But too often the testimonies are borne with faulty, indistinct utterance, and it is impossible to gain a correct idea of what is said. Thus the blessing is often lost.

Let those who pray and those who speak pronounce their words properly and speak in clear, distinct, even tones. Prayer, if properly offered, is a power for good. It is one of the means used by the Lord to communicate to the people the precious treasures of truth. But prayer is not what it should be, because of the defective voices of those who utter it. Satan rejoices when the prayers offered to God are almost inaudible. Let God's people learn how to speak and pray in a way that will properly represent the great truths they possess. Let the

testimonies borne and the prayers offered be clear and distinct. Thus God will be glorified.[9]

Clarity in Public Reading--It is essential that students be trained to read in a clear, distinct tone. We have been pained as we have attended conference meetings, tract society meetings, and meetings of various kinds, where reports were read in an almost inaudible voice or in a hesitating manner or a muffled tone. One-half the interest in a meeting is killed when the participants do their part in an indifferent, spiritless fashion. They should learn to speak in such a way that they can edify those who listen. Let everyone connected with missionary work qualify himself to speak in a clear, attractive way, enunciating his words perfectly.[10]

Mouthpiece for God--He who accepts the position of being a mouthpiece for God should consider it highly essential that he presents the truth with all the grace and intelligence that he can acquire through discipline of the mind and in such a manner that the truth shall lose nothing by his

presentation. Let no one consider it a little thing to speak in a thick voice and clumsy manner, or to pitch the voice in a high, unnatural key, and talk loud and long and thus abuse the organs of speech given of God, and make himself unacceptable to the people.[11]

Defective Utterance of Truth--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.[12]

Manner of Speaking for All Workers--All the workers, whether they speak from the pulpit or give Bible readings, are to be taught to speak in a clear, expressive manner.[13]

Holy Boldness in Prayer--I am pained as I see how little the gift of speech is appreciated. In reading the Bible, in engaging in prayer, in bearing testimony in meeting, how necessary is clear, distinct utterance! And how much is lost in family worship when the one offering prayer bows the face down and speaks in a low, feeble voice! But as soon as family worship is over, those who could not speak loud enough to be heard in prayer, can usually speak in clear, distinct tones, and there is no difficulty in hearing what they say. Prayer that is thus uttered is appropriate for the closet, but not edifying in family or public worship; for unless those assembled can hear what is said, they cannot say Amen. Nearly all can speak loud enough to be heard in ordinary conversation, and why should they not speak thus when called upon to bear testimony or to offer prayer?

When speaking of divine things, why not speak in distinct tones and in a manner that will make it manifest that you know whereof you speak, and are not ashamed to show your colors? Why not pray as if you had a conscience void of offense, and could

come to the throne of grace in humility, yet with holy boldness, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting? Do not bow down and cover up your faces as if there were something that you desired to conceal; but lift up your eyes toward the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ your Mediator stands before the Father to present your prayers, mingled with His own merit and spotless righteousness, as fragrant incense.[14]

Notes:

1. The Southern Work, October 27, 1903.
2. Manuscript 4, 1897.
3. Letter 8, 1894.
4. Letter 367, 1904.
5. Testimonies for the Church 1:645.
6. Evangelism, 670.
7. Evangelism, 640.
8. Testimonies for the Church 2:617.
9. Testimonies for the Church 6:382.
10. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 246, 247.
11. Manuscript 67, 1895.

12. Testimonies for the Church 6:380.
13. Evangelism, 665.
14. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,
241.

Chapter 46

Anecdotes and Humor

Levity Inappropriate--The minister of God is not to speak words which will create levity. We have been bought with the price of a great sacrifice, even the sacrifice of God's only begotten Son.[1]

No Light, Trifling Words--The minister of the gospel who is a laborer together with God, will learn daily in the school of Christ....No light, trifling words will fall from his lips; for is he not an ambassador for Christ, bearing a divine message to perishing souls? All jesting and joking, all lightness and trifling, is painful to the cross-bearing disciple of Christ.[2]

Conversation in Heaven--All lightness and trifling is positively forbidden in the Word of God. His conversation should be in heaven, his words seasoned with grace.[3]

A Worthy Example for Youth--Ministers should set the youth a worthy example, one corresponding to their holy calling.... They are to put away all coarseness, all trifling, ever remembering that they are educators; that, whether they will or not, their words and acts are to those with whom they come in contact a savor of life or of death.[4]

Decorum in the Sacred Desk--What can the minister do without Jesus? Verily, nothing. Then if he is a frivolous, joking man, he is not prepared to perform the duty laid upon him by the Lord. “Without Me,” says Christ, “ye can do nothing.” The flippant words that fall from his lips, the trifling anecdotes, the words spoken to create a laugh, are all condemned by the Word of God, and are entirely out of place in the sacred desk.[5]

No Slang Phrases--The minister should be free from every unnecessary temporal perplexity, that he may give himself wholly to his sacred calling. He should be much in prayer, and should bring himself under discipline to God, that his life may

reveal the fruits of true self-control. His language should be correct; no slang phrases, no cheap utterances, should fall from his lips.[6]

In Christ's Stead--Ministers cannot be too guarded, especially before the young. They should use no lightness of speech, jesting or joking, but should remember that they are in Christ's stead, that they must illustrate by example the life of Christ.[7]

No Jestng in the Pulpit--The minister who is ready to engage in frivolous conversation, ready to jest and laugh, does not realize the sacred obligations resting upon him, and if he goes from such an exercise to the pulpit, the Lord cannot stand by his side to bless him.... Flowery discourses will not be sufficient to feed the soul of the famishing child of God.[8]

Speech Seasoned With Grace--Let trifling and joking be banished from the conversation of the minister, but let his speech be seasoned with grace; let the light and love of Jesus shine in his example

and precept, that souls may be won for the Master.[9]

Abuse of the Gospel--Some who stand in the pulpit make the heavenly messengers in the audience ashamed of them. The precious gospel, which it has cost so much to bring to the world, is abused. There is common, cheap talk; grotesque attitudes and workings of the features. There is, with some, rapid talking, with others a thick, indistinct utterance.[10]

Common Words of Human Devising--The messages of truth are to be kept entirely free from cheap, common words of human devising. Thus forcible impressions will be made upon hearts. Let not our ministers cherish the idea that they must bring forth something new and strange, or that cheap, common expressions will give them influence. Ministers are to be the mouthpiece of God, and they must eradicate from their speech every expression that is cheap or common. Let them be careful lest by attempting during their discourse to cause laughter, they dishonor God.

Our message is a solemn and sacred one, and we must watch unto prayer. The words uttered must be of such a character that through them God can make an impression on heart and mind. Let the ministers of the gospel be sanctified through the truth.[11]

On the Enemy's Ground--As soon as a preacher comes down from the position a minister should ever occupy, and descends to the comical to create a laugh over his opponent, or when he is sarcastic and sharp, and rails upon him, he does that which the Saviour of the world did not dare to do; for he places himself upon the enemy's ground.[12]

Pure Provender With No Chaff--The preaching of the Word should appeal to the intellect, and should impart knowledge, but it should do more than this. The words of the minister should reach the hearts of the hearers. Neither is it the object of preaching to amuse. Some ministers have adopted a style of preaching

that has not the best influence. It has become a habit with them to weave anecdotes into their discourses. The impression thus made upon the hearers is not a savor of life unto life. Ministers should not bring amusing stories into their preaching. The people need pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from the chaff. “Preach the Word,” was the charge that Paul gave to Timothy, and this is our commission also.

The minister who mixes storytelling with his discourses is using strange fire. God is offended, and the cause of truth is dishonored, when His representatives descend to the use of cheap, trifling words.

My brethren, you are required by our Saviour to take heed how you witness for Him. You need to go deeper and still deeper in the study of the Word. You have all classes of minds to meet, and as you teach the truths of the sacred Word, you are to manifest earnestness, respect, and reverence. Weed out storytelling from your discourses, and preach the Word. You will then have more sheaves to

bring to the Master. Remember that in your audience there are those who are constantly harassed by temptation. Some are wrestling with doubt, almost in despair, almost hopeless. Ask God to help you to speak words that will strengthen them for the conflict.[13]

Irrelevant Anecdotes--Ministers should not make a practice of relating irrelevant anecdotes in connection with their sermons; for this detracts from the force of the truth presented. The relation of anecdotes or incidents that create a laugh or a light thought in the minds of the hearers is severely censurable. The truth should be clothed in chaste, dignified language; and the illustrations used should be of a like character.[14]

Comic Illustrations--A minister of the gospel should not be regardless of his attitude. If he is the representative of Christ, his deportment, his attitude, his gestures, should be of such a character as will not strike the beholder with disgust. Ministers should possess refinement. They should discard all uncouth manners, attitudes, and

gestures, and should encourage in themselves humble dignity of bearing. They should be clothed in a manner befitting the dignity of their position. Their speech should be in every respect solemn and well chosen. I was shown that it is wrong to make coarse, irreverent expressions, relate anecdotes to amuse, or present comic illustrations to create a laugh. Sarcasm and playing upon the words of an opponent are all out of God's order.[15]

Amusing Stories--My brother, you need to examine more closely the discourses you present to the people. The object of your ministerial labors is not to amuse. It is not to convey information alone, not merely to convince the intellect. The preaching of the Word should appeal to the intellect and impart knowledge, but it comprises much more than this. The heart of the minister must reach the hearts of the hearers. Some have adopted a style of preaching that does not have a right influence. It has become a habit with them to cheapen their discourses by the relation of anecdotes. The impression thus made upon the hearers is not a savor of life unto life. You should not bring

amusing stories into your preaching. The people need pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from all that is not food. “Preach the Word,” was the charge that Paul gave to Timothy, and this is your commission.[16]

No Clowns in the Pulpit--I warned you against clownishness in the desk or before the people. Do you not sometimes bring this acting into the sacred desk? You please the world; you attract the world. Is this an evidence that you are having a deep spiritual piety, sanctified to God through the Spirit?zxc

Notes:

1. Manuscript 19, 1910.
2. Evangelism, 206, 207.
3. Testimonies for the Church 2:338.
4. Gospel Workers, 126.
5. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 142.
6. Gospel Workers, 145.
7. Testimonies for the Church 1:380, 381.

8. The Review and Herald, June 23, 1891.
9. The Review and Herald, April 5, 1892.
10. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 339.
11. Evangelism, 211.
12. Testimonies for the Church 3:220.
13. The Review and Herald, December 22, 1904.
14. Gospel Workers, 166.
15. Testimonies for the Church 1:648, 649.
16. Letter 61, 1896.
17. Letter 9, 1889.

Chapter 47

Illustrations and Visual Aids

Chaste and Dignified--The truth should be clothed in chaste, dignified language; and the illustrations used should be of a like character.[1]

Self-evident Illustrations--It would be well if ministers who labor in word or doctrine could enter the fields and spend some portion of the day in physical exercise with the students. They could do as Christ did in giving lessons from nature to illustrate Bible truth.[2]

Teaching by Illustration--In Christ's parable teaching the same principle is seen as in His own mission to the world. That we might become acquainted with His divine character and life, Christ took our nature and dwelt among us. Divinity was revealed in humanity; the invisible glory in the visible human form. Men could learn of the unknown through the known; heavenly things were revealed through the earthly; God was

made manifest in the likeness of men. So it was in Christ's teaching: the unknown was illustrated by the known; divine truths by earthly things with which the people were most familiar.

The Scripture says, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; ... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 13:34, 35) Natural things were the medium for the spiritual; the things of nature and the life experience of His hearers were connected with the truths of the written Word. Leading thus from the natural to the spiritual kingdom, Christ's parables are links in the chain of truth that unites man with God, and earth with heaven.[3]

Application of the Scriptures--The Lord wishes you to learn how to use the gospel net. Many need to learn this art. In order for you to be successful in your work, the meshes of your net--the application of the Scriptures--must be close,

and the meaning easily discerned. Then make the most of drawing in the net. Come right to the point. Make your illustrations self-evident. However great a man's knowledge, it is of no avail unless he is able to communicate it to others.[4]

Illustrations for Everyone--Teachers, remember that the Lord is your strength. Strive to give the students ideas that will be to them a savor of life unto life. Teach by illustrations. Ask God to give you words to speak that all can understand.[5]

Children in Understanding--The teacher should constantly aim at simplicity and effectiveness. He should teach largely by illustration, and even in dealing with older pupils should be careful to make every explanation plain and clear. Many pupils well advanced in years are but children in understanding.[6]

Comprehension by Children--In all that men have written, where can be found anything that has such a hold upon the heart, anything so well adapted to awaken the interest of the little ones, as

the stories of the Bible? In these simple stories may be made plain the great principles of the law of God. Thus by illustrations best suited to the child's comprehension, parents and teachers may begin very early to fulfill the Lord's injunction concerning His precepts: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deuteronomy 6:7)[7]

Dignity of the Word--Too many illustrations do not have a correct influence; they belittle the sacred dignity that should ever be maintained in the presentation of the Word of God to the people.[8]

Starving Sheep--There are men who stand in the pulpits as shepherds, professing to feed the flock, while the sheep are starving for the bread of life. There are long-drawn-out discourses, largely made up of the relation of anecdotes; but the hearts of the hearers are not touched. The feelings of some may be moved, they may shed a few tears, but their hearts are not broken. The Lord Jesus has

been present when they have been presenting that which was called sermons, but their words were destitute of the dew and rain of heaven. They evidenced that the anointed ones described by Zechariah (see chapter 4) had not ministered to them that they might minister to others. When the anointed ones empty themselves through the golden pipes, the golden oil flows out of themselves into the golden bowls, to flow forth into the lamps, the churches. This is the work of every true, devoted servant of the living God.

The Lord God of heaven cannot approve much that is brought into the pulpit by those who are professedly speaking the word of the Lord. They do not inculcate ideas that will be a blessing to those who hear. There is cheap, very cheap fodder placed before the people.[9]

Strange Fire--The minister is using strange fire when he mixes storytelling with his discourses. ... You have men of all classes of minds to meet, and as you deal with the sacred Word, you should manifest earnestness, respect, reverence. Let not

the impression be made upon any mind that you are a cheap, surface speaker. Weed out storytelling from your discourses. Preach the Word. You would have had more sheaves to bring to the Master if you had constantly preached the Word. You little understand the soul's great need and longing. Some are wrestling with doubt, almost in despair, almost hopeless.[10]

Use of Visual Aids--By the use of charts, symbols, and representations of various kinds the minister can make the truth stand out clearly and distinctly. This is a help, and in harmony with the Word of God.[11]

Object Lessons in Sabbath School--Our Sabbath Schools should be made more interesting. The public schools have of late years greatly improved their methods of teaching. Object lessons, pictures, and blackboards are used to make difficult lessons clear to the youthful mind. Just so may present truth be simplified and made intensely interesting to the active minds of the children.[12]

Memory Training--The use of object lessons, blackboards, maps, and pictures, will be an aid in explaining these lessons [Bible stories], and fixing them in the memory. Parents and teachers should constantly seek for improved methods.[13]

Charts in Presentation of Truth--Instruction has been given me clearly and distinctly that charts should be used in the presentation of truth. And these illustrations should be made still more impressive by words showing the importance of obedience.[14]

Combination of Word and Illustration--The use of charts is most effective in explaining the prophecies relating to the past, the present, and the future. But we are to make our work as simple and inexpensive as possible. The truth is to be explained in simplicity.[15]

Means of Holding Attention--Brother S is an intelligent evangelist. He speaks with the simplicity of a child. Never does he bring any slur into his discourses. He preaches directly from the Word,

letting the Word speak to all classes. His strong arguments are the words of the Old and the New Testaments. He does not seek for words that would merely impress the people with his learning, but he endeavors to let the Word of God speak to them directly in clear, distinct utterance. If any refuse to accept the message, they must reject the Word.

Brother S dwells especially upon the prophecies in the books of Daniel and the Revelation. He has large representations of the beasts spoken of in these books, and these are brought forward at the proper time to illustrate his remarks. Not one careless or unnecessary word escapes his lips. He speaks forcibly and solemnly. Many of his hearers have never before heard discourses of so solemn a nature. They manifest no spirit of levity, but a solemn awe seems to rest upon them.[16]

Life-Size Images of Prophetic Beasts--Elder S is arousing a good interest by his meetings. People of all classes come out to hear, and to see the life-size images that he has of the beasts of

Revelation.[17]

Representations With Convincing Power--I am pleased with the manner in which our brother [Elder S] has used his ingenuity and tact in providing suitable illustrations for the subjects presented-- representations that have a convincing power. Such methods will be used more and more in this closing work.[18]

Illustrative Devices--Let the workers for God manifest tact and talent, and originate devices by which to communicate light to those who are near and to those who are afar off.[19]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 166.
2. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 325.
3. Christ's Object Lessons, 17, 18.
4. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 253.
5. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 254.

6. Education, 233.
7. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 181.
8. Evangelism, 209.
9. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 336, 337.
10. Evangelism, 210.
11. Testimonies for the Church 9:142.
12. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 114.
13. Education, 186.
14. Evangelism, 203.
15. Evangelism, 203.
16. Evangelism, 204, 205.
17. Evangelism, 205.
18. Evangelism, 205.
19. Evangelism, 206.

Chapter 48

Oratorical and Theatrical Display

Eloquent Orations As Sounding Brass--The life renewed by divine grace and hidden with Christ in God is eloquent in its simplicity. The orations and speeches made by apparently learned men are in God's estimation as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal in comparison with the words which come direct from a heart refined by belief in Christ as a personal Saviour. Those who are eloquent in God's sight are willing to walk in lowly paths. They are unappreciated by those who are constantly striving for the supremacy, who have no sense of what it means to walk in humble subjection to God's will and way; but God declares: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word" [Isaiah 66:2].[1]

Ministers, Not Actors--Unless men are led to

value the truth as a choice possession, to receive it as that which will sanctify the soul, no lasting good has been accomplished. He who presents eloquent words, simply causes the people to forget the truth that is mingled with his oratory. When the excitement passes away, it is found that the word of God has not been fastened upon the mind; nor have the simple gained in understanding. The people may go away from the church and may speak in admiration of the oratorical powers of the man who has preached to them, but they may not be convicted by the truth or brought any nearer to the point of decision. They speak of the sermon in the same way as they would of a play, and of the minister in the same manner as they would of an actor at a theater. They may come again to listen to the same kind of discourse, and may again go away unimpressed and unfed.

People should not be encouraged to prize oratorical display. This kind of sermonizing has the same kind of effect upon the mind as does the reading of an exciting story. It has a stimulating effect, but does not transform the character. The

influence of this kind of preaching has been made plain in the results that have followed. The people are attracted to the man, and think no one is equal to him; but I have been shown that as it was in _____, so it is in other places, that no solid foundation is made for the organization of a church. When such a minister leaves those who have apparently embraced the truth, it is made manifest that the people are not bound up with Christ, but have been bound to the man. Christ was as a stranger to them, and they knew Him not. The people left His company, and walked no more with Him.

The messengers of God are to deliver the last, solemn, testing message of mercy to a fallen world. If the minister exhibits himself, he interposes himself between the message and the people. If he educates himself to present the truth in a certain manner, he can make his work of no effect, and leave it so that it will ravel out. This is because the Holy Spirit does not work with his efforts. The people are encouraged to look to him and to exalt him, and Jesus is not the one who is seen, but

[rather] the man [who] steps into the place of the crucified and risen Saviour. The minister may preach a discourse which will go clear above the people into the clouds and stars, but leave no lasting impression upon the hearts of his hearers. Unless conviction is fastened on a heart, then time and means are expended to no effect. Of what value is it that the people think much of the minister, when they do not have a regard for saving, testing truth? The Holy Spirit must work the man; the man must not endeavor to work the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a servant, but a controlling power. The Holy Spirit causes the truth to shine in every mind, and speaks through every discourse where the minister surrenders himself to its working. The Holy Spirit walks with the soul by the way, and talks with the human agent. It is He who gives the atmosphere that surrounds the soul, and speaks to the impenitent through words of warning.[2]

Men of Prayer, Men of Power--It is not eloquent speakers that are needed, but humble, earnest workers, men who have childlike trust in a

higher strength. It is the men of prayer, who seek the Lord with humble, contrite hearts, that are men of power.[3]

Oratory a Possible Snare--It is the truth enshrined in the soul that makes one a man of God. Oratory, though it may please a certain class, will prove a snare to the one who uses it, and a snare to the church. ...

Our anxiety should not be to secure a minister who will please the people by smart speeches and oratory, in order to gain flattery and applause, but to secure men who are laborers together with God, men who study to show themselves approved unto God.[4]

Fanciful Eloquence--The minister may make a high range into the heavens, by poetical descriptions and fanciful presentations which please the senses and feed the imagination, but which do not touch the common life experience, the daily necessities; bringing home to the heart the very truths which are of vital interest. The

immediate requirements, the present trials, need present help and strength--the faith that works by love and purifies the soul, not words which have no real influence upon the living daily walk in practical Christianity.

The minister may think that with his fanciful eloquence he has done great things in feeding the flock of God; the hearers may suppose that they never before heard such beautiful themes, they have never seen the truth dressed up in such beautiful language, and as God was represented before them in His greatness, they felt a glow of emotion. But trace from cause to effect all this ecstasy of feeling caused by these fanciful representations. There may be truths, but too often they are not the food that will fortify them for the daily battles of life.[5]

A Few Simple Rules--I was shown that our ministers were doing themselves great injury by carelessness in the use of their vocal organs. Their attention was called to this important matter, and cautions and instructions were given them by the

Spirit of God. It was their duty to learn the wisest manner of using these organs. The voice, this gift of heaven, is a powerful faculty for good, and if not perverted, would glorify God. All that was essential was to study and conscientiously follow a few simple rules. But instead of educating themselves, as they might have done by the exercise of a little common sense, they employed a professor of elocution.

As a result, many who were feeling that God had a work for them to do in teaching the truth to others, have become infatuated and crazed with elocution. All that certain ones needed was to have this temptation presented before them. Their interest was attracted by the novelty, and young men and some ministers were carried away with this excitement. They left their fields of labor--everything in the vineyard of the Lord was neglected--and paid their money and gave their precious time to attend a school of elocution. When they came from this drill, devotion and religion had parted company with them, and the burden of souls was laid off, as they would lay aside a garment.

They had accepted Satan's suggestions, and he had led them where he chose.

Some set themselves up as teachers of elocution, who had neither discretion nor ability, and they made themselves disgusting to the public, for they did not properly use what knowledge they had gained. Their performances were void of dignity or good sense; and these exploits on their part have closed the door, so far as they are known, to any influence that they may have in future as men to carry the message of truth to the world. This was Satan's device. It was well to make improvement in speaking; but to give time and money to this one branch, and absorb the mind with it, was rushing into extremes and showing great weakness.

Young men who call themselves Sabbathkeepers attach "professor" to their names and abuse the community with that which they do not understand. Many thus pervert the light which God has seen fit to give them. They have not well-balanced minds. Elocution has become a byword. It

has caught up men to engage in a work that they cannot do wisely, and spoiled them for doing a work which, had they been humbly and modestly seeking to accomplish it in the fear of God, they would have made a glorious success. These youth might have been fitting for usefulness in the missionary field as canvassers and colporteurs, or as licentiates proving themselves for ministerial labor, doing work for time and for eternity. But they have been crazed with the thought of becoming teachers of elocution, and Satan stands and laughs that he has caught them in the net which he has laid for them.[6]

Eloquence Even of a Stammering Tongue--

Most precious gems of truth are often rendered powerless by the wisdom of words in which they are clothed, while the power of the Spirit of God is lacking. Christ presented the truth in its simplicity; and He reached not only the most elevated, but the lowliest men of earth. The minister who is God's ambassador and Christ's representative on the earth, who humbles himself that God may be exalted, will possess the genuine quality of

eloquence. True piety, a close connection with God, and a daily, living experience in the knowledge of Christ, will make eloquent even the stammering tongue.[7]

Use of Common Fire--Some ministers make the mistake of supposing that success depends on drawing a large congregation by outward display, and then delivering the message of truth in a theatrical style. But this is using common fire instead of the sacred fire of God's kindling. The Lord is not glorified by this manner of working. Not by startling notices and expensive display is His work to be carried to completion, but by following Christlike methods.[8]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 176, 1899.
2. Letter 29, 1895.
3. Letter 146, 1903.
4. Manuscript 1a, 1890.
5. Evangelism, 182.
6. Testimonies for the Church 4:604-606.

7. Testimonies for the Church 4:314.
8. Gospel Workers, 383.

Chapter 49

Danger of Excessive Emotion

Impression by God's Word, Not Feeling--It is through the Word--not feeling, not excitement--that we want to influence the people to obey the truth. On the platform of God's Word we can stand with safety. The living Word is replete with evidence, and a wonderful power accompanies its proclamation in our world.[1]

Emotional Preaching--If the preaching is of an emotional character, it will affect the feelings, but not the heart and conscience. Such preaching results in no lasting good, but it often wins the hearts of the people and calls out their affections for the man who pleases them. They forget that God has said: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." [2]

Trust in God, Not Man--I am pained beyond measure to see the little discernment existing among our people who have had so great light.

They listen to a sermon that stirs their emotions, and the language of their hearts is, “Evermore give us the ministry of this man; he moves our hearts, he makes us feel.” They forget God, and praise and exalt the man, to his injury and the injury of their own souls . When will those who claim to believe the truth cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils? When will they trust in God, make Him just what He is--all and in all?[3]

Temporary Nature of Impulsive Decisions--

There are in the ministry men who gain apparent success by swaying minds through human influence. They play upon the feelings at will, making their hearers weep, and in a few minutes laugh. Under labor of this kind, many are moved by impulse to profess Christ, and there is thought to be a wonderful revival; but when the test comes, the work does not endure. Feelings are stirred, and many are borne along by the tide that seems to be setting heavenward; but in the strong current of temptation they quickly float back as driftwood. The laborer is self-deceived, and he misleads his hearers.[4]

Real Intelligence in Preaching--A man may preach in a spirited manner and please the ear, but convey no new idea or real intelligence to the mind. The impressions received through such preaching last no longer than while the speaker's voice is heard. When search is made for the fruit of such labor, there is little to be found.[5]

Unnatural Use of the Voice--Some raise their voices to an unnatural key when they speak in the desk; others talk very rapidly, and the people cannot hear what is said. This works disaster to themselves, as well as to others, for their unnatural use of the voice results in injury to the vocal organs. They needlessly exhaust their strength, and make their efforts painful to their congregation. They should exercise self-control, that quality so essential for them as ambassadors of Christ, and overcome their pernicious habits. If they would but do this, they would be able to leave a pleasant impression on the minds of their hearers, and the preaching of the truth would become attractive.[6]

Intensity Without Emotionalism--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 it 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.

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.[7]

Notes:

1. Selected Messages 3:375.
2. Testimonies for the Church 5:301.
3. Letter 8, 1889.
4. Gospel Workers, 382.
5. Testimonies for the Church 1:447.
6. The Review and Herald, October 28, 1890.
7. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 227, 228.

Chapter 50

Being Heard, but Not by Shouting

Wearing Out of the Vocal Organs--From the light I have had, the ministry is a sacred and exalted office, and those who accept this position should have Christ in their hearts and manifest an earnest desire to represent Him worthily before the people in all their acts, in their dress, in their speaking, and even in their manner of speaking. They should speak with reverence.

Some destroy the solemn impression they may have made upon the people, by raising their voices to a very high pitch and hallooing and screaming out the truth. When presented in this manner, truth loses much of its sweetness, its force, and solemnity. But if the voice is toned right, if it has solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will produce a much better impression.

This was the tone in which Christ taught His disciples. He impressed them with solemnity; He spoke in a pathetic manner. But this loud hallooing--what does it do? It does not give the people any more exalted views of the truth and does not impress them any more deeply. It only causes a disagreeable sensation to the hearers and wears out the vocal organs of the speaker. The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear.

Many who might be useful men are using up their vital force and destroying their lungs and vocal organs by their manner of speaking. Some ministers have acquired a habit of hurriedly rattling off what they have to say as though they had a lesson to repeat and were hastening through it as fast as possible. This is not the best manner of speaking. By using proper care, every minister can educate himself to speak distinctly and impressively, not to hurriedly crowd the words together without taking time to breathe. He should speak in a moderate manner, that the people may get the ideas fixed in their minds as he passes

along. But when the matter is rushed through so rapidly, the people cannot get the points in their minds, and they do not have time to receive the impression that it is important for them to have; nor is there time for the truth to affect them as it otherwise would.

Speaking from the throat, letting the words come out from the upper extremity of the vocal organs, all the time fretting and irritating them, is not the best way to preserve health or to increase the efficiency of those organs. You should take a full inspiration and let the action come from the abdominal muscles. Let the lungs be only the channel, but do not depend upon them to do the work. If you let your words come from deep down, exercising the abdominal muscles, you can speak to thousands with just as much ease as you can speak to ten.

Some of our preachers are killing themselves by long, tedious praying and loud speaking, when a lower tone would make a better impression and save their own strength. Now, while you go on

regardless of the laws of life and health, and follow the impulse of the moment, do not charge it upon God if you break down.[1]

Prayers That All Can Hear--To those who are planning to enter God's work as ministers, I would say: Strive with determination to be perfect in speech. Ask God to help you to accomplish this great object. When in the congregation you offer prayer, remember that you are addressing God, and that He desires you to speak so that all who are present can hear and can blend their supplications with yours. A prayer uttered so hurriedly that the words are jumbled together is no honor to God and does the hearers no good. Let ministers and all who offer public prayer learn to pray in such a way that God will be glorified and the hearers will be blessed. Let them speak slowly and distinctly and in tones loud enough to be heard by all so that the people may unite in saying, Amen.[2]

Loud Talking a Danger to Health--[An impromptu dialogue during Ellen White's talk to the General Conference Committee at Lake

Goguac in Michigan. July 14, 1890.] Elder Farnsworth: “Don’t you think, Sister White, a great many of our ministers have received great injury from their manner of speaking?”

Ellen White: “Oh, yes, indeed; I have seen it over and over. My husband got in the way of sometimes raising his voice very loud, and it seemed as though he could not get out of that way. And there is a brother in Texas, Brother A, that is dying just as sure as if he put a knife to his throat. Now since I have come here I have thought of that and I must write to him.”

Elder Kilgore: “He has been told about that.”

Elder Farnsworth: “They are all around in every conference.”

Ellen White: “In my younger days I used to talk too loud. The Lord has shown me that I could not make the proper impression upon the people by getting the voice to an unnatural pitch. Then Christ was presented before me, and His manner of

talking. There was a sweet melody in His voice. His voice, in a slow, calm manner, reached those who listened. His words penetrated their hearts, and they were able to catch on to what He said before the next sentence was spoken.”[3]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 2:615, 616.
2. Testimonies for the Church 6:38
3. Manuscript 19b, 1890.

Chapter 51

Refinement and Solemnity of Demeanor

No Need for Sensationalism--The Lord calls upon you to make decided improvement in your manner of presenting the truth. You need not be sensational. Preach the Word, as Christ, the Son of God, preached the Word. Violent gesticulations detract greatly from the impressions the truth would make upon human hearts, and lessen the force of the demonstrations of the Spirit of God. They efface the solemn impressions regarding God's Word that holy angels desire shall be made upon minds.[1]

Awkward and Uncouth Gestures--Awkward and uncouth gestures are not to be tolerated in the common walks of life; how much less, then, are they to be endured in the most sacred work of the gospel ministry. The minister should cultivate grace, courtesy, and refinement of manner. He

should carry himself with a quiet dignity becoming his elevated calling. Solemnity, a certain godly authority, mingled with meekness, should characterize the demeanor of him who is a teacher of God's truth.[2]

Notes:

1. Evangelism, 184.
2. Evangelism, 640.

Chapter 52

Every Person an Original

No Man's Shadow--Ministers are never to copy any man's gestures, his habits, his attitude, his expressions, the tones of his voice. They are to become no man's shadow, in thought, in sentiment, or in devising and executing the great whole. If God has made you a shepherd of the flock, He has given you qualification to do that work. Christ says, "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9). Let every man take his Bible, and place himself in divine communion with the great Teacher. God is the source from which all knowledge and wisdom flows.[1]

Each in His Own Armor--We are failing in another direction, and that is that men who can work should be linked in their labors with those who are inexperienced, that they may get an experience in the right direction. The inexperienced ones should not be sent out alone. They should

stand right by the side of older and experienced ministers, where they could educate them. They should say to them, “You must not copy my gestures, nor the tone of my voice, so that nobody will know whether you are speaking or whether I am speaking. You are to stand in your own armor, with your own phase of character, sanctified by God. You are not to take my phase of character, nor my gestures, nor my tone of voice, nor my expressions, nor my words.”[2]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 104, 1898.
2. Manuscript 19b, 1890.

Chapter 53

The Real Proof of Preaching

Evidence of a Godly Life--It is not enough to argue in defense of the truth. The most telling evidence of its worth is seen in a godly life; and without this the most conclusive statements will be lacking in weight and prevailing power; for our strength lies in being connected with God by His Holy Spirit, and transgression severs us from this sacred nearness with the Source of our might and wisdom.[1]

Hypocritical Preaching--To preach what we do not practice, is but to confirm sinners in their impenitence. The most earnest exhortations to walk in the light will be unheeded, if the speaker himself neglects to follow the light which Christ has given.[2]

Solidity of Character--Those who labor for Christ should be men and women of great discretion, so that those who do not understand

their doctrines may be led to respect them, and regard them as persons void of fanaticisms, void of rashness and impetuosity. Their discourses and conduct and conversation should be of a nature that will lead men to the conclusion that these ministers are men of thought, of solidity of character, men who fear and love their heavenly Father.[3]

Need of Personal Experience--A clear, faithful testimony must be borne by every shepherd of the flock of God. The state of the heart is to be our first earnest concern. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). But mere speech is nothing. Preaching the Word, and then working contrary to the Word, makes that Word of none effect. Lip knowledge, forms and ceremonies, are of little value while Christ is not abiding in the soul.

We are to watch for souls as they that must give an account. We must sanctify the Lord God in our hearts. Then we shall be men and women of faith, prayer, and power. There is a great work to

be done. The heart must be faithfully sentineled, else pride and rebellion will bear rule within. Evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in its own homemade fog, all the time charging upon someone else the result of its own unchristian course of action.[5]

Christ As the Great Center--Those who have not worked in full consecration to God have lost much themselves, and have not been able to communicate to the church correct principles of Christianity. Self has not been hid in Christ. Those who handle sacred things are not growing in grace and in the knowledge of the deep truths of the Word of God, attaining to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. They fall short of the divine measure. Some have preached in the desk, but have failed to reach the people, because they have not had the sanctifying power of Christ in their own hearts. They have not come in personal contact with the people, and they have not been benefited as they might have been. Not all have presented Christ as the great Center to whom all must come, realizing that He is the Author and

Finisher of their redemption, their all in all. The result of their labor makes it manifest that they have not the deep personal experience they should have, but need deeper piety and unselfish devotion to the work.[5]

Failure to Practice the Word--Actions speak louder than words. The sermon that is preached in the pulpit is counteracted by the sermon that is preached in the lives of those who claim to be advocates of truth. It is because of a lack of the practicing of the words of Christ that a curse is coming upon our churches. If Christ is not living in His human agent, then when circumstances are favorable to their development the attributes of Satan will appear. A noble life is the most powerful sermon in favor of Christianity. If we would live such a life, our consciences must be quickened by continual contact with the Word of God. Our souls must be familiar with the heavenly standard, and we must avoid every course that diverges from the right.[6]

Constant Growth in Grace--Unless there is

constant growth in grace, we shall be wanting in words suitable for the occasion. The reason so many of our ministers preach tame, lifeless discourses is that they allow a variety of things of a worldly nature to take their time and attention. Commune with your own heart and then commune with God. Unless you do this, your efforts will be fruitless, made Christless by the unsanctified hurry and confusion of worldly things.[7]

Preaching and Practicing--At this period of time every minister of Christ is to heed the charge Paul gave to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself," to your character, your words, your conduct, "and unto the doctrine" [1 Timothy 4:16]. The minister must practice the doctrine he preaches, else he needs that someone should teach him the first principles of pure doctrine. ...

The Lord has given me a message for you. Ministers of the gospel must keep self in continual subjection to Christ. But in your present state of mind you are not subject to the will or control of God. Self, poor, sick self, is revealed on every

hand. When self dies, the peace of Christ will take possession of the soul. As long as you are a minister of the gospel, you are under the most solemn obligation to God to be wise, not in your own conceit, but wise in the wisdom of God.

Every day hereditary tendencies to wrong will strive for the mastery. Every day you are to war against your objectionable traits of character, until there are left in you none of those things which need to be separated from you. Then you will think candidly and wisely how to take yourself to the Lord. You will foresee the evils which will come, unless you change by avoiding the cause which produces the effect.

You need now to understand as never before the softening, subduing power of true, Christlike character. You need to understand the warfare in which we are engaged. The power of holy living is far ahead of all doctrinal discourses. ...

We need now as never before to pray with heart and voice for the Spirit of Christ to use us in His

service through the sanctification of the Spirit. We need to pray that we may by uniting with our fellow workers build up God's kingdom. We are never to be satisfied with self, but are ever to press upward, seeking to attain higher fervency and greater zeal. Our heart's greatest desire should be to be found among the meek and lowly people of God. Then we can find souls and win souls.

Those who minister in word and doctrine must first be partakers of the fruits of the Spirit. Bear this in mind. Bridle your disposition, and then peace and contentment will find room in your soul. If you wish your heart to overflow with the love of God, cultivate grateful thanksgiving for the unspeakable privilege of knowing the truth. If you would lose sight of self by beholding Christ, you would be changed from glory to glory, from character to character, and would rejoice in His redeeming love.

We have no time for fretting over ourselves, no time to look on the dark side. There are souls to be saved. We must live in Christ and Christ must live

in us, else we shall preach and labor in vain. Those who are brethren in the faith must stand together in oneness, striving to answer Christ's prayer to His Father. Let us stop fretting. Let us put away all jealousy, all evil surmising. Let us put on Christ and walk in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Preach the Word. Practice the Word. Then souls will be converted.

At present your spiritual condition is a stumbling block to your best efforts. We have the most sublime truths ever given to men. How are we handling them? In Christ, dead to self, open your mouth, and God will fill it. Christ will impress the minds of your hearers.

Cooperation with God means His cooperation with us. Cooperation with our brethren gives standing room for every one who does the work. Cooperation is now greatly needed. Seek not for the highest place. If you do, you will be given the lowest place. Have courage in the Lord. But do not think that you are the only agent through whom He will work. For Christ's sake do your best, without

speaking one ungrateful word to God or to your brethren. Then the Lord will bless you. We have not a moment to waste in regrets or recrimination.

Take not your troubles to man, who may have no greater wisdom than you yourself. Take your troubles to Him who hears and answers prayer. Labor, labor with this poor soul and that poor soul. Keep your head out of books and your hand from writing. Seek the salvation of those who are ready to perish. How earnestly should we be engaged in laboring for souls as they that must give an account.[8]

Impact of Jesus' Love on the Speaker's Heart--There have been entire discourses, dry and Christless, in which Jesus has scarcely been named. The speaker's heart is not subdued and melted by the love of Jesus. He dwells upon dry theories. No great impression is made. The speaker has not the divine unction, and how can he move the hearts of the people? We need to repent and be converted--yes, the preacher converted. The people must have Jesus lifted up before them, and they must be

entreated to “Look and live.”[9]

Character As the Exemplar of Teacher’s Words--A dignified authority is required in the teacher, else he lacks that ability which will make him a successful teacher. The children are quick to discern any weakness or defect of character in the teacher. The deportment is making its impression. The words which you utter will not give them the right mold unless they see in your character the model.[10]

Teacher’s Deportment, Student’s Reverence for God--The one who shall accept the responsibility of teacher, if not fully qualified, if he senses the responsibility of his position, will do his utmost to learn. He will cultivate reverence, cheerfulness, and firmness. Let the deportment be of that character that your class will be educated to have solemn thoughts and reverence toward God. While the ideas may be presented in simplicity, the language, when speaking of God, of Christ, His sufferings, His resurrection, as realities to you, should carry the minds up high above earthly

things, and make them feel that they are in the presence of the Infinite One.[11]

Notes:

1. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 2:998.
2. The Review and Herald, June 20, 1882.
3. Evangelism, 170, 171.
4. Manuscript 11, 1899.
5. Manuscript 12, 1891.
6. Letter 71, 1895.
7. Manuscript 101, 1902.
8. Letter 119, 1900.
9. Selected Messages 3:184.
10. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 98.
11. Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 97.

Chapter 54

Christ the Sum and Substance

Glory of the Incarnate God--If Jesus were made the sum and substance of every discourse, sinners would be convicted. By the message borne they would know what they must do to be saved. Lift Him up, the Man of Calvary, higher and still higher. Who can declare the glory of the incarnate God? What language can describe it? It is not the men learned in this world's wisdom who have true eloquence.[1]

Foundation of the Gospel--Theoretical discourses are essential, that people may see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole; but no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel.[2]

True Example for Ministers--Will not our ministers wrestle in earnest prayer that they may have a holy unction, that they may not bring

unimportant, unessential things into their labor at this important time? Let them not bring into their ministerial labors that which can be heard in any of the denominational churches. Let them ever keep before their hearers an uplifted Saviour, in order to prevent their converts from attaching themselves to the man, to bear his mold and copy his ways in their manner of conversation and conduct. The Lord has a variety of workers, who must impress the people in various lines. One man's ways are not to be considered perfect and to be adopted exclusively in any congregation. Christ is our Example.[3]

Simple Lessons of Christ--In the name of Jesus Christ, I would appeal to the church who has been made the depository of deep and precious truths. God has given treasures to the church not to be hoarded, not to be buried in the earth, but to be imparted to others, that others may be enriched as well as ourselves. How shall we work? Let both laymen and ministers follow the example of Christ. Let them meet the people where they are. I would entreat you to labor in word and doctrine; do not

get above the simplicity of the work. Do not soar away above the minds of the common people so that they cannot follow you, and if they did follow you, would neither be benefited nor blessed. Teach the simple lessons of Christ. Tell the touching story of His life of self-denial and sacrifice. Tell of His humiliation and death. Tell of His resurrection and ascension, of His intercession for them in the courts of God. Tell them that “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).[4]

Spiritual Nourishment--Of all professed Christians, Seventhday Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world. Our ministers should ever be able to direct men and women to Christ, to the One who Himself declared, “I am the Bread of life.” Let those who minister to the spiritual necessities of the people, read to them the words of Christ: “I am the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever: and the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life

of the world.” ...

Often there are delivered to the people discourses destitute of the Bread of life, the food essential for spiritual growth. Those who have been appropriating for themselves the Bread of life, will be able to break it to others. ...

I have felt very sad as I have seen ministers walking and working in the light of the sparks of their own kindling; ministers who were not obtaining spiritual nourishment from Christ, the Bread of life. Their own souls were as destitute of the heavenly manna as the hills of Gilboa were destitute of dew and rain. In their hearts Christ was not an abiding Presence. How could they speak intelligently of Him whom they had never known by experimental knowledge?[5]

Practical Lessons Along With the Prophecies--A few forcible remarks upon some point of doctrine will fasten in the mind much more firmly, than to bring in a mass of matter where nothing lays out clear and distinct in the mind of

those ignorant of our faith. There should be interspersed with the prophecies, practical lessons of the teachings of Christ. There should ever be the softening, subduing influence of the Spirit of God upon our own heart. The self-denial and the sufferings of Christ should be brought into our labors, and the great love wherewith He has loved us appear in all our efforts.[6]

Christ in the Heart--Discourses that have little of Christ and His righteousness in them are given in the desk. They are Christless sermons. To preach in the demonstration of the Spirit is completely beyond the power of those who are without Christ. They are feeble, empty, and without nourishment. They have no Christ to carry with them in private life. They are full of boasting, of pride, of self-esteem, speaking evil of things of which they have no real knowledge. They manifest an impatience of everything that does not follow in their line. They will even scoff and mock at sacred things, because they do not see that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. They degrade themselves by perverting and falsifying truth.[7]

The Spirit's Power--Merely to speak to beautiful things that please the ear and attract attention should not be our purpose. We are to present Christ and Him crucified, that souls who are dead in trespasses and sins may be alarmed and quickened. Those who seek to teach others need to be converted to Christ; they need to plead with God that He will imbue them with His Holy Spirit before they can lift up Christ as the sinner's only hope. Flowery speeches, pleasing tales, anecdotes, and stories do not convict the sinner. Men listen to such words as they would listen to a pleasant song, and the laborers gather but few sheaves into the garner. The message the sinner should hear is, "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). And the truth will subdue and tender the soul of the teacher because he feels its practical utility.[8]

Life-Healing Balm From the Cross--The cross, the cross of Calvary presented again and

again, plainly dwelt upon in every discourse, will prove the life-healing balm, will reveal the beauty and excellence of virtue. Those who quibble over the authenticity of the Scriptures and question the authority of revelation will not be influenced.[9]

Jesus in the Discourse--“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3). The eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us. This theme will quench unbelief; and yet, sad to say, Jesus has been dropped out of many, many discourses that have been preached by Seventh-day Adventist ministers. And why? Because these ministers had not Jesus abiding in their hearts by faith; they were not clothed with Christ’s righteousness.[10]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 176, 1899.
2. Gospel Workers, 158.
3. Manuscript 21a, 1894.
4. Manuscript 38, 1894.

5. Manuscript 21, 1891.
6. Letter 48, 1886.
7. Manuscript 15, 1886.
8. Manuscript 12, 1891.
9. Manuscript 20, 1893.
10. Manuscript 16, 1890.

Chapter 55

Promise of the Holy Spirit

Consequence of Silence on the Subject--Just prior to leaving His disciples for the heavenly courts, Jesus encouraged them with the promise of the Holy Spirit. This promise belongs to us as much as to them, and yet how rarely is it presented to the people and its reception spoken of in the church. In consequence of this silence upon this most important theme, what promise do we know less about by its practical fulfillment than this rich promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereby efficiency is to be given to all our spiritual labor? The promise of the Holy Spirit is casually brought into the discourses, is incidentally touched upon, and that is all. Prophecies have been dwelt upon, doctrines have been expounded, but that which is absolutely essential to the church in order that they may grow in spiritual strength and efficiency, in order that the preaching may carry conviction with it, and souls be converted to God, has largely been left out of ministerial effort.[1]

Need of Presentation in Every Discourse--

The Holy Spirit is to be presented in every discourse. What wonderful statements Christ has made concerning His representative to the world. This is the theme of encouragement to be kept before the people. In comprehending the office of the Holy Spirit, we shall bring all blessings to ourselves. He will make us complete in Christ.[2]

Cause of Spiritual Drought--

Ministers preaching present truth will assent to the necessity of the influence of the Spirit of God in the conviction of sin and the conversion of souls, and this influence must attend the preaching of the Word, but they do not feel its importance sufficiently to have a deep and practical knowledge of the same. The scantiness of the grace and power of the divine influence of the truth upon their own hearts prevents them from discerning spiritual things and from presenting its positive necessity upon the church. So they go crippling along, dwarfed in religious growth, because they have in their ministry a legal religion. The power of the

grace of God is not felt to be a living, effectual necessity, an abiding principle.[3]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 12, 1891.
2. Manuscript 8, 1898.
3. Manuscript 27, 1889.

Chapter 56

Eternal Truth

Need of New Sermons--A familiarity with the truths of the Scripture will give the teacher of truth qualifications that will make him a representative of Christ. The spirit of the Saviour's teaching will give force and directness to his instruction and to his prayers. His will not be a narrow, lifeless testimony; he will not preach over and over the same set discourses; for his mind will be open to the constant illumination of the Holy Spirit.[1]

Converted Speakers--When men are really converted, controversy and debate will be ended. The plain, searching truth will be proclaimed by lips touched with a live coal from the altar of God.[2] **Plain Presentation of Truth**--Everywhere there are hearts crying out for the living God. Discourses unsatisfying to the hungry soul have been given in the churches. In these discourses there is not that divine manifestation which touches the mind and creates a glow in the soul. The

hearers cannot say: “Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” (Luke 24:32). Much of the teaching given is powerless to awaken the transgressor or convict souls of sin. The people who come to hear the Word need a plain, straightforward presentation of truth.[3]

Appeal to Men of High Position--Men in high positions of trust in the world will be charmed by a plain, straightforward, Scriptural statement of truth.[4]

Voice Like a Trumpet--The true minister of the gospel will not stand before the people to speak smooth words, to cry, Peace and safety. He realizes the dangers that threaten the soul, and he presents the truth as it is in Jesus. The truth comes from his lips clear, plain, decided, as if he fully believed that the words spoken will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The words of the minister who knows that he has the Spirit and power of God, will awaken the conscience of his hearers.[5]

Effect of Smooth Sermons--God's ministers must lift up the voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions. The smooth sermons so often preached make no lasting impression. Men are not cut to the heart, because the plain, sharp truths of the Word of God are not spoken to them.[6]

Good News of Salvation--The highest employment of the powers of speech is that of imparting divine truth. Wherever the audience may be, whoever may compose that audience, Christ's witness is to speak the plain, unvarnished truth. He is to minister grace to his hearers. His words will be in harmony with the teaching of Christ. The soul who is truly converted will have his lips touched with the sacred fire of cleansing. To every individual he meets he will find an opportunity of speaking the good news of salvation. He believes; therefore he utters the sentiments of his heart. He stands as the oracle of God, speaking to men the words of life and salvation.[7]

Fresh Manna--You have been too anxious to

present lines of thought that would bring glory to yourself. You have thought it was necessary to dwell upon subjects which do not enlighten minds in regard to vital truth, or make clearer the way to present salvation. For Christ's sake keep to the point. In every discourse break the bread of life, present fresh manna, lay upon souls the solemn responsibilities that God has placed upon them, and keep in view eternal realities. Call the attention of the people to vital questions, and keep them to the point of decision, asking them, "What are you going to do?" Cooperate with heavenly intelligences. When you allow your mind to be diverted from plain lines of truth and to be engrossed with subjects that please your fancy, you are simply losing time. The Holy Spirit does not work with you, and thus you make a mistake.[8]

Self to the Background--In the first chapter of Corinthians, Paul has given us instruction which every true laborer needs to study, especially the following verses: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are

called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Corinthians 1:23-25). Here is a lesson of special consequence to every worker in the vineyard of the Lord. It will not result in solid work for men to preach to please the ears of the people, while the truth is not held forth in a manner to bring them to the cross of Jesus Christ. The messenger of God must present eternal truths plainly, and keep in distinct view before the people their peril in neglecting eternal interests. While self is kept out of sight Jesus Christ must be ever lifted up and exalted.

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which

are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

“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. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling” (1 Corinthians 2:1-3).

The apostle feared lest his work should stand in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God, and thus his labor prove to be a work which would not produce a harvest. ... Especial heed should be given to the words of the apostle: “Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers” (2

Timothy 2:14).

The minister of the gospel is never exhorted to strive to be a smart preacher, a popular speaker; but is commanded to “study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” (2 Timothy 2:15, 16). Will every messenger of God give heed to these words?[9]

New Light, New Ideas--Some of our ministers have a runway of discourses which they use without variation year after year. The same illustrations, the same figures, and almost the same words. They have ceased to be students. There is an end to improvement, and they stagger under the load of a few set discourses to prevent mental decrepitude. But by the ever-learning student new light, new ideas, new gems of truth will be found and eagerly grasped. ... The gospel is not properly taught and represented before unbelievers by men who have ceased to be students, who have, as it

were, graduated as far as searching the Scriptures is concerned, and they bring a reproach upon the truth by the manner in which they handle it. If men obtain the ears of the people, the very best quality of preaching is needed, because pleasing fables are presented by eloquent lips.[10]

Scriptural Study vs. Suppositions and Fables--Preach the Word. You may have inventive minds. You may be expert, as were the Jewish teachers, in getting up new theories; but Christ said of them, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). They presented traditions, suppositions, and fables of all kinds to the people. The forms and ceremonies they enjoined made it simply impossible for the people to know whether they were keeping the Word of God or following the imaginations of men.

Satan is well pleased when he can thus confuse the mind. Let not ministers preach their own suppositions. Let them search the Scriptures earnestly, with a solemn realization that if they

teach for doctrine the things that are not contained in God's Word, they will be as those represented in the last chapter of Revelation.[11]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 252.
2. The Review and Herald, February 21, 1899.
3. Testimonies for the Church 6:53.
4. Evangelism, 557.
5. The Review and Herald, March 29, 1906.
6. Gospel Workers, 149.
7. Letter 222, 1907.
8. Letter 29, 1895.
9. Manuscript 29, 1893.
10. Letter 33, 1886.
11. Letter 207, 1899.

Chapter 57

Testing Truths

Truth for This Time--We are to dwell in our doctrinal discourses upon the truth as it is in Jesus. Present the truth for this time as an important message, from another world. Lift Him up, the Man of Calvary. Come in consecration to holier ground, and still holier. Preach the truth with the power of God sent down from heaven. Let the truth take hold of the spiritual part of our own nature, and then the current of divine power will be communicated to those whom we address. Bear in mind you must have increased faith. Our faith is too small. What can give us the aid the crisis demands is the intelligent knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. We want His nature--all our faculties and powers strengthened and vitalized by the Spirit of Christ.[1]

The Third Angel's Message--The present truth, the special message given to our world, even the third angel's message, comprehends a vast

field, containing heavenly treasures. No one can be excusable who says, “I will no longer have anything to do with these special messages; I will preach Christ.” No one can preach Christ, and present the truth as it is in Jesus, unless he presents the truths that are to come before the people at the present time, when such important developments are taking place.[2]

Common Truths First--Jesus spoke before the Pharisees and Sadducees in parables, hiding the clearness of truth under symbols and figures because they would make a wrong use of the truths He presented before them; but to His disciples He spoke plainly. We should learn from Christ’s method of teaching and be careful not to cut off the ears of the people by presenting truths which, not being fully explained, they are in no way prepared to receive.

The truths that we hold in common should be dwelt upon first and the confidence of the hearers obtained; then, as the people can be brought along, we can advance slowly with the matter presented.

Great wisdom is needed to present unpopular truth before a prejudiced people in the most cautious manner, that access may be gained to their hearts. Discussions place before the people who are unenlightened in regard to our position and who are ignorant of Bible truth, a set of arguments skillfully gotten up and carefully arranged to cover over the clear points of truth. Some men have made it their business to cover up plain statements of facts in the Word of God by their deceptive theories, which they make plausible to those who have not investigated for themselves.[3]

Sound Arguments--It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments that will not only silence our opponents but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. With those who have educated themselves as debaters there is great danger that they will not handle the Word of God with fairness.

In meeting an opponent it should be our earnest effort to present subjects in such a manner as to awaken conviction in his mind, instead of seeking merely to give confidence to the believer.[4]

Demonstration of the Spirit--Our work for this time is not to be done by enticing words of man's wisdom, such as were used by heathen orators to gain applause. Speak in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with the power which God alone can impart. The testing truths for this time are to be proclaimed by men whose lips have been touched with a live coal from off God's altar. Such preaching will be a decided contrast to the preaching usually heard.[5]

Bread to the Starving--Many souls are hungering for the Bread of life. Their cry is, "Give me bread; do not give me a stone. It is bread that I want." Feed these perishing, starving souls. Let our ministers bear in mind that the strongest meat is not to be given to babes who know not the first principles of the truth as we believe it. In every age the Lord has had a special message for the people

of that time; so we have a message for the people in this age. But while we have many things to say, we may be compelled to withhold some of them for a time, because the people are not prepared to receive them now.

When a discourse is given, the people may listen with interest, but it is all strange and new to them, and Satan is ready to suggest to their minds many things that are not true. He will seek to pervert and misrepresent the speaker's words. What shall we do? The discourses presenting the reasons of our faith should be published in little leaflets, and circulated as widely as possible. Thus the falsehoods and misrepresentations which the enemy of truth constantly tries to keep in circulation would be revealed in their true character. The people have an opportunity of knowing just what the minister said. Those who introduce the leaven of truth amid the mass of false theories and doctrines may expect opposition. Satan's batteries will be opened upon those who advocate the truth, and the standardbearers must expect to meet many sneers and much reviling that

is hard to bear.

The message of warning is to be given in all the highways and byways. The cities are to be worked, not merely preached to; there must be house-to-house labor.[6]

Moral Beauty of Testing Truth--As you are to begin work in a new mission, be careful that your defects are not exalted as virtues, and thus retard the work of God. It is testing truths that we are bringing before the people, and in every movement these truths should be elevated to stand in moral beauty before those for whom we labor. Do not throw about the truth the peculiarities of your own character, or your own manner of labor.[7]

The Three Angels' Messages--It is our privilege to expect large things, even the demonstration of the Spirit of God. This is a power which will convict and convert the soul. Our message is a life-and-death message, and we must let this message appear as it is--the great power of

God. Then the Lord will make it effectual. We are to present it in all its telling force. The first and second angels' messages are bound up with the third angel's message. The power of the proclamation of the first and second angels' messages is to be concentrated in the third.[8]

The Testing Message--Let every discourse that does not enlighten the soul, that does not answer the question, What must I do to be saved? be cut off from your program. Preach the testing message of the third angel. It is essential that our ministers preach the truth that has a direct bearing on the message for this time, and that they present the subjects in the most simple language. What must I do to be saved, and the righteousness of Christ, are themes that are of vital importance to the people.[9]

Importance of the Sabbath Truth--The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the test for this time, and therefore all connected with this great memorial is to be kept before the people.[10]

Test for This Time--I write this letter to say a few things to my ministering brethren. When you have a congregation before you for only two weeks, do not defer the presentation of the Sabbath question, the real genuine matter, until everything else is presented, supposing that you are paving the way for it. Thus a mistake was made at Ballarat and at Maitland. The Sabbath was touched upon, but was not made the great question, the test for this time.

Lift up the standard, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Make this everything, and then by your strong arguments wall it in, and make it of still greater force.[11]

Cause of the Shaking--I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it,

and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.[12]

John's Revelation--To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of destruction. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them. None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth.[13]

The Testimony of Christ--To John the Lord opened the subjects that He saw would be needed by His people in the last days. The instruction that He gave is found in the book of Revelation. Those who would be co-workers with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in this book. With pen and voice

they will strive to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal. ...

The solemn messages that have been given in their order in the Revelation are to occupy the first place in the minds of God's people. Nothing else is to be allowed to engross our attention.

Precious time is rapidly passing, and there is danger that many will be robbed of the time which should be given to the proclamation of the messages that God has sent to a fallen world. Satan is pleased to see the diversion of minds that should be engaged in a study of the truths which have to do with eternal realities.

The testimony of Christ, a testimony of the most solemn character, is to be borne to the world. All through the book of Revelation there are the most precious, elevating promises, and there are also warnings of the most fearfully solemn import. Will not those who profess to have a knowledge of the truth read the testimony given to John by Christ? Here is no guesswork, no scientific

deception. Here are the truths that concern our present and future welfare.[14]

Daniel and the Revelation--Those who accept positions as educators should prize more and more the revealed will of God so plainly and strikingly presented in Daniel and the Revelation.[15]

Purpose of the Book of Revelation--In the book of Revelation we read of a special work that God desires to have His people do in these last days. He has revealed His law and shown us the truth for this time. This truth is constantly unfolding, and God designs that we shall be intelligent in regard to it, that we may be able to distinguish between right and wrong, between righteousness and unrighteousness.

The third angel's message, the great testing truth for this time, is to be taught in all our institutions. God designs that through them this special warning shall be given, and bright beams of light shall shine to the world. Time is short. The perils of the last days are upon us, and we should

watch and pray, and study and heed the lessons that are given us in the books of Daniel and the Revelation.

When John was banished from those he loved to lonely Patmos, Christ knew where to find His faithful witness. John said: “I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”

The Lord’s day is the seventh day, the Sabbath of creation. On the day that God sanctified and blessed, Christ signified “by His angel unto His servant John” things which must come to pass before the close of the world’s history, and He means that we should become intelligent with regard to them. It is not in vain that He declares: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”

(Revelation 1:9, 10, 1-3) This is the education that is to be patiently given. Let our lessons be appropriate for the day in which we live, and let our religious instruction be given in accordance with the messages God sends.

We shall have to stand before magistrates to answer for our allegiance to the law of God, to make known the reasons of our faith. And the youth should understand these things. They should know the things that will come to pass before the closing up of the world's history. These things concern our eternal welfare, and teachers and students should give more attention to them. By pen and voice, knowledge should be imparted which will be meat in due season, not only to the young, but to those of mature years also.[16]

Solemn Scenes of Prophecy--The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed be left untouched. If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed

in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account.

Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. It will be as a sword cutting both ways.

But be not too ready to take a controversial attitude. There will be times when we must stand still and see the salvation of God. Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, “the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star.”[17]

Perils of the Last Days--Will our brethren bear in mind that we are living amid the perils of the last days? Read Revelation in connection with Daniel. Teach these things.[18]

Notes:

1. Letter 230, 1899.
2. Manuscript 33, 1897.
3. Testimonies for the Church 3:426.
4. Testimonies for the Church 5:708.
5. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 6:1084.
6. Manuscript 95, 1894.
7. Letter 12, 1887.
8. Letter 209, 1899.
9. Letter 29, 1895.
10. Letter 207, 1899.
11. Letter 209, 1899.
12. Early Writings, 270.
13. The Great Controversy, 341, 342.
14. Testimonies for the Church 8:301, 302.
15. Testimonies for the Church 6:131.
16. Testimonies for the Church 6:127-129.
17. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 118.
18. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 115.

Chapter 58

Soon Coming of Christ

The Preaching of the Gospel--God does not expect His workers to attend to trifling matters. They are to preach the gospel. They will find that short discourses are the most effective. In every place in which the work is begun, the standard is to be raised higher and still higher. The truth of Christ's soon coming is to be proclaimed. And all the workers, whether they speak from the pulpit or give Bible readings, are to be taught to speak in a clear, expressive manner.[1]

Earnest Warnings--Living power must attend the message of Christ's second appearing. We must not rest until we see many souls converted to the blessed hope of the Lord's return. In the days of the apostles the message that they bore wrought a real work, turning souls from idols to serve the living God. The work to be done today is just as real, and the truth is just as much truth; only we are to give the message with as much more earnestness as the

coming of the Lord is nearer. The message for this time is positive, simple, and of the deepest importance. We must act like men and women who believe it. Waiting, watching, working, praying, warning the world--this is our work.[2]

Practical Christian Truth--The truths of prophecy are bound up together, and as we study them, they form a beautiful cluster of practical Christian truth. All the discourses that we give are plainly to reveal that we are waiting, working, and praying for the coming of the Son of God. His coming is our hope. This hope is to be bound up with all our words and works, with all our associations and relationships.[3]

The Second Coming, a Constant Theme--The second coming of the Son of man is to be the wonderful theme kept before the people. Here is a subject that should not be left out of our discourses. Eternal realities must be kept before the mind's eye, and the attractions of the world will appear as they are, altogether profitless as vanity. What are we to do with the world's vanities, its praises, its

riches, its honors, or its enjoyments?[4]

Notes:

1. Letter 200, 1903.
2. The Review and Herald, November 13, 1913.
3. Evangelism, 220.
4. Evangelism, 220.

Chapter 59

The Way of Salvation

Burden of Every Sermon--The science of salvation is to be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Let nothing be brought into the preaching of the Word to supplement Christ, the Word and power of God. Let His name, the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, be exalted in every discourse, and from Sabbath to Sabbath let the trumpet of the watchmen give a certain sound. Christ is the science and eloquence of the gospel, and His ministers are to hold forth the Word of life, presenting hope to the penitent, peace to the troubled and desponding, and grace and completeness and strength to the believing.[1]

The Lamb of God--Never should a sermon be preached, or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the hearers to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”[2]

Salvation in Its Simplicity--In every congregation there are souls who are unsatisfied. Every Sabbath they want to hear something definite explaining how they can be saved, how they are to become Christians. The important thing for them to know is, How can a sinner be presented before God? Let the way of salvation be presented before them in simplicity, just as plainly as you would speak to a little child. Lift up Jesus as the sinner's only hope.[3]

Application of Truth to the Heart--It is especially true that new and startling themes should not be presented to the people at too great length. In every address given, let there be an application of truth to the heart that whosoever may hear shall understand, and that men, women, and youth may become alive unto God.[4]

Need of a Change of Heart--Sometimes men and women decide in favor of the truth because of the weight of evidence presented, without being converted. The minister's work is not done until he

has urged upon his hearers the necessity of a change of heart. In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ.[5]

Refuge in Christ--The minister who has learned of Christ will ever be conscious that he is a messenger of God, commissioned by Him to do a work both for time and eternity. It should not be any part of his object to call attention to himself, his learning, or his ability. But his whole aim should be to bring sinners to repentance, pointing them, both by precept and example, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Self should be hidden in Jesus. Such men will speak as those conscious of possessing power and authority from God, being a mouthpiece for Him. Their discourses will have an earnestness and fervor of persuasion that will lead sinners to see their lost condition, and take refuge in Christ.[6]

Steps in Conversion--Ministers should present the truth in a clear, simple manner. There are among their hearers many who need a plain

explanation of the steps requisite in conversion. The great masses of the people are more ignorant on this point than is supposed. Among graduates from college, eloquent orators, able statesmen, men in high positions of trust, there are many who have given their powers to other matters, and have neglected the things of greatest importance. When such men form part of a congregation, the speaker often strains every power to preach an intellectual discourse, and fails to reveal Christ. He does not show that sin is the transgression of the law. He does not make plain the plan of salvation. That which would have touched the hearts of his hearers, would have been to point them to Christ dying to bring redemption within their reach.[7]

Remission of Sins Through Christ--Direct applications must be made. And ever the speaker must remember that he is only the instrument. It is the Holy Spirit that impresses the hearts of high and low, the most dignified and the most hopelessly abandoned. The Word must be spoken in simplicity. Men must be addressed as sinners in peril of losing their souls. All distinctions must be

overlooked; for all need the same truth. All need a crucified and risen Saviour, who died that they might be saved.

Present the Word of God as the way in which a holy faith and a pure character may be attained. Offer a full and free salvation, not as coming from yourselves, but from Christ. Show your hearers their need of returning through repentance and faith to their loyalty; for all are on a level; all are condemned alike by that great moral standard of righteousness. Proclaim remission of sins through Christ, the only Sin-bearer, the only Sin-pardoner. Proclaim the remission of sins through repentance toward God and faith in Christ, and God will ratify your testimony. With all assurance you can proclaim the means by which a holy character may be obtained--as Enoch obtained it, through Christ Jesus.

Every messenger of God can proclaim pardon and remission of sins through the name of Christ, who died to redeem the sinner. The Lord's full favor comes to those who seek Him with the whole

heart, and are willing to follow Him in doing God's will, enthroning Christ in the heart, planting His attributes deep in the life practice. These have a constraining motive, a supreme love for Christ our Saviour, which brings even the thoughts into captivity to Him.[8]

Convicting and Converting Truths--In every congregation there are souls upon whom the Spirit of the Lord is moving, and they need help in order that they may understand what they must do to be saved. You have often presented grand scenes before them which they could not comprehend. Those who are imaginative may grasp these lofty thoughts, but to the larger number such discourses are only as Greek [to them]. Dwell upon truths that convict and convert souls. God is at work in the tent, though there be few or many present.

From unfeigned lips you should breathe a prayer that God would guide you to give to every man his portion of meat in due season, and so aid you that you will not get above the simplicity of the gospel to dwell upon favorite subjects which

will not enlighten the darkened conscience, or convince men of sin, of righteousness, and judgment to come. In distinct lines, present to your hearers what they must do to be saved; lead them into the paths of truth and holiness. As the flock of the pasture, lead them where they may drink the water of salvation.[9]

Unreserved Consecration--Some time ago I wrote in my diary the following: “We seemed to be assembled in a meeting. One of authority was present. He said: ‘Say to ministers and evangelists, Carry the work forward with true spirituality. Make the application that is made in the Word of God, that the result may not be merely a sympathetic stirring of the feelings--a result that will fade away into nothingness when the impression is removed.’ I am commissioned to say that all who see their need can be helped. Let every step taken be a step of advancement toward genuine conversion, toward unreserved consecration of heart, mind, soul, and strength to the service of the Lord. Let all that is done tend to genuine reformation in thought, in word, in deed, in character-building. Let the true

be discerned from the false. Do not allow the enemy to lead you to weave wrong figures into the pattern. Keep the love of Christ prominent before the children and youth. Repeat to them often His simple lessons.”[10]

Obedience to Parents and to God--Teach the youth that sin in any line is defined in the Scriptures as “transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. ... Teach them in simple language that they must be obedient to their parents and give their hearts to God.[11]

Spiritual Malaria--Unruly, debasing tendencies and passions cannot reign in the heart controlled by the Spirit of Christ. There are many who have never submitted their will and way fully without any reserve to Jesus Christ.

There need to be far more lessons in the ministry of the Word of true conversion than of the arguments of the doctrines. For it is far easier and more natural for the heart that is not under the control of the Spirit of Christ to choose doctrinal

subjects rather than the practical. There are many Christless discourses given no more acceptable to God than was the offering of Cain. They are not in harmony with God.

The Lord calls upon you, my brother, to step down from the work, leave the walls of Zion, or be a converted man. When your own heart is sanctified through the truth there will be in it no moral defilement. It will now require a most desperate resistance upon your part to unholy suggestions because your soul is tainted with spiritual malaria. You have breathed a satanic atmosphere. You have not been a man in the sight of God. When your mind should have been growing, your ideas elevated, and your plans and labors broadened, you have been growing less and less efficient as a worker because God is not blessing your efforts.[12]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 107, 1898.
2. Testimonies for the Church 6:54.

3. Evangelism, 350.
4. Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 258.
5. Gospel Workers, 159.
6. Evangelism, 134.
7. Gospel Workers, 170.
8. Manuscript 138, 1897.
9. Letter 29, 1895.
10. Letter 111, 1904.
11. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 169.
12. Letter 5, 1886.

Chapter 60

Practical Godliness

Way to the Heart--Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness. Frequently, when efforts are made to present the truth in new fields, the discourses given are largely theoretical. ...

In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ. The popular sins and indulgences of our day should be condemned, and practical godliness enjoined. Feeling from the heart the importance of the words he utters, the true minister is unable to repress his concern for the souls of those for whom he labors.[1]

A Place in Every Discourse--The most convincing arguments may be presented, and yet sinners seem as far from salvation as ever. Ministers should not preach sermon after sermon on doctrinal subjects alone. Practical godliness

should find a place in every discourse.[2]

Purity, Holiness, and Usefulness--Purity, holiness, and usefulness should be the burden of every sermon, the burden of every prayer.[3]

Store of Practical Subjects--You should be careful and study to have a store of practical subjects that you have investigated and that you can enter into the spirit of and present in a plain, forcible manner to the people at the right time and place as they may need. You have not been thoroughly furnished from the Word of Inspiration unto all good works. When the flock have needed spiritual food, you have frequently presented some argumentative subject that was no more appropriate for the occasion than an oration upon national affairs.[4]

Practical Godliness a New Revelation--The members of the various churches are very ignorant in regard to the Bible, and the simplest lessons on practical godliness come to them as a new revelation. They need to know what is truth. Do not

take up lines of thought that will simply please the fancy or gratify curiosity. Break the bread of life to the people.[5]

Christ's Lifestyle--Although it is not congenial to the natural inclinations, the minister must proclaim the straight truth which will make the ears of them that hear tingle; for they must lay before those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God the dangers and the perils that are around them, and the doom that awaits the impenitent. Because this message is not agreeable to their inclination or welcome to those who must be warned, they are solemnly charged to be faithful in its declaration. The minister will meet wrongs that will seem to defy correction. They will be made aware of sins that seem to be covered that will need to be exposed on the right hand and on the left. The prophet says, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God" (Isaiah

58:1, 2).

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:1, 2).

The minister is not to indulge in the relation of anecdotes, but he is to preach the Word. “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality” (1 Timothy 5:20, 21). “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). We are to present Christ to the people, following the words of the apostle, where he says, “Whom we preach, warning every man,

and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily”([Colossians 1:28, 29). Was it essential for Paul to have this experience? Read carefully his words, and see if it is safe for any of the ministers of Christ to shape their life according to any lower standard of godliness.[6]

Plain, Sensible Discourses--No worker is to consider it his duty to administer reproof, and point out existing evils, and stop with this. Such work does not accomplish any good, but only disheartens and discourages. Plain, sensible, intelligent discourses should be preached to the churches that will show the need of seeking the Lord in prayer, and of opening the heart to the Light of life, and that will lead church members to engage in humble work for God. To every man God has given a work; to each worker who engages in service for Him, He gives a part to act in communicating light and truth.[7]

Renewal of Grace--I am determined to keep before the people the fact that we must have unity. We must cease all criticism. We must urge that the great peculiarity distinguishing Christians from all others, is the union that exists between them and the Lord Jesus Christ, by constant exercise of the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. This union, oneness with Christ, leads to unity with and love toward one another. Christians delight to honor God by obeying all His commandments. Bound together in love with Christ, they have love toward one another.

We must dwell upon this theme more than we have done. The subject of His renewing grace, dwelt upon in discourses, will be pleasing to the Lord, and His Holy Spirit will come into the hearts of those who listen.[8]

Notes:

1. Gospel Workers, 158, 159.
2. Evangelism, 178.
3. Letter 27, 1888.

4. Testimonies for the Church 3:228.
5. Letter 29, 1895.
6. Letter 3, 1892.
7. Manuscript 95, 1907.
8. Letter 42, 1906.

Chapter 61

Men and Women of the Bible

Enoch

Conversation on Heavenly Things--Enoch's case is before us. Hundreds of years he walked with God. He lived in a corrupt age, when moral pollution was teeming all around him; yet he trained his mind to devotion, to love purity. His conversation was upon heavenly things. He educated his mind to run in this channel, and he bore the impress of the divine. His countenance was lighted up with the light which shineth in the face of Jesus.[1]

Preacher of Righteousness--As the scenes of the future were opened to his view, Enoch became a preacher of righteousness, bearing God's message to all who would hear the words of warning. In the land where Cain had sought to flee from the divine presence, the prophet of God made known the wonderful scenes that had passed before

his vision. “Behold,” he declared, “the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds.”

The power of God that wrought with His servant was felt by those who heard. Some gave heed to the warning and renounced their sins; but the multitudes mocked at the solemn message. The servants of God are to bear a similar message to the world in the last days, and it also will be received by the majority with unbelief and mockery.

As year after year passed, deeper and deeper grew the tide of human guilt, darker and darker gathered the clouds of divine judgment. Yet Enoch, the witness of faith, held on his way, warning, pleading, and teaching, striving to turn back the tide of guilt and to stay the bolts of vengeance.[2]

Reprover of Sin--He was a fearless reprover of sin. While he preached the love of God in Christ to the people of his time, and pleaded with them to forsake their evil ways, he rebuked the prevailing

iniquity, and warned the men of his generation that judgment would surely be visited upon the transgressor. It was the Spirit of Christ that spoke through Enoch; that Spirit is manifested, not alone in utterances of love, compassion, and entreaty; it is not smooth things only that are spoken by holy men. God puts into the heart and lips of His messengers truths to utter that are keen and cutting as a two-edged sword.[3]

Fruitage of His Message--After proclaiming his message, he always took back with him to his place of retirement some who had received the warning. Some of these became overcomers, and died before the Flood came. But some had lived so long in the corrupting influence of sin that they could not endure righteousness.[4]

Jochebed

Teacher of Moses--Jochebed was a woman and a slave. Her lot in life was humble, her burden heavy. But through no other woman, save Mary of Nazareth, has the world received greater blessing.

Knowing that her child must soon pass beyond her care, to the guardianship of those who knew not God, she the more earnestly endeavored to link his soul with heaven. She sought to implant in his heart love and loyalty to God. And faithfully was the work accomplished. Those principles of truth that were the burden of his mother's teaching and the lesson of her life, no after influence could induce Moses to renounce.[5]

Educator for God--God had heard the mother's prayers; her faith had been rewarded. It was with deep gratitude that she entered upon her now safe and happy task. She faithfully improved her opportunity to educate her child for God. She felt confident that he had been preserved for some great work, and she knew that he must soon be given up to his royal mother, to be surrounded with influences that would tend to lead him away from God. All this rendered her more diligent and careful in his instruction than in that of her other children. She endeavored to imbue his mind with the fear of God and the love of truth and justice, and earnestly prayed that he might be preserved

from every corrupting influence. She showed him the folly and sin of idolatry, and early taught him to bow down and pray to the living God, who alone could hear him and help him in every emergency.

She kept the boy as long as she could, but was obliged to give him up when he was about twelve years old. From his humble cabin home he was taken to the royal palace, to the daughter of Pharaoh, “and he became her son.” Yet even here he did not lose the impressions received in childhood. The lessons learned at his mother’s side could not be forgotten. They were a shield from the pride, the infidelity, and the vice that flourished amid the splendor of the court.

How far-reaching in its results was the influence of that one Hebrew woman, and she an exile and a slave! The whole future life of Moses, the great mission which he fulfilled as the leader of Israel, testifies to the importance of the work of the Christian mother.[6]

Faithful Women As Mothers--Especially does

responsibility rest upon the mother. She, by whose lifeblood the child is nourished and its physical frame built up, imparts to it also mental and spiritual influences that tend to the shaping of mind and character. It was Jochebed, the Hebrew mother, who, strong in faith, was “not afraid of the king’s commandment” (Hebrews 11:23), of whom was born Moses, the deliverer of Israel. It was Hannah, the woman of prayer and self-sacrifice and heavenly inspiration, who gave birth to Samuel, the heaven-instructed child, the incorruptible judge, the founder of Israel’s sacred schools. It was Elisabeth, the kinswoman and kindred spirit of Mary of Nazareth, who was the mother of the Saviour’s herald.[7]

Moses

Words of Eloquence--The life of Moses was marked with supreme love to God. His piety, humility, and forbearance gave him influence with the host of Israel. His zeal and faith in God were greater than those of any other man upon the earth. He had often addressed his people in words of

stirring eloquence. No one knew better than he how to move the affections of the people. He conducted all matters connected with the religious interests of the people with great wisdom.[8]

King Saul

Fluency and Wisdom--As Saul approached them [a band of prophets], the Spirit of the Lord came upon him also, and he joined in their song of praise, and prophesied with them. He spoke with so great fluency and wisdom, and joined so earnestly in the service, that those who had known him exclaimed in astonishment, “What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”[9]

Abigail

Kindness and Peace--The piety of Abigail, like the fragrance of a flower, breathed out all unconsciously in face and word and action. The Spirit of the Son of God was abiding in her soul. Her speech, seasoned with grace, and full of

kindness and peace, shed a heavenly influence. Better impulses came to David, and he trembled as he thought what might have been the consequences of his rash purpose. “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” Matthew 5:9. Would that there were many more like this woman of Israel, who would soothe the irritated feelings, prevent rash impulses, and quell great evils by words of calm and well-directed wisdom.[10]

Elijah

Clear, Trumpetlike Tones--Looking first upon the brokendown altar of Jehovah, and then upon the multitude, Elijah cries out in clear, trumpetlike tones, “How long halt ye between two opinions?”[11]

Children of Israel

Responsibility of Parents--God commanded the Hebrews to teach their children His requirements, and to make them acquainted with

all His dealings with their people. The home and the school were one. In the place of stranger lips, the loving hearts of the father and mother were to give instruction to their children. Thoughts of God were associated with all the events of daily life in the home dwelling. The mighty works of God in the deliverance of His people were recounted with eloquence and reverential awe. The great truths of God's providence and of the future life were impressed on the young mind. It became acquainted with the true, the good, the beautiful.

By the use of figures and symbols the lessons given were illustrated, and thus more firmly fixed in the memory. Through this animated imagery the child was, almost from infancy, initiated into the mysteries, the wisdom, and the hopes of his fathers, and guided in a way of thinking and feeling and anticipating, that reached beyond things seen and transitory, to the unseen and eternal.[12]

John the Baptist

Pure, Native Eloquence--The voice of John

was lifted up like a trumpet. His commission was, “Show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” (Isaiah 58:1) He had obtained no human scholarship. God and nature had been his teachers. But one was needed to prepare the way before Christ who was bold enough to make his voice heard like the prophets of old, summoning the degenerate nation to repentance.

And all went forth into the wilderness to hear him. Unlearned fishermen and peasants came from the surrounding countries and from regions nigh and afar off. The Roman soldiers from the barracks of Herod came to hear. Chieftains came with their swords girded by their sides, to put down anything that savored of riot or rebellion. The avaricious tax gatherers came from the regions round about; and from the Sanhedrin came forth the phylacteried priests. All listened as if spellbound; and all came away, even the Pharisee, the Sadducee, and the cold, unimpressionable scoffer of the age, with the sneer gone, and cut to the heart with a sense of their sin. There were no long arguments, no finely

cut theories, elaborately delivered in their “firstly,” “secondly,” and “thirdly.” But pure native eloquence was revealed in the short sentences, every word carrying with it the certainty and truth of the weighty warnings given. ...

John the Baptist met sin with open rebuke in men of humble occupation and in men of high degree. He declared the truth to kings and nobles, whether they would hear or reject it.[13]

The Power of His Words--It was the purpose of John to startle and arouse the people, and cause them to tremble because of their great wickedness. In simplicity and plainness, he pointed out the errors and crimes of men. A power attended his words, and, reluctant as the people were to hear the denunciation of their unholy lives, they could not resist his words. He flattered none; neither would he receive flattery of any. The people, as if with common consent, came to him repenting, and confessing their sins, and were baptized of him in Jordan.

Kings and rulers came to the wilderness to hear the prophet, and were interested and deeply convicted as he fearlessly pointed out their particular sins. His discernment of character and spiritual sight read the purposes and hearts of those who came to him, and he fearlessly told both rich and poor, the honorable and the lowly, that without repentance of their sins and a thorough conversion, although they might claim to be righteous, they could not enjoy the favor of God and have part in the kingdom of the Messiah, whose coming he announced.

In the spirit and with the power of Elijah, John denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and raised his voice in reproofing their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing.[14]

Voice Startling and Stern--With no elaborate arguments or fine-spun theories did John declare his message. Startling and stern, yet full of hope, his voice was heard from the wilderness: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 3:2. With a new, strange power it moved the

people. The whole nation was stirred. Multitudes flocked to the wilderness.[15]

Burden of His Mission--With vision illuminated by the divine Spirit he studied the characters of men, that he might understand how to reach their hearts with the message of heaven. The burden of his mission was upon him. In solitude, by meditation and prayer, he sought to gird up his soul for the lifework before him.[16]

Trumpet Tones--John had preached the coming of the Messiah. In trumpet tones the words of the forerunner of Christ had rung in their ears.[17]

One of the Greatest of Prophets--Christ declared John the Baptist to be one of the greatest of the prophets, and He showed His hearers that they had had sufficient evidence that John was a messenger from God. The words of the preacher in the wilderness were with power. He bore his message unflinchingly, rebuking the sins of priests and rulers, and enjoining upon them the works of

the kingdom of heaven.[18]

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

Teacher of the Child Jesus--The child Jesus did not receive instruction in the synagogues schools. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips and from the scrolls of the prophets, He learned of heavenly things.[19]

Class at His Mother's Knee--In childhood, youth, and manhood, Jesus studied the Scriptures. As a little child He was daily at His mother's knee, taught from the scrolls of the prophets.[20]

The Apostles

Simple, Accurate Speech--The apostles and their associates were unlettered men, yet through the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, their speech, whether in their own or a foreign language, became pure, simple, and accurate, both in word and in accent.[21]

Elevated Truths--From this time [Pentecost] forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate in word and accent, whether they spoke their native tongue or a foreign language. These humble men, who had never learned in the school of the prophets, presented truths so elevated and pure as to astonish those who heard them.[22]

Words As Sharp Arrows--The arguments of the apostles alone, though clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice that had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Spirit sent the arguments home to hearts with divine power. The words of the apostles were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting men of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory.[23]

Heroes of Faith--The disciples were but humble men, without wealth and with no weapon but the Word of God; yet in Christ's strength they went forth to tell the wonderful story of the manger and the cross, and to triumph over all opposition.

Without earthly honor or recognition, they were heroes of faith. From their lips came words of divine eloquence that shook the world.[24]

Preachers of a Creator God--The apostles endeavored to impart to these idolaters a knowledge of God the Creator, and of His Son, the Saviour of the human race. They first directed attention to the wonderful works of God--the sun, the moon, and the stars, the beautiful order of the recurring seasons, the mighty snow-capped mountains, the lofty trees, and other varied wonders of nature, which showed a skill beyond human comprehension. Through these works of the Almighty, the apostles led the minds of the heathen to a contemplation of the great Ruler of the universe.

Having made plain these fundamental truths concerning the Creator, the apostles told the Lystrians of the Son of God, who came from heaven to our world because He loved the children of men.[25]

Clear, Plain Message--The gospel workers in Corinth realized the terrible dangers threatening the souls of those for whom they were laboring; and it was with a sense of the responsibility resting on them that they presented the truth as it is in Jesus. Clear, plain, and decided was their message--a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. And not only in their words, but in the daily life, was the gospel revealed.[26]

Simplicity and Clarity--They had presented the truth with simplicity and clearness, praying for the conviction and conversion of souls. And they had endeavored to bring their conduct into harmony with their teaching, that the truth presented might commend itself to every man's conscience.[27]

Boldness and Power--The people were amazed at the boldness of the disciples. They supposed, because they were ignorant fishermen, they would be overcome with embarrassment when confronted by the priests, scribes, and elders. But they took knowledge that they had been with Jesus.

The apostles spoke as He had spoken, with a convincing power that silenced their adversaries.[28]

John the Apostle

Faithful, Earnest Laborer--After the ascension of Christ, John stands forth as a faithful, earnest laborer for the Master. With the other disciples he enjoyed the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and with fresh zeal and power he continued to speak to the people the words of life, seeking to lead their thoughts to the Unseen. He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest. In beautiful language and with a musical voice he told of the words and works of Christ, speaking in a way that impressed the hearts of those who heard him. The simplicity of his words, the sublime power of the truths he uttered, and the fervor that characterized his teachings, gave him access to all classes.[29]

No Controversy--As a witness for Christ, John entered into no controversy, no wearisome

contention. He declared what he knew, what he had seen and heard.[30]

Focus on Gospel Story--When the faith of the Christians would seem to waver under the fierce opposition they were forced to meet, the old, tried servant of Jesus would repeat with power and eloquence the story of the crucified and risen Saviour.[31]

Simplicity of Language--When he testified of the Saviour's grace, the simplicity of his language was eloquent with the love that pervaded his whole being. He had not a doubt nor a suspicion. He entered into no controversy, no wearisome contention.[32]

Powerful Preacher--The apostle's life was in harmony with his teachings. The love which glowed in his heart for Christ, led him to put forth the most earnest, untiring labor for his fellow men, especially for his brethren in the Christian church. He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest, and his words carried with them a weight

of conviction.[33]

Candor in the Emperor's Court--John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. Here before the authorities the apostle's doctrines were misstated. False witnesses accused him of teaching seditious heresies. By these accusations his enemies hoped to bring about the disciple's death.

John answered for himself in a clear and convincing manner, and with such simplicity and candor that his words had a powerful effect. His hearers were astonished at his wisdom and eloquence. But the more convincing his testimony, the deeper was the hatred of his opposers. The emperor Domitian was filled with rage. He could neither dispute the reasoning of Christ's faithful advocate, nor match the power that attended his utterance of truth; yet he determined that he would silence his voice.[34]

Influence of the Holy Spirit--The simplicity of his words, the sublime power of the truths he

uttered, and the spiritual fervor that characterized his teachings, gave him access to all classes. Yet even believers were unable to fully comprehend the sacred mysteries of divine truth unfolded in his discourses. He seemed to be constantly imbued with the Holy Spirit. He sought to bring the thoughts of the people up to grasp the unseen. The wisdom with which he spoke caused his words to drop as the dew, softening and subduing the soul.[35]

Peter

Adaptation to His Audience--With clearness and power Peter bore witness of the death and resurrection of Christ: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words:

Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him ... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of

death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.”

Peter did not refer to the teachings of Christ to prove his position, because he knew that the prejudice of his hearers was so great that his words on this subject would be of no effect. Instead, he spoke to them of David, who was regarded by the Jews as one of the patriarchs of their nation.[36]

Christ As His Example--This courageous defense appalled the Jewish leaders. They had supposed that the disciples would be overcome with fear and confusion when brought before the Sanhedrin. But instead, these witnesses spoke as Christ had spoken, with a convincing power that silenced their adversaries. There was no trace of fear in Peter’s voice as he declared of Christ, “This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”

Peter here used a figure of speech familiar to the priests.[37]

Stephen

Defender of Truth--Stephen, the foremost of the seven deacons, was a man of deep piety and broad faith. Though a Jew by birth, he spoke the Greek language, and was familiar with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He therefore found opportunity to preach the gospel in the synagogues of the Greek Jews. He was very active in the cause of Christ, and boldly proclaimed his faith. Learned rabbis and doctors of the law engaged in public discussion with him, confidently expecting an easy victory. But “they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.” Not only did he speak in the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was plain that he was a student of the prophecies, and learned in all matters of the law. He ably defended the truths that he advocated, and utterly defeated his opponents.[38]

Clear, Thrilling Voice--When Stephen was questioned as to the truth of the charges against him, he began his defense in a clear, thrilling voice, which rang through the council hall. In words that

held the assembly spellbound, he proceeded to rehearse the history of the chosen people of God.[39]

Wisdom and Power--With power from on high, Stephen reproved the unbelieving priests and elders, and exalted Jesus before them. They could not withstand the wisdom and power with which he spoke.[40]

Paul

Instruction From God--Paul did not come to the churches as an orator or as a scientific philosopher. He did not seek merely to please the ear by flowery words and phrases. In eloquent simplicity he proclaimed the things that had been revealed to him. He was able to speak with power and authority, for he frequently received instruction from God in vision.[41]

Good Reasoning Powers--He could reason with extraordinary clearness, and by his withering sarcasm could place an opponent in no enviable

light ... An eloquent speaker and a severe critic, Paul, with his stern purpose and undaunted courage, possessed the very qualifications needed in the early church.[42]

His Life an Example--Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of the truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist.[43]

Sensible, Intelligent Appeals--His toil-worn hands, as he presented them before the people, bore testimony that he was not chargeable to any man for his support. They detracted nothing, he deemed, from the force of his pathetic appeals, sensible, intelligent, and eloquent beyond those of any other

man who had acted a part in the Christian ministry.[44]

Step-by-Step Approach--Paul did not approach the Jews in such a way as to arouse their prejudices. He did not at first tell them that they must believe in Jesus of Nazareth; but dwelt upon the prophecies that spoke of Christ, His mission and His work. Step by step he led his hearers on, showing the importance of honoring the law of God. He gave due honor to the ceremonial law, showing that it was Christ who instituted the Jewish economy and the sacrificial service. Then he brought them down to the first advent of the Redeemer, and showed that in the life and death of Christ every specification of the sacrificial service had been fulfilled.

The Gentiles, Paul approached by exalting Christ, and then presenting the binding claims of the law. He showed how the light reflected by the cross of Calvary gave significance and glory to the whole Jewish economy.

Thus the apostle varied his manner of labor, shaping his message to the circumstances under which he was placed. After patient labor he was successful to a large degree; yet there were many who would not be convinced.[45]

Modest Language--There is a striking contrast between the boastful, self-righteous claims of those who profess to be without sin, and the modest language of the apostle. Yet it was the purity and faithfulness of his own life that gave such power to his exhortations to his brethren.[46]

Forcible Manner--With the Spirit of God resting upon him, he would in a clear and forcible manner carry his hearers down through the prophecies to the time of Christ's first advent and show them that the scriptures had been fulfilled which referred to His sufferings, death, and resurrection.[47]

Convincing Arguments--Among those who encountered Paul in the marketplace were "certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics";

but they, and all others who came in contact with him, soon saw that he had a store of knowledge even greater than their own. His intellectual power commanded the respect of the learned; while his earnest, logical reasoning and the power of his oratory held the attention of all in the audience. His hearers recognized the fact that he was no novice, but was able to meet all classes with convincing arguments in support of the doctrines he taught. Thus the apostle stood undaunted, meeting his opposers on their own ground, matching logic with logic, philosophy with philosophy, eloquence with eloquence.

His heathen opponents called his attention to the fate of Socrates, who, because he was a setter-forth of strange gods, had been condemned to death; and they counseled Paul not to endanger his life in the same way. But the apostle's discourses riveted the attention of the people, and his unaffected wisdom commanded their respect and admiration.[48]

Failure of Mere Eloquence and Logic--It had

been Paul's custom to adopt an oratorical style in his preaching. He was a man fitted to speak before kings, before the great and learned men of Athens, and his intellectual acquirements were often of value to him in preparing the way for the gospel. He tried to do this in Athens, meeting eloquence with eloquence, philosophy with philosophy, and logic with logic; but he failed to meet with the success he had hoped for.[49]

Simple Presentation of Christ--The experience of the apostle Paul in meeting the philosophers of Athens has a lesson for us. In presenting the gospel before the court of the Areopagus, Paul met logic with logic, science with science, philosophy with philosophy. The wisest of his hearers were astonished and silenced. His words could not be controverted. But the effort bore little fruit. Few were led to accept the gospel. Henceforth Paul adopted a different manner of labor. He avoided elaborate arguments and discussion of theories, and in simplicity pointed men and women to Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

Writing to the Corinthians of his work among them, he said: “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 anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. ... My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)[50]

Deep Reasoning--The facts in the case were that Paul was a man of great learning, and his wisdom and manners charmed his hearers. Learned men were pleased with his knowledge, and many of them believed on Jesus. When before kings and large assemblies, he would pour forth such eloquence as would fascinate all before him. This greatly enraged the priests and elders. Paul could readily enter into deep reasoning and, soaring up, carry the people with him in the most exalted trains of thought, bringing to view the deep riches of the grace of God and portraying before them the

amazing love of Christ. Then with simplicity he would come down to the understanding of the common people and in a most powerful manner relate his experience, which called forth from them an ardent desire to become the disciples of Christ.[51]

Creative Power of the True God--The people were carried away with admiration for Paul's earnest and logical presentation of the attributes of the true God--of His creative power, and the existence of His overruling providence. With earnest and fervid eloquence, the apostle declared, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." [52]

Tact With Heathen Audiences--Paul's words contain a treasure of knowledge for the church. He was in a position where he might easily have said that which would have irritated his proud listeners,

and brought himself into difficulty. Had his oration been a direct attack upon their gods and the great men of the city, he would have been in danger of meeting the fate of Socrates. But with a tact born of divine love, he carefully drew their minds away from heathen deities, by revealing to them the true God, who was to them unknown.[53]

Christ the Center of His Mind--His words were spoken with solemn earnestness, and his hearers could not but discern that he loved with all his heart the crucified and risen Saviour. They saw that his mind was centered in Christ, that his whole life was bound up with his Lord. So impressive were his words, that only those who were filled with the bitterest hatred against the Christian religion could stand unmoved by them.[54]

Sound, Practical Instruction--Paul was an eloquent speaker. Before his conversion, he had often sought to impress his hearers by flights of oratory. But now he set all this aside. Instead of indulging in poetic descriptions and fanciful representations, which might please the senses and

feed the imagination, but which would not touch the daily experience, Paul sought by the use of simple language to bring home to the heart the truths that are of vital importance. Fanciful representations of truth may cause an ecstasy of feeling; but all too often, truths presented in this way do not supply the food necessary to strengthen and fortify the believer for the battles of life. The immediate needs, the present trials, of struggling souls--these must be met with sound, practical instruction in the fundamental principles of Christianity.[55]

Gospel in Its Simplicity--During the year and a half that Paul had spent in Corinth, he had purposely presented the gospel in its simplicity. "Not with excellency of speech or of wisdom" had he come to the Corinthians; but with fear and trembling, and "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," had he declared "the testimony of God," that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Corinthians 2:1, 4, 5)

Paul had necessarily adapted his manner of teaching to the condition of the church. “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,” he afterward explained to them, “but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3:1)[56]

His Religion Not a Mere Profession--His conversation, his influence, his refusal to yield to self-gratification, must show that his religion was not a profession merely, but a daily, living connection with God. One goal he kept ever before him, and strove earnestly to reach--“the righteousness which is of God by faith.” (Philippians 3:9)[57]

Convincing Power--With convincing power the apostle set forth the great truth of the resurrection.[58]

Plain Speech--The apostle, in the most decided and impressive manner, endeavored to correct the false and dangerous ideas and practices that were prevailing in the Corinthian church. He spoke

plainly, yet in love for their souls.[59]

Calm, Self-Possessed Bearing--In the midst of the tumult (see Acts 21:33-40) the apostle was calm and self-possessed. His mind was stayed upon God, and he knew that angels of heaven were about him. He felt unwilling to leave the temple without making an effort to set the truth before his countrymen. As he was about to be led into the castle, he said to the chief captain, "May I speak unto thee?" Lysias responded, "Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?" In reply Paul said, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."

The request was granted, and "Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people." The gesture attracted their attention, while his bearing commanded respect.[60]

Personal Experience--Had he attempted to enter into argument with his opponents, they would have stubbornly refused to listen to his words; but the relation of his experience was attended with a convincing power that for the time seemed to soften and subdue their hearts.[61]

Evident Sincerity--In a candid, straightforward manner he stated the object of his visit to Jerusalem, and the circumstances of his arrest and trial. ... The apostle spoke with earnestness and evident sincerity, and his words carried with them a weight of conviction.[62]

Clear Defense Before Agrippa--With clearness and power Paul outlined before Agrippa the leading events connected with the life of Christ on earth.[63]

True Courtesy--Look at Paul when brought before rulers. His speech before Agrippa is an illustration of true courtesy as well as persuasive eloquence.[64]

Caution and Kindness--He said nothing of the abuse which he had suffered at the hands of the Jews, or of their repeated plots to assassinate him. His words were marked with caution and kindness. ... He related his own experience, and presented arguments from the Old Testament Scriptures with simplicity, sincerity, and power.[65]

As a Voice From Heaven--With more than human eloquence and power, Paul presents the truths of the gospel. He points his hearers to the sacrifice made for the fallen race. He declares that an infinite price has been paid for man's redemption. ...

Thus pleads the advocate of truth. Faithful among the faithless, loyal among the disloyal, he stands as God's representative, and his voice is as a voice from heaven. There is no fear, no sadness, no discouragement in word or look. ...

Many who that day looked upon him, "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." (Acts 6:15)

Never before had that company listened to words like these. They struck a chord that vibrated in the hearts of even the most hardened. Truth, clear and convincing, overthrew error.[66]

Timothy

Home Instruction--Timothy's father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. From a child he had known the Scriptures. The piety that he saw in his home life was sound and sensible. The faith of his mother and his grandmother in the sacred oracles was to him a constant reminder of the blessing in doing God's will. The Word of God was the rule by which these two godly women had guided Timothy. The spiritual power of the lessons that he had received from them kept him pure in speech and unsullied by the evil influences with which he was surrounded. Thus his home instructors had cooperated with God in preparing him to bear burdens.

Paul saw that Timothy was faithful, steadfast,

and true, and he chose him as a companion in labor and travel. Those who had taught Timothy in his childhood were rewarded by seeing the son of their care linked in close fellowship with the great apostle. Timothy was a mere youth when he was chosen by God to be a teacher; but his principles had been so established by his early education that he was fitted to take his place as Paul's helper. And though young, he bore his responsibilities with Christian meekness.[67]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 2:122.
2. Gospel Workers, 52, 53.
3. Patriarchs and Prophets, 86.
4. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 1:1088.
5. Education, 61.
6. Patriarchs and Prophets, 243, 244.
7. The Ministry of Healing, 372.
8. Spiritual Gifts 3:57.
9. Patriarchs and Prophets, 610.
10. Patriarchs and Prophets, 667.
11. Prophets and Kings, 147.

12. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 95.
13. Selected Messages 2:148, 149.
14. The Review and Herald, January 7, 1873.
15. Testimonies for the Church 8:332.
16. The Desire of Ages, 102.
17. The Review and Herald, February 13, 1900.
18. Christ's Object Lessons, 278.
19. The Desire of Ages, 70.
20. Education, 185.
21. The Desire of Ages, 821.
22. The Story of Redemption, 246.
23. The Acts of the Apostles, 45.
24. The Acts of the Apostles, 77.
25. The Acts of the Apostles, 180.
26. The Acts of the Apostles, 249.
27. The Acts of the Apostles, 330.
28. The Story of Redemption, 252.
29. The Acts of the Apostles, 546.
30. The Acts of the Apostles, 555.
31. The Acts of the Apostles, 568.
32. Manuscript 8a, 1888.
33. The Review and Herald, February 15, 1881.
34. The Acts of the Apostles, 569, 570.
35. The Review and Herald, February 15, 1881.

36. The Acts of the Apostles, 41.
37. The Acts of the Apostles, 63, 64.
38. The Acts of the Apostles, 97.
39. The Acts of the Apostles, 99.
40. Early Writings, 197.
41. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 6:1084.
42. The Acts of the Apostles, 124.
43. Gospel Workers, 59.
44. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 6:1064.
45. Gospel Workers, 118.
46. The Sanctified Life, 86.
47. Early Writings, 201, 202.
48. The Acts of the Apostles, 235, 236.
49. The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 6:1084.
50. The Ministry of Healing, 214, 215.
51. Early Writings, 206, 207.
52. The Acts of the Apostles, 238.
53. The Acts of the Apostles, 241.
54. The Acts of the Apostles, 247, 248.
55. The Acts of the Apostles, 251, 252.
56. The Acts of the Apostles, 270, 271.
57. The Acts of the Apostles, 314.
58. The Acts of the Apostles, 320.
59. The Acts of the Apostles, 321.

60. The Acts of the Apostles, 408.
61. The Acts of the Apostles, 409.
62. The Acts of the Apostles, 421.
63. The Acts of the Apostles, 436.
64. The Ministry of Healing, 489, 490.
65. The Acts of the Apostles, 450, 451.
66. The Acts of the Apostles, 495, 496.
67. The Acts of the Apostles, 203, 204.

Chapter 62

Medieval Reformers

Wycliffe

Able Teacher and Preacher--He was an able and earnest teacher, and an eloquent preacher, and his daily life was a demonstration of the truths he preached. His knowledge of the Scriptures, the force of his reasoning, the purity of his life, and his unbending courage and integrity, won for him general esteem and confidence.[1]

Lack of Fear--Wycliffe appealed from the synod to Parliament; he fearlessly arraigned the hierarchy before the national council, and demanded a reform of the enormous abuses sanctioned by the church. With convincing power he portrayed the usurpations and corruptions of the papal see.[2]

Fearlessness and Humility--He fearlessly maintained his teachings, and repelled the

accusations of his persecutors. Losing sight of himself, of his position, of the occasion, he summoned his hearers before the divine tribunal, and weighed their sophistries and deceptions in the balances of eternal truth.[3]

Huss

Preacher of God's Word--But it was in another field that Huss began the work of reform. Several years after taking priest's orders he was appointed preacher of the chapel of Bethlehem. The founder of this chapel had advocated, as a matter of great importance, the preaching of the Scriptures in the language of the people. Notwithstanding Rome's opposition to this practice, it had not been wholly discontinued in Bohemia. But there was great ignorance of the Bible, and the worst vices prevailed among the people of all ranks. These evils Huss unsparingly denounced, appealing to the Word of God to enforce the principles of truth and purity which he inculcated.[4]

Jerome

Clarity and Power--The words of Jerome excited astonishment and admiration, even in his enemies. For a whole year he had been immured in a dungeon, unable to read or even to see, in great physical suffering and mental anxiety. Yet his arguments were presented with as much clearness and power as if he had had undisturbed opportunity for study.[5]

Luther

Deep Fervor--Luther was ordained a priest, and was called from the cloister to a professorship in the University of Wittenberg. Here he applied himself to the study of the Scriptures in the original tongues. He began to lecture upon the Bible; and the book of Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles were opened to the understanding of crowds of delighted listeners. He was mighty in the Scriptures and the grace of God rested upon him. His eloquence captivated his hearers, the clearness and power with which he presented the truth convinced

their understanding, and his deep fervor touched their hearts.[6]

Fearless Bearing--The simple energy of his words, his fearless bearing, his calm, speaking eye, and the unalterable determination expressed in every word and act made a deep impression upon the assembly. It was evident that he could not be induced, either by promises or threats, to yield to the mandate of Rome. Christ had spoken through Luther's testimony with a power and grandeur that for the time inspired both friends and foes with awe and wonder.[7]

God's Chosen Instrument--Luther was God's chosen instrument to tear off the garb of hypocrisy from the papal church and expose her corruption. He raised his voice zealously, and in the power of the Holy Spirit cried out against and rebuked the existing sins of the leaders of the people.[8]

Calm, Dignified Power--The calm, dignified power of Luther humbled his enemies, and dealt a most dreadful blow to the papacy.[9]

Words With Majesty--Luther's prayer was heard. His courage and faith returned as he met his enemies. Meek as a lamb he stood, surrounded by the great men of the earth, who, like angry wolves, fastened their eyes upon him, hoping to awe him with their power and greatness. But he had taken hold of the strength of God and feared not. His words were spoken with such majesty and power that his enemies could do nothing against him. ...

The calm bearing of Luther was in striking contrast to the passion and rage exhibited by those so-called great men. They could not frighten him into a recantation of the truth. In noble simplicity and calm firmness he stood like a rock.[10]

Forcible Exposition--At the next interview, Luther presented a clear, concise, and forcible exposition of his views, fully supported by many quotations from Scripture.[11]

Solemnity and Earnestness--The solemnity and deep earnestness of his words gave him a

power that even his enemies could not wholly withstand.[12]

Prudence and Dignity--“For this reason I entreat your imperial majesty, with all humility, to allow me time, that I may answer without offending against the Word of God.”

In making this request, Luther moved wisely. His course convinced the assembly that he did not act from passion or impulse. Such calmness and self-command, unexpected in one who had shown himself bold and uncompromising, added to his power, and enabled him afterward to answer with a prudence, decision, wisdom, and dignity that surprised and disappointed his adversaries, and rebuked their insolence and pride.[13]

Careful Preparation of His Defense--With his mind stayed upon God, Luther prepared for the struggle before him. He thought upon the plan of his answer, examined passages in his own writings, and drew from the Holy Scriptures suitable proofs to sustain his positions.[14]

Subdued, Humble Tone--The imperial officer now demanded his decision as to whether he desired to retract his doctrines. Luther made his answer in a subdued and humble tone, without violence or passion. His demeanor was diffident and respectful; yet he manifested a confidence and joy that surprised the assembly.[15]

Courage and Firmness--The courage and firmness which he now displayed, as well as the power and clearness of his reasoning, filled all parties with surprise.[16]

In the Presence of God--The papal leaders were chagrined that their power, which had caused kings and nobles to tremble, should be thus despised by a humble monk; they longed to make him feel their wrath by torturing his life away. But Luther, understanding his danger, had spoken to all with Christian dignity and calmness. His words had been free from pride, passion, and misrepresentation. He had lost sight of himself, and of the great men surrounding him, and felt only

that he was in the presence of One infinitely superior to popes, prelates, kings, and emperors. Christ had spoken through Luther's testimony with a power and grandeur that for the time inspired both friends and foes with awe and wonder. ...

The elector Frederick had looked forward anxiously to Luther's appearance before the Diet, and with deep emotion he listened to his speech. With joy and pride he witnessed the doctor's courage, firmness, and self-possession, and determined to stand more firmly in his defense.[17]

Clear Reasoning--The contrast between the two disputants [Oecolampadius and Eck] was not without effect. The calm, clear reasoning of the Reformer, so gently and modestly presented, appealed to minds that turned in disgust from Eck's boastful and boisterous assumptions.[18]

The Wesleys and Whitefield

Justification and Renewal--Wesley's life was devoted to the preaching of the great truths which

he had received--justification through faith in the atoning blood of Christ, and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, bringing forth fruit in a life conformed to the example of Christ.

Whitefield and the Wesleys had been prepared for their work by long and sharp personal convictions of their own lost condition; and that they might be able to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, they had been subjected to the fiery ordeal of scorn, derision, and persecution, both in the university and as they were entering the ministry. ...

As members of the Church of England, they were strongly attached to her forms of worship, but the Lord had presented before them in His Word a higher standard. The Holy Spirit urged them to preach Christ and Him crucified. The power of the Highest attended their labors. Thousands were convicted and truly converted. It was necessary that these sheep be protected from ravening wolves. Wesley had no thought of forming a new denomination, but he organized them under what

was called the Methodist Connection.[19]

Gospel of the Grace of God--Thus while preaching the gospel of the grace of God, [John] Wesley, like his Master, sought to “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Faithfully did he accomplish the work given him of God, and glorious were the results which he was permitted to behold. At the close of his long life of more than fourscore years--above half a century spent in itinerant ministry-- his avowed adherents numbered more than half a million souls. But the multitude that through his labors had been lifted from the ruin and degradation of sin to a higher and a purer life, and the number who by his teaching had attained to a deeper and richer experience, will never be known till the whole family of the redeemed shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. His life presents a lesson of priceless worth to every Christian. Would that the faith and humility, the untiring zeal, self-sacrifice, and devotion of this servant of Christ, might be reflected in the churches of today![20]

Humble Men of Reformation Times

Simple, Straightforward Reasoning--By argument, sophistry, the traditions of the Fathers, and the authority of the church, many endeavored to overthrow the truth. Its advocates were driven to their Bibles to defend the validity of the fourth commandment. Humble men, armed with the Word of truth alone, withstood the attacks of men of learning, who, with surprise and anger, found their eloquent sophistry powerless against the simple, straightforward reasoning of men who were versed in the Scriptures rather than in the subtleties of the schools.[21]

Notes:

1. The Great Controversy, 81.
2. The Great Controversy, 89.
3. The Great Controversy, 90.
4. The Great Controversy, 99.
5. The Great Controversy, 112, 113.
6. The Story of Redemption, 341.
7. The Story of Redemption, 348.

8. Testimonies for the Church 1:372.
9. Testimonies for the Church 1:373.
10. Testimonies for the Church 1:374, 375.
11. The Great Controversy, 136.
12. The Great Controversy, 154.
13. The Great Controversy, 156.
14. The Great Controversy, 157.
15. The Great Controversy, 158.
16. The Great Controversy, 160, 161.
17. The Great Controversy, 161, 162.
18. The Great Controversy, 184.
19. The Great Controversy, 256, 257.
20. The Great Controversy, 264.
21. The Great Controversy, 455.

Chapter 63

Adventist Pioneers

William Miller

Language of Truth--Mr. Miller's manner of preaching was not flowery or oratorical, but he dealt in plain and startling facts that roused his hearers from their careless indifference. He supported his statements and theories by Scripture proof as he progressed. A convincing power attended his words, that seemed to stamp them as the language of truth. ...

He was an interesting speaker, and his exhortations, both to professed Christians and the impenitent, were appropriate and powerful. Sometimes a solemnity so marked as to be painful, pervaded his meetings. A sense of the impending crisis of human events impressed the minds of the listening crowds.[1]

James White

Boldness in Acting and Speaking--God should have the glory for the unbending integrity and noble courage to vindicate the right and condemn the wrong which my husband has had. Just such firmness and decision were necessary at the commencement of the work, and they have been needed all along, as it progressed step by step. He has stood in defense of the truth without yielding a single principle to please the best friend. He has had an ardent temperament, bold and fearless in acting and speaking. This has often led him into difficulties which he might frequently have avoided. He has been obliged to stand more firmly, to be more decided, to speak more earnestly and boldly, because of the very different temperament of the men connected with him in his labor.[2]

Clearness of Mind--After God had tested and proved us in the furnace of affliction, He raised up my husband and gave him greater clearness of

mind and power of intellect to plan and execute than he had before his affliction. When my husband felt his own weakness and moved in the fear of God, then the Lord was his strength. Prompt in speech and action, he has pushed forward reforms where they would otherwise have languished. He has made very liberal donations, fearing that his means would prove a snare to him.[3]

Precious Light of Truth for Himself--God has permitted the precious light of truth to shine upon His Word and illuminate the mind of my husband. He may reflect the rays of light from the presence of Jesus upon others by his preaching and writing.[4]

Greater Light for Others--I was shown that his relation to the people of God was similar, in some respects, to that of Moses to Israel. There were murmurers against Moses, when in adverse circumstances, and there have been murmurers against him.... He has also given my husband great light upon Bible subjects, not for himself alone, but

for others. I saw that these things should be written and talked out, and that new light would continue to shine upon the Word.[5]

Instrument of God for Reproof--As my husband has stood by my side to sustain me in my work, and has borne a plain testimony in unison with the work of the Spirit of God, many have felt that it was he personally who was injuring them, when it was the Lord who laid upon him the burden and who was, through His servant, reproving them and seeking to bring them where they would repent of their wrongs and have the favor of God.[6]

Influence of His Writings--My husband has labored untiringly to bring the publishing interest up to its present state of prosperity. I saw that he had had more sympathy and love from his brethren than he has thought he had. They eagerly search the paper to find something from his pen. If there is a tone of cheerfulness in his writings, if he speaks encouragingly, their hearts are lightened, and some even weep with tender feelings of joy. But if gloom

and sadness are expressed, the countenances of his brethren and sisters, as they read, grow sad, and the spirit which characterizes his writings is reflected upon them.[7]

W. W. Prescott

Source of Success--I know that since coming to this place he has had the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; his lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar. We know and can distinguish the voice of the True Shepherd. The truth has been poured forth from the lips of the servant of God as the people had never heard it before; unbelievers turn pale, and say, "That man is inspired." The people do not stroll about the grounds, but go immediately into the tent, and listen as if spellbound.

Every day some of our workers go out into the suburbs with [copies of the Bible] Echoes, notices, and invitations to come to the meeting, where such wonderful things are presented from the Word of God. The Lord is pouring into the chambers of the

mind and the soul temple fresh light, as precious as gold. I never heard the Word presented with greater fervency and power. I know it must be through the constraining power of God upon the human instrument. It is remarked by many that there is no manner of disturbance upon the ground. Every time I enter the encampment, I think the angels of God are here.[8]

God's Modern Messenger

First Speech (Poland, Maine, 1845)--For three months my throat and lungs had been so diseased that I could talk but little, and that in a low and husky tone. On this occasion I stood up in meeting and commenced to speak in a whisper. I continued thus for about five minutes, when the soreness and obstruction left me, my voice became clear and strong, and I spoke with perfect ease and freedom for nearly two hours. When my message was ended, my voice was gone until I again stood before the people, when the same singular restoration was repeated. I felt a constant assurance that I was doing the will of God, and saw marked

results attending my efforts.[9]

Strength From the Lord--Sabbath I was very feeble. After speaking to the people I was so wearied I came near fainting. The people said they had never seen me look so wretched before. I lost fifteen pounds of flesh in three weeks. Sunday I entreated the Lord to give me strength to bear my testimony to the people, and I believed. I went upon the stand in great weakness, talked one hour and a half, and left the stand much stronger than I went upon it, and kept all the strength that was given me on that occasion. ...

I have just received an appeal from the most influential men of Dunlap--bankers, ministers, and merchants--to repeat my discourse given Sunday under the tent, on temperance, in the Congregational church.[10]

Power by the Holy Spirit--When I have been expected to speak to many people, at times I have felt that it was impossible for me to appear day after day before great congregations. But I have

tried to place myself physically in right relation to God. Then I have said to Him, “I have done all I can do, Lord, using Thine own means, and now I ask for the special blessing which Thou alone canst give to sustain me.” With trembling steps I have walked into the desk to speak to assembled thousands; but the moment I have stood before the congregation, the Spirit of God has always come to me with strengthening power.

Often I said to my husband while he was with me, “If only I could have the assurance beforehand, how much good it would do me.” He would answer, “God has never failed to bless you the moment you rise to speak; so whatever may be your feelings, you must put your trust in Him, hanging your helpless soul on His promises.” This I have tried to do. I have learned that we must act our part, cooperating with God. He gives strength for every duty.[11]

Voice Given Her of God--When I was only about eleven years old, I heard a minister read the account of Peter’s imprisonment, as recorded in the

book of Acts; and he read in so impressive a manner that the details of the story in all their reality seemed to be passing before my eyes. So deep was the impression made upon my mind that I have never forgotten it.

When, a few years afterward, I was speaking in general meetings, I met this man again, and at the close of my discourse he asked, “How did you get that wonderful voice?” I told him that the Lord had given it to me. When I began my public labors, I had no voice, except when I stood before the congregations to speak. At other times I could not speak above a whisper. “And,” I added, “I have often thought of what you said to the people when someone asked you how you became a minister. You told them that your friends said you could never be a minister, because you could not speak properly; but that you went away by yourself and talked to the trees in the woods; and then when driving the oxen, you would talk to them just as if you were in meeting. ‘This,’ you said, ‘is the way I learned to speak in public.’”--[12]

Divine Aid in Speaking--The following day I was ill, and very weak. The cold had taken a firm hold on my system. I doubted if I should be able to speak on the morrow. However, I ventured to allow the brethren to make an appointment for me to address the people Sabbath forenoon. I made the Lord my entire dependence; for I knew that unless He should be my helper, I could not speak more than a few words. My throat and head were greatly troubled. I was so hoarse that I could scarcely speak aloud.

Sabbath morning I felt no better. At the appointed hour, I went over to the chapel, and found it crowded. I feared I should fail, but began talking. The moment I began to speak, strength was imparted. I was relieved of hoarseness, and spoke without difficulty for nearly an hour. My illness seemed to disappear, and my mind was clear. As soon as I finished speaking, the hoarseness came upon me again, and I began coughing and sneezing as before.

To me, this experience was a marked evidence

of divine help.[13]

Long Sermons by Ellen White--[This entry as well as the next form part of an impromptu discussion during a talk Ellen White gave to the General Conference at Lake Goguac, Michigan, July 14, 1890.] Elder Underwood: “Do we preach too long?”

Ellen White: “Yes, indeed; and I, too; I take that right to myself. I preach too long.”

W. C. White: “Let me ask a question. Are we to take your example as an exponent of your views?”

Ellen White: “Well, didn’t I just make my confession? And haven’t I given you an example? I consider myself an exception, but I think I have ventured too far even in the exception. But I will tell you why I consider myself an exception. I have been taken by my husband and carried on the cars and laid on the seat, and I have gone to a place of meeting and have stood under paralysis that had been upon me for weeks, so that I have not been

able to command my language to speak a sentence correctly. And yet I would stand on my feet before the public and make my testimony as straight as a string. The Spirit of the Lord was upon me. Everyone is not an exception. Now, how can I tell when I am going too far? I have been brought up to that point again and again. ...

“Now, how far shall I go? I have taken the position that if the Lord gives me a burden for the Battle Creek church, I will tell it to them; but unless I have a burden, I have nothing more to say. I spoke 21 times in as many days there at Battle Creek. I did not speak every day, but some days spoke twice. This was before I left; and I never got rested until it resulted in this terrible sickness. I knew, and told them at Fresno, that I was fighting my last round. And then in those private meetings the labor was worse than speaking in public, and having to tell them such straight things as I had to tell them.

“Now I do not know whether your question is answered or not; perhaps it is like a long sermon: it

is so long that you have lost the main point.”

Elder White: “Now I have questioned somewhat whether one person had the right to shape his action on another’s experience. I have questioned if it was not our duty to shape our action on our own experience.”

Ellen White: “Well, now, it has been like this. I have been sick and in pain; and I want to tell you that there is never a time when I make an appointment but that before that appointment comes I have wrestled with the most terrible difficulty of the heart, or some infirmity, that makes it seem like an impossibility for me to go before the public. And yet just as soon as I stand on my feet before the people I feel just as sure that the angels of God are right by my side as if I opened my eyes and looked upon them as I did at Christ at the time He restored me. I am taken right out of and above myself. I feel just as though, as it were, the judgment is right before me; just as though the universe of heaven is looking upon me, and as though I have these things to do and I must say

them if I drop dead in the desk. Now, I do not believe it is the duty of others to do that. And every day I feel that way. It is because the terrible realities of eternity are opened before me, and as soon as I get up on my feet the terrible realities seem to enshroud me like a garment.”[14]

Voice, Volume, and Speed--Elder Farnsworth:
“Don’t you think, sister White, a great many of our ministers have received great injury from their manner of speaking?”

Ellen White: “Oh, yes, indeed; I have seen it over and over. My husband got in the way of sometimes raising his voice very loud, and it seemed as though he could not get out of that way. And there is a brother in Texas, Brother A, that is dying just as sure as if he put a knife to his throat. Now since I have come here I have thought of that and I must write to him.”

Elder Kilgore: “He has been told about that.”

Elder Farnsworth: “They are all around in

every conference.”

Ellen White: “In my younger days I used to talk too loud. The Lord has shown me that I could not make the proper impression upon the people by getting the voice to an unnatural pitch. Then Christ was presented before me, and His manner of talking. There was a sweet melody in His voice. His voice, in a slow, calm manner, reached those who listened; His words penetrated their hearts, and they were able to catch on to what He said before the next sentence was spoken. Some seem to think they must race right straight along or else they will lose the inspiration and the people will lose the inspiration. If that is inspiration, let them lose it, and the sooner the better.

“Well, I wrote an article on that point when I was at St. Helena because I felt as though our ministers were going down, and there was some cause for it.”--Manuscript 19b, 1890.

Messages From God’s Spirit--When I am speaking to the people I say much that I have not

premeditated. The Spirit of the Lord frequently comes upon me. I seem to be carried out of, and away from, myself; the life and character of different persons are clearly presented before my mind. I see their errors and dangers, and feel compelled to speak of what is thus brought before me.[15]

Revelation Through Visions--Before I stand on my feet, I have no thought of speaking as plainly as I do. But the Spirit of God rests upon me with power, and I cannot but speak the words given me. I dare not withhold one word of the testimony.... I speak the words given me by a Power higher than human power, and I cannot, if I would, recall one sentence.

In the night season the Lord gives me instruction in symbols, and then explains their meaning. He gives me the word, and I dare not refuse to give it to the people. The love of Christ, and, I venture to add, the love of souls, constrains me, and I cannot hold my peace.[16]

Husband and Wife a Speaking Team--At first I moved out timidly in the work of public speaking. If I had confidence, it was given me by the Holy Spirit. If I spoke with freedom and power, it was given me of God. Our meetings were usually conducted in such a manner that both of us took part. My husband would give a doctrinal discourse, then I would follow with an exhortation of considerable length, melting my way into the feelings of the congregation. Thus my husband sowed and I watered the seed of truth, and God did give the increase.[17]

Life of Christ and the Health Question--Evening after the Sabbath, I spoke again to a large number. Sunday the Methodist church was opened. Father spoke in the forenoon and I spoke in the afternoon upon the life, sufferings, and resurrection of Christ. An appointment was given out for the evening for me to speak at the hall upon the health question. Long before the hour, the hall was full to overflowing and a number stood in the street unable to get into the hall. We crowded our passage through. But fears were expressed that the

floor might give way. Men who knew assured them there was not the least danger.

Persons proposed going to the Methodist house which was open for their reception and more convenient and better ventilated. They stated that quite a number were already there. One cried out, "Divide the preachers." Your father made answer [that] he would not venture to try the experiment, fearing he would not get his share of hearers. Finally a general move was made to the meetinghouse which was crowded and extra seats prepared. I had a very respectful, attentive congregation. I spoke one hour and a half, with freedom. The meeting closed well. We have another appointment out tonight. May the Lord go with us and aid us in our labor, is our prayer.[18]

Sermon on (Colossians 1:24-29)--Brother D. T. Bourdeau spoke in the early morning meeting. In the afternoon I spoke to the people from (Colossians 1:24-29). I felt great weakness before going into the desk. I pleaded most earnestly with God in prayer to help me and to bless the people in

a special manner. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me and upon the people. I was followed by three interpreters--German, French, and Danish--but this did not embarrass me in the least. The heavenly angels were in our midst. I was blessed in speaking, the people blessed in hearing. I cannot see but that my message is having a better impression than on the minds of my American brethren and sisters.

After the discourse we had a most precious meeting. Our brethren of all nationalities spoke of being greatly blessed, and of being very grateful to God for the word spoken.[19]

Message on (Matthew 9:28-30)--My text was (Matthew 9:28-30). The congregation were, many of them, intelligent men and women. I presented the truth in its simplicity, that old and young could understand. This was the manner of Jesus' preaching. He taught the people in simplicity. He used no large words that the unlearned could not understand. The unlearned, the veriest child, could understand His words.

Jesus declared in Nazareth, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” (Luke 4:18) How many of the professed ministers of Jesus Christ are copying this example of our divine Teacher?[20]

Preaching on the Parable of the Talents--An appointment had been made for me to speak Sabbath afternoon, January 7th, but as I rode the five miles to the meeting, I was in such a state of exhaustion that I feared and trembled and was beset with temptations. Looking at appearance, it was impossible for me to speak. I prayed all the way. When I stood upon the platform, such an assurance was given me by the Lord that He had sent His angel to sustain me, that I could not doubt. These words seemed spoken to me: “Be strong in the Lord; yea, be strong.” I never spoke with greater ease and freedom from infirmity. The hearers said my voice was clear and musical, and

the congregation could not but know that the Spirit and power of God was upon me.

I spoke for an hour upon the parable of the talents, dwelling with considerable definiteness on the slothful servant who hid his one talent in the earth, and presented it to the Lord with a bitter complaint, accusing God of being a hard Master. The Lord spoke through clay, and hearts were touched. Some were deeply moved. A minister of the Church of England, who came from Tasmania in company with Brethren Baker and Rousseau, and who has just begun to keep the Sabbath, was present.[21]

Prudence and Solemnity--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 retract. 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 are 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 [of us] move calmly, considerately choosing our words in harmony with the solid truth for this time, which requires [that it] be presented to the mind as free from that which is emotional as possible, while still bearing the intensity and solemnity that it is proper it should bear. We must guard against creating extremes, guard against encouraging those who would be either in the fire or in the water.[22]

Subject From Holy Spirit for Special Occasion--On Sunday, June 23, [1895], I spoke under the tent at Canterbury. A general meeting had been appointed, and many of our people were present from Ashfield, Sydney, and Petersham. Several souls were convinced of the truth who had

not fully decided to obey. As I entered the desk I could not seem to fasten my mind upon any subject upon which to speak, but as soon as I rose to my feet, everything was clear, and the text given me was the question of the lawyer to Christ--“What shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

The power of God came upon me, and the truth of God was presented by His human agent in a most clear and powerful way. Elder Corliss said that he had heard me speak under almost every circumstance for the last forty years but that this was the most powerful discourse he had ever heard me give. I seemed to be lifted up and away from myself. It was the Lord’s Spirit that came upon me, and to His name be all the glory. In my next letter to you, I will give the substance of what was spoken.

After the discourse we spent about one hour in social meeting. The testimonies borne were excellent, and our meeting closed, leaving a most favorable impression upon the minds of those who were hesitating at the cross, and wondering how

they should make a living if they accepted the truth.[23]

Message About the Fruitless Fig Tree--
Afternoon. I have just returned from the services in the tent. I have spoken twice today, nearly one hour in the half-past-six morning meeting, and again this afternoon. I generally speak on Wednesday afternoons because it is a holiday, but this week I consented to speak on Tuesday because it is Cup Day. ... The tent was full. Extra seats were furnished, and some had to stand.

I spoke upon the fruitless fig tree, making application of the same to the churches that bear no fruit. The Lord gave me freedom before that large assembly. There were present before me noble-looking countenances, and many, both men and women, wept. None left their seats, but all listened with most profound attention. The Lord did give me a message for the people. I know that the Holy Spirit worked upon minds and hearts. I have never in any of our camp meetings seen such eagerness to hear the truth.

I have already spoken twelve times above one hour, and several times short discourses. The Lord's presence is upon this encampment, and many hearts are stirred.[24]

Notes:

1. Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 27.
2. Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 243.
3. Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 244.
4. Testimonies for the Church 3:502.
5. Testimonies for the Church 3:85.
6. Testimonies for the Church 3:261.
7. Testimonies for the Church 3:96, 97.
8. Letter 82, 1895.
9. Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 72, 73.
10. Letter 22, 1879.
11. Manuscript 8a, 1888.
12. Manuscript 91, 1903.
13. The Review and Herald, July 19, 1906.
14. Manuscript 19b, 1890.
15. Testimonies for the Church 5:678.
16. Manuscript 22, 1890.

17. Testimonies for the Church 1:75.
18. Letter to Ellen White's son, W. C. White--
Letter 17, 1870.
19. Letter 23, 1885.
20. Manuscript 55, 1886.
21. Letter 23a, 1893.
22. Letter 37, 1894.
23. Letter 28, 1895.
24. Letter 82, 1895.

Chapter 64

The Power of Song

A Means of Education--The history of the songs of the Bible is full of suggestion as to the uses and benefits of music and song. Music is often perverted to serve purposes of evil, and it thus becomes one of the most alluring agencies of temptation. But, rightly employed, it is a precious gift of God, designed to uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul.

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!

The value of song as a means of education should never be lost sight of. Let there be singing in the home, of songs that are sweet and pure, and there will be fewer words of censure and more of cheerfulness and hope and joy. Let there be singing in the school, and the pupils will be drawn closer to God, to their teachers, and to one another.

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.[1]

Talent of Singing--One night I seemed to be in a council meeting where these matters [the place to give messages of warning and instruction] were being talked over. And a very grave, dignified man said, "You are praying for the Lord to raise up men and women of talent to give themselves to the work. You have talent in your midst which needs to be recognized." Several wise propositions were made and then words were spoken in substance as I write them. He said, "I call your attention to the singing talent which should be cultivated; for the human voice in singing is one of God's entrusted talents to be employed to His glory. The enemy of righteousness makes a great account of this talent in his service. And that which is the gift of God, to be a blessing to souls, is perverted, misapplied, and serves the purpose of Satan. This talent of voice is a blessing if consecrated to the Lord to serve His cause. _____ has talent, but it is not appreciated. Her position should be considered and her talent will attract the people, and they will hear the message of truth.[2]

A Living Connection With God--There must be a living connection with God in prayer, a living connection with God in songs of praise and thanksgiving.[3]

Education of the Tongue--If you sit in heavenly places with Christ, you cannot refrain from praising God. Begin to educate your tongues to praise Him, and train your hearts to make melody to God; and when the evil one begins to settle his gloom about you, sing praise to God.[4]

Aid in the Resisting of Temptation--Let praise and thanksgiving be expressed in song. When tempted, instead of giving utterance to our feelings, let us by faith lift up a song of thanksgiving to God.... 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.[5]

Means of Victory Over the Enemy--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 [off] the enemy, and praising God would beat him back and give us the victory.[6]

Effects of Holy Song--Great have been the blessings received by men in response to songs of praise.... How often in spiritual experience is this history repeated! How often by words of holy song are unsealed in the soul the springs of penitence and faith, of hope and love and joy![7]

Way of Making Work Pleasant--Make your work pleasant with songs of praise.[8]

Song in the Home--Evening and morning join with your children in God's worship, reading His Word and singing His praise. Teach them to repeat God's law. Concerning the commandments, the Israelites were instructed: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Accordingly, Moses directed the Israelites to set the words of the law to music.

...

If it was essential for Moses to embody the commandments in sacred song, so that as they marched in the wilderness the children could learn to sing the law verse by verse, how essential it is at this time to teach our children God's Word! Let us come up to the help of the Lord, instructing our children to keep the commandments to the letter. Let us do everything in our power to make music in our homes, that God may come in.[9]

Family Union in Song--Happy the father and mother who can teach their children God's written Word with illustrations from the open pages of the book of nature; who can gather under the green trees, in the fresh, pure air, to study the Word and to sing the praise of the Father above. By such associations parents may bind their children to their hearts, and thus to God, by ties that can never be broken.[10]

Songs by Children--Let the services be brief and full of life, adapted to the occasion, and varied

from time to time. Let all join in the Bible reading, and learn and often repeat God's law. It will add to the interest of the children if they are sometimes permitted to select the reading. Question them upon it, and let them ask questions. Mention anything that will serve to illustrate its meaning. When the service is not thus made too lengthy, let the little ones take part in prayer, and let them join in song, if it be but a single verse.[11]

Notes:

1. Education, 167, 168.
2. Evangelism, 497, 498.
3. Evangelism, 498.
4. In Heavenly Places, 95.
5. The Ministry of Healing, 254.
6. Letter 5, 1850.
7. Education, 162.
8. Child Guidance, 148.
9. Evangelism, 499.
10. Education, 251.
11. Child Guidance, 522.

Chapter 65

Christ's Singing

Christ a Victor Over Temptation As a Child-

-When Christ was a child like these children here, He was tempted to sin, but He did not yield to temptation. As He grew older He was tempted, but the songs His mother had taught Him to sing came into His mind, and He would lift His voice in praise. And before His companions were aware of it, they would be singing with Him. God wants us to use every facility which Heaven has provided for resisting the enemy.[1]

Songs of Faith and Holy Cheer--

With a song, Jesus in His earthly life met temptation. Often when sharp, stinging words were spoken, often when the atmosphere about Him was heavy with gloom, with dissatisfaction, distrust, or oppressive fear, was heard His song of faith and holy cheer.[2]

Communion With Heaven Through Song--

Christ descended to poverty that He might teach

how closely in our daily life we may walk with God. He took human nature that He might be able to sympathize with all hearts. He was capable of sympathizing with all. He could engage in toil, bear His part in sustaining the family in their necessity, become accustomed to weariness, and yet show no impatience. His spirit was never so full of worldly cares as to leave no time nor thought for heavenly things. He often held communion with heaven in song. The men of Nazareth often heard His voice raised in prayer and thanksgiving to God; and those who associated with Him, who often complained of their weariness, were cheered by the sweet melody that fell from His lips.[3]

At the Start of the Day--The early morning often found Him in some secluded place, meditating, searching the Scriptures, or in prayer. With the voice of singing He welcomed the morning light. With songs of thanksgiving He cheered His hours of labor and brought heaven's gladness to the toilworn and disheartened.[4]

As Incense, the Fragrance of Singing--Often He expressed the gladness of His heart by singing psalms and heavenly songs. Often the dwellers in Nazareth heard His voice raised in praise and thanksgiving to God. He held communion with heaven in song; and as His companions complained of weariness from labor, they were cheered by the sweet melody from His lips. His praise seemed to banish the evil angels, and, like incense, fill the place with fragrance. The minds of His hearers were carried away from their earthly exile, to the heavenly home.[5]

Notes:

1. Manuscript 65, 1901.
2. Education, 166.
3. The Review and Herald, October 24, 1899.
4. The Ministry of Healing, 52.
5. The Desire of Ages, 73, 74.

Chapter 66

Voice Culture and Song

A Subject for Every School--I am glad that a musical element has been brought into the Healdsburg School. In every school, instruction in singing is greatly needed. There should be much more interest in voice culture than is now generally manifested. Students who have learned to sing sweet gospel songs with melody and distinctness, can do much good as singing evangelists. They will find many opportunities to use the talent that God has given them, carrying melody and sunshine into many lonely places darkened by sin and sorrow and affliction, singing to those who seldom have church privileges.[1]

Correct Intonation and Pronunciation--No words can properly set forth the deep blessedness of genuine worship. 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.[2]

Beauty, Pathos, and Power--Music can be a great power for good; yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and at other times those who sing are left to blunder along, and the music loses its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering.

But it is sometimes more difficult to discipline the singers and keep them in working order, than to improve the habits of praying and exhorting. Many want to do things after their own style; they object to consultation, and are impatient under leadership. Wellmatured plans are needed in the service of God. Common sense is an excellent thing in the worship of the Lord.[3]

Characteristics of Good Singing--Great improvement can be made in singing. Some think that the louder they sing the more music they make; but noise is not music. Good singing is like the music of the birds--subdued and melodious.

In some of our churches I have heard solos that were altogether unsuitable for the service in the Lord's house. The long-drawn-out notes and the peculiar sounds common in operatic singing are not pleasing to the angels. They delight to hear the simple songs of praise sung in a natural tone. The songs in which every word is uttered clearly, in a musical tone, are the songs that they join us in singing. They take up the refrain that is sung from

the heart with the spirit and the understanding.[4]

Solemnity and Awe--The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.[5]

Music a Part of God's Worship Above--Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above. We should endeavor in our songs of praise to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. I have often been pained to hear untrained voices, pitched to the highest key, literally shrieking the sacred words of some hymn of praise. How inappropriate those sharp, rasping voices for the solemn, joyous worship of God. I long to stop my ears, or flee from the place, and I rejoice when the painful exercise is ended.[6]

Notes:

1. The Review and Herald, August 27, 1903.

2. Testimonies for the Church 9:143, 144.
3. Evangelism, 505.
4. Evangelism, 510.
5. Testimonies for the Church 5:493.
6. Evangelism, 507, 508.

Chapter 67

Wrong Use of the Voice in Music

Bedlam of Noise--The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing.

The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God

blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. ...

No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship. The same kind of influence came in after the passing of the time in 1844. The same kind of representations were made. Men became excited, and were worked by a power thought to be the power of God.[1]

Satan's Snare--The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such a confusion of noise and multitude of sounds as passed before me last January. Satan works amid the din and confusion of such music, which, properly conducted, would be a praise and glory to God. He makes its effect like the poison

sting of the serpent.

Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.[2]

Songs to Make Angels Weep--There has been a class of social gatherings in of an entirely different character, parties of pleasure that have been a disgrace to our institutions and to the church. They encourage pride of dress, pride of appearance, self-gratification, hilarity, and trifling. Satan is entertained as an honored guest, and takes possession of those who patronize these gatherings.

A view of one such company was presented to me, where were assembled those who profess to believe the truth. One was seated at the instrument of music, and such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep. There was mirth, there was coarse laughter, there was abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create. This is an enthusiasm and infatuation of which all who love

God will be ashamed. It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action. I have reason to think that some who were engaged in that scene heartily repented of the shameful performance.[3]

Frivolous Songs and Popular Sheet Music--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.

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.[4]

Worship of Music As an Idol--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 judgment all these words of inspiration will condemn those who have not heeded them.[5]

Forbidden Pleasures--What a contrast between the ancient custom and the uses to which music is now too often devoted! How many employ this gift to exalt self, instead of using it to glorify God! A love for music leads the unwary to unite with world-lovers in pleasure-gatherings where God has forbidden His children to go. Thus

that which is a great blessing when rightly used, becomes one of the most successful agencies by which Satan allures the mind from duty and from the contemplation of eternal things.[6]

Ambition for Display--Musical entertainments which, if conducted properly, will do no harm, are often a source of evil. In the present state of society, with the low morals of not only youth but those of age and experience, there is great danger of becoming careless, and giving especial attention to favorites, and thus creating envy, jealousies, and evil surmisings. Musical talent too often fosters pride and ambition for display, and singers have but little thought of the worship of God. Instead of leading minds to remembering God, it often causes them to forget Him.[7]

Counsel to Music Leaders--I was taken into some of your singing exercises, and was made to read the feelings that existed in the company, you being the prominent one. There were petty jealousies, envy, evil surmisings, and evil speaking.... The heart service is what God requires;

the forms and lip service are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Your singing is for display, not to praise God with the spirit and understanding. The state of the heart reveals the quality of the religion of the professor of godliness.[8]

God's Choice of Singing--Singing is just as much the worship of God in a religious meeting as speaking, and any oddity or peculiarity cultivated attracts the attention of the people and destroys the serious, solemn impression which should be the result of sacred music. Anything strange and eccentric in singing detracts from the seriousness and sacredness of religious service.

Bodily exercise profiteth little. Everything that is connected in any way with religious worship should be dignified, solemn, and impressive. God is not pleased when ministers professing to be Christ's representatives so misrepresent Christ as to throw the body into acting attitudes, making undignified and coarse gestures, unrefined, coarse gesticulations. All this amuses, and will excite the curiosity of those who wish to see strange, odd, and

exciting things, but these things will not elevate the minds and hearts of those who witness them.

The very same may be said of singing. You assume undignified attitudes. You put in all the power and volume of the voice you can. You drown the finer strains and notes of voices more musical than your own. This bodily exercise and the harsh, loud voice makes no melody to those who hear on earth and those who listen in heaven. This singing is defective and not acceptable to God as perfect, softened, sweet strains of music. There are no such exhibitions among the angels as I have sometimes seen in our meetings. Such harsh notes and gesticulations are not exhibited among the angel choir. Their singing does not grate upon the ear. It is soft and melodious and comes without this great effort I have witnessed. It is not forced and strained, requiring physical exercise.

Brother S is not aware how many are amused and disgusted. Some cannot repress thoughts not very sacred and feelings of levity to see the unrefined motions made in the singing. Brother S

exhibits himself. His singing does not have an influence to subdue the heart and touch the feelings. Many have attended the meetings and listened to the words of truth spoken from the pulpit, which have convicted and solemnized their minds; but many times the way the singing has been conducted has not deepened the impression made. The demonstrations and bodily contortions, the unpleasant appearance of the strained, forced effort has appeared so out of place for the house of God, so comical, that the serious impressions made upon the minds have been removed. Those who believe the truth are not as highly thought of as before the singing. ...

He [Brother S] has thought that singing was about the greatest thing to be done in this world and that he had a very large and grand way of doing it.

Your singing is far from pleasing to the angel choir. Imagine yourself standing in the angel band elevating your shoulders, emphasizing the words, motioning your body and putting in the full volume

of your voice. What kind of concert and harmony would there be with such an exhibition before the angels?

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 equaled 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.

How this gift has been debased! When

sanctified and refined it would accomplish great good in breaking down the barriers of prejudice and hardhearted unbelief, and would be the means of converting souls. It is not enough to understand the rudiments of singing, but with the understanding, with the knowledge, must be such a connection with heaven that angels can sing through us.

Your voice has been heard in church so loud, so harsh, accompanied or set off with your gesticulations not the most graceful, that the softer and more silvery strains, more like angel music, could not be heard. You have sung more to men than to God.

As your voice had been elevated in loud strains above all the congregation, you have been thoughtful of the admiration you were exciting. You have really had such high ideas of your singing, that you have had some thoughts that you should be remunerated for the exercise of this gift.[9]

Tendency Toward Extremes--Singing should not be allowed to divert the mind from the hours of devotion. If one must be neglected, let it be the singing. It is one of the great temptations of the present age to carry the practice of music to extremes, to make a great deal more of music than of prayer. Many souls have been ruined here. When the Spirit of God is arousing the conscience and convicting of sin, Satan suggests a singing exercise or a singing school, which, being conducted in a light and trifling manner, results in banishing seriousness, and quenching all desire for the Spirit of God. Thus the door of the heart, which was about to be opened to Jesus, is closed and barricaded with pride and stubbornness, in many cases never again to be opened.

By the temptations attending these singing exercises, many who were once really converted to the truth have been led to separate themselves from God. They have chosen singing before prayer, attending singing schools in preference to religious meetings, until the truth no longer exerts its sanctifying power upon their souls. Such singing is

an offense to God.[10]

Notes:

1. Selected Messages 2:36, 37.
2. Selected Messages 2:37, 38.
3. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 339.
4. Testimonies for the Church 1:496, 497.
5. Testimonies for the Church 1:505, 506.
6. Patriarchs and Prophets, 594.
7. Letter 6a, 1890.
8. Evangelism, 507.
9. Manuscript 5, 1874.
10. The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.

Chapter 68

Singing That Is to God's Glory

Music in Heaven--I saw the beauty of heaven. I heard the angels sing their rapturous songs, ascribing praise, honor, and glory to Jesus. I could then realize something of the wondrous love of the Son of God.[1]

Angel Instrumentalists--I have been shown the order, the perfect order, of heaven, and have been enraptured as I listened to the perfect music there. After coming out of vision, the singing here has sounded very harsh and discordant. I have seen companies of angels, who stood in a hollow square, every one having a harp of gold. At the end of the harp was an instrument to turn to set the harp or change the tunes. Their fingers did not sweep over the strings carelessly, but they touched different strings to produce different sounds. There is one angel who always leads, who first touches the harp and strikes the note, then all join in the rich, perfect music of heaven. It cannot be described. It is

melody, heavenly, divine, while from every countenance beams the image of Jesus, shining with glory unspeakable.[2]

Enchanting Music in Melodious Strains--Let those men and women who are satisfied with their dwarfed, crippled condition in divine things be suddenly transported to heaven and for an instant witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever abides there-- every soul filled with love; every countenance beaming with joy; enchanting music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb.[3]

Influence of Songs on Lucifer--The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them; but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy. The influence of the holy angels seemed for a time to carry him with them. As songs of praise ascended in melodious strains, swelled by thousands of glad voices, the spirit of evil seemed

vanquished; unutterable love thrilled his entire being; his soul went out, in harmony with the sinless worshipers, in love to the Father and the Son.[4]

Angel Choir at Jesus' Birth--Then was the melody of heaven heard by mortal ears, and the heavenly choir swept back to heaven as they closed their ever memorable anthem. The light faded away ... but there remained in the hearts of the shepherds the brightest picture mortal man had ever looked upon, and the blessed promise and assurance of the advent to our world of the Saviour of men, which filled their hearts with joy and gladness, mingled with faith and wondrous love to God.[5]

Singing at Jesus' Resurrection--As Jesus came forth from the sepulcher, those shining angels prostrated themselves to the earth in worship, and hailed Him with songs of victory and triumph.[6]

Redeemed Souls a Subject for Song--The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its

noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.[7]

In Our Homes the Echo of Angel Songs--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.[8]

Thanksgiving the Keynote of Heaven--Difficulties will arise that will try your faith and patience. Face them bravely. Look on the bright side. If the work is hindered, be sure that it is not your fault, and then go forward, rejoicing in the Lord. Heaven is full of joy. It resounds with the praises of Him who made so wonderful a sacrifice for the redemption of the human race. Should not

the church on earth be full of praise? Should not Christians publish throughout the world the joy of serving Christ? Those who in heaven join with the angelic choir in their anthem of praise must learn on earth the song of heaven, the keynote of which is thanksgiving.[9]

Songs of Heaven--They [many professed Christians] know not the language of heaven and are not educating their minds so as to be prepared to sing the songs of heaven or to delight in the spiritual exercises which will there engage the attention of all.[10]

Praise to God--“Whoso offereth praise,” says the Creator, “glorifieth Me.” 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.”[11]

Worship in the Heavenly Courts--Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above, and we should endeavor, in our songs of praise, to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. The proper training of the voice is an important feature in education, and should not be neglected.[12]

Songs of Saints and Angels--If the saints fixed their eyes upon the prize before them and glorified God by praising Him, then the angels would bear the glad tidings to the city, and the angels in the city would touch their golden harps and sing with a loud voice, "Alleluia!" and the heavenly arches would ring with their lovely songs.[13]

Mercy on Earth, Music in Heaven--As you open your door to Christ's needy and suffering ones, you are welcoming unseen angels. You invite the companionship of heavenly beings. They bring a sacred atmosphere of joy and peace. They come with praises upon their lips, and an answering strain is heard in heaven. Every deed of mercy

makes music there. The Father from His throne numbers the unselfish workers among His most precious treasures.[14]

Preparation for Heaven--To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth.[15]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 1:123.
2. Testimonies for the Church 1:146.
3. Testimonies for the Church 2:266.
4. Patriarchs and Prophets, 36, 37.
5. My Life Today, 363.
6. Early Writings, 182.
7. Steps to Christ, 126.
8. Education, 168.
9. Testimonies for the Church 7:244.
10. Testimonies for the Church 2:265.

11. Patriarchs and Prophets, 289, 290.
12. The Signs of the Times, March 14, 1900.
13. Early Writings, 39.
14. The Desire of Ages, 639.
15. Testimonies for the Church 5:491.

Chapter 69

Song a Part of Worship

An Act of Worship Like Prayer--Singing, as a part of religious service, is as much an act of worship as is prayer. The heart must feel the spirit of the song, to give it right expression.[1]

Meaning of Words in Songs--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.[2]

Preparation for the Church Above--God is high and holy; and to the humble, believing soul, His house on earth, the place where His people meet for worship, is as the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the words spoken by Christ's ministers, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship.[3]

Angels in Our Church Audience--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.[4]

Theme of Every Song--The science of salvation is to be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication.[5]

Sing With Spirit and Understanding--The evil of formal worship cannot be too strongly depicted, but no words can properly set forth the deep blessedness of genuine worship. 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.[6]

Beauty in Singing Not Everything--Many are singing beautiful songs in the meetings, songs of what they will do, and what they mean to do; but some do not do these things; they do not sing with the spirit and the understanding also. So in the reading of the Word of God, some are not benefited, because they do not take it into their very life; they do not practice it.[7]

Hymns for the Occasion--Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn, melodies. The voice can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued.[8]

Congregational Hymns--Another matter

which should receive attention, both at our camp meetings and elsewhere, is that of singing. A minister should not give out hymns to be sung, until it has first been ascertained that they are familiar to those who sing. A proper person should be appointed to take charge of this exercise, and it should be his duty to see that such hymns are selected as can be sung with the spirit and with the understanding also. Singing is a part of the worship of God, but in the bungling manner in which it is often conducted, it is no credit to the truth, and no honor to God. There should be system and order in this as well as every other part of the Lord's work. Organize a company of the best singers, whose voices can lead the congregation, and then let all who will, unite with them. Those who sing should make an effort to sing in harmony; they should devote some time to practice, that they may employ this talent to the glory of God.[9]

Song Service for Everyone--There should be in the meetings nothing of a theatrical nature. The singing should not be done by a few only. All present should be encouraged to join in the song

service. There are those who have a special gift of song, and there are times when a special message is borne by one singing alone or by several uniting in song. But the singing is seldom to be done by a few. The ability to sing is a talent of influence, which God desires all to cultivate and use to His name's glory.[10]

Sweet, Simple Singing--How can God be glorified when you depend for your singing on a worldly choir that sings for money? My brother, when you see these things in a right light, you will have in your meetings only sweet, simple singing, and you will ask the whole congregation to join in the song. What if among those present there are some whose voices are not so musical as the voices of others. When the singing is such that angels can unite with the singers, an impression is made on minds that singing from unsanctified lips cannot make.[11]

Charm of Congregational Singing--In the meetings held, the singing should not be neglected. God can be glorified by this part of the service.

And when singers offer their services, they should be accepted. But money should not be used to hire singers. Often the singing of simple hymns by the congregation has a charm that is not possessed by the singing of a choir, however skilled it may be.[12]

God's Kingdom More Than Mere Form--
Form and ceremony do not constitute the kingdom of God. Ceremonies become multitudinous and extravagant as the vital principles of the kingdom of God are lost. But it is not form and ceremony that Christ requires. He hungers to receive from His vineyard fruit in holiness and unselfishness, deeds of goodness, mercy, and truth.

Gorgeous apparel, fine singing, and instrumental music in the church do not call forth the songs of the angel choir. In the sight of God these things are like the branches of the unfruitful fig tree which bore nothing but pretentious leaves. Christ looks for fruit, for principles of goodness and sympathy and love. These are the principles of heaven, and when they are revealed in the lives of

human beings, we may know that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. A congregation may be the poorest in the land, without music or outward show, but if it possesses these principles, the members can sing, for the joy of Christ is in their souls, and this they can offer as a sweet oblation to God.[13]

Song Service Not a Concert--The presentation before me was that if Elder _____ would heed the counsel of his brethren, and not rush on in the way he does in making a great effort to secure large congregations, he would have more influence for good, and his work would have a more telling effect. He should cut off from his meetings everything that has a semblance of theatrical display; for such outward appearances give no strength to the message that he bears. When the Lord can cooperate with him, his work will not need to be done in so expensive a manner. He will not need then to go to so much expense in advertising his meetings. He will not place so much dependence on the musical program. This part of his services is conducted more after the order of a

concert in a theater, than a song service in a religious meeting.[14]

God's Preference in Music--The superfluities which have been brought into the worship in _____ must be strenuously avoided.... Music is acceptable to God only when the heart is sanctified and made soft and holy by its facilities. But many who delight in music know nothing of making melody in their hearts to the Lord. Their heart is gone "after their idols." [15]

Rubbish in the Church--When professing Christians reach the high standard which it is their privilege to reach, the simplicity of Christ will be maintained in all their worship. Forms and ceremonies and musical accomplishments are not the strength of the church. Yet these things have taken the place that God should have, even as they did in the worship of the Jews.

The Lord has revealed to me that when the heart is cleansed and sanctified, and the members of the church are partakers of the divine nature, a

power will go forth from the church, who believe the truth, that will cause melody in the heart. Men and women will not then depend upon their instrumental music but on the power and grace of God, which will give fullness of joy. There is a work to be done in clearing away the rubbish which has been brought into the church.... This message is not only for the church at _____, but for every other church that has followed her example.[16]

Simplicity in Religious Services--True ministers know the value of the inward working of the Holy Spirit upon human hearts. They are content with simplicity in religious services. Instead of making much of popular singing, they give their principal attention to the study of the Word, and render praise to God from the heart. Above the outward adorning they regard the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. In their mouths is found no guile.[17]

Work of the Holy Spirit--The hearts of many in the world as well as many church members are

hungering for the Bread of Life and thirsting for the waters of salvation. They are interested in the service of song, but they are not longing for that or even prayer. They want to know the Scriptures. What saith the Word of God to me? The Holy Spirit is working on mind and heart, drawing them to the Bread of Life. They see everything round them changing. Human feelings, human ideas of what constitutes religion, change. They come to hear the Word just as it reads.[18]

Proper Balance in Camp Meetings--
Improvements can be made in our manner of conducting camp meetings, so that all who attend may receive more direct labor. There are some social meetings held in the large tent, where all assemble for worship; but these are so large that only a small number can take part, and many speak so low that but few can hear them. ... In some instances much time was devoted to singing. There was a long hymn before prayer, a long hymn after prayer, and much singing interspersed all through the meeting. Thus golden moments were used unwisely, and not one-half the good was done that

might have been realized had these precious seasons been properly managed.[19]

Instrumental Accompaniment--In our camp meeting services there should be singing and instrumental music. Musical instruments were used in religious services in ancient times. The worshipers praised God upon the harp and cymbal, and music should have its place in our services. It will add to the interest.[20]

Care in the Conduct of Song Service--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 instruments of 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.[21]

Notes:

1. Patriarchs and Prophets, 594.
2. Education, 168.
3. The Youth's Instructor, October 8, 1896.
4. Testimonies for the Church 6:367.
5. Evangelism, 502.
6. Testimonies for the Church 9:143, 144.
7. Evangelism, 508.
8. Evangelism, 508.
9. The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.
10. Testimonies for the Church 7:115, 116.
11. Evangelism, 509.
12. Evangelism, 509.
13. Evangelism, 511, 512.
14. Evangelism, 501.
15. Evangelism, 512.
16. Evangelism, 512.
17. Evangelism, 502.
18. Evangelism, 501.
19. Evangelism, 511.
20. Testimonies for the Church 6:62.
21. Gospel Workers, 357, 358.

Chapter 70

Singing a Means of Witness

Instrumentality for Salvation--The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls.[1]

Power for Winning Souls--There is great pathos and music in the human voice, and if the learner will make determined efforts, he will acquire habits of talking and singing that will be to him a power to win souls to Christ.[2]

Gifts From God--Your voice, your influence, your time--all these are gifts from God and are to be used in winning souls to Christ.[3]

Singing Evangelists--In the evening a large audience assembled in the church to listen to a musical program rendered by Brother Beardslee and his pupils. Good singing is an important part of the worship of God. I am glad that Brother

Beardslee is training the students, so that they can be singing evangelists.[4]

Song in Home Visitation--Learn to sing the simplest of songs. These will help you in house-to-house labor, and hearts will be touched by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Christ was often heard singing hymns of praise.... There was joy in His heart. We learn from the Word that there is joy among the angels of heaven over one repentant sinner and that the Lord rejoices over His church with singing.[5]

Youth Singing for Higher Classes--Students, go out into the highways and the hedges. Endeavor to reach the higher as well as the lower classes. Enter the homes of the rich and the poor, and as you have opportunity ask, "Would you be pleased to have us sing? We should be glad to hold a song service with you." Then as hearts are softened, the way may open for you to offer a few words of prayer for the blessing of God. Not many will refuse. Such ministry is genuine missionary work. God desires every one of us to be converted, and to

learn to engage in missionary effort in earnest. He will bless us in this service for others, and we shall see of His salvation.[6]

Song Service During Travel--On Sabbath we had a song service. Brother Lawrence, who is a musician, led the singing. All the passengers in the car seemed to enjoy the service greatly, many of them joining in the singing.

On Sunday we had another song service, after which Elder Corliss gave a short talk, taking as his text the words, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The passengers listened attentively and seemed to enjoy what was said.

On Monday we had more singing, and we all seemed to be drawing closer together.[7]

Angels As Teachers of Singing--Those who have the gift of song are needed. Song is one of the most effective means of impressing spiritual truth upon the heart. Often by the words of sacred songs

the springs of penitence and faith have been unsealed.... Church members, young and old, should be educated to go forth to proclaim this last message to the world. If they go in humility, angels of God will go with them, teaching them how to lift up the voice in prayer, how to raise the voice in song, and how to proclaim the gospel message for this time.[8]

Notes:

1. Testimonies for the Church 5:493.
2. Evangelism, 504.
3. Testimonies for the Church 9:38.
4. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 487.
5. My Life Today, 238.
6. The Review and Herald, August 27, 1903.
7. Evangelism, 503.
8. My Life Today, 238.

Chapter 71

Singing in Israel's Experience

Song and Events of Human History--The melody of praise is the atmosphere of heaven; and when heaven comes in touch with the earth, there is music and song--“thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” (Isaiah 51:3)

Above the new-created earth, as it lay, fair and unblemished, under the smile of God, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” (Job 38:7) So human hearts, in sympathy with heaven, have responded to God’s goodness in notes of praise. Many of the events of human history have been linked with song.[1]

Red Sea Crossing--The earliest song recorded in the Bible from the lips of man was that glorious outburst of thanksgiving by the hosts of Israel at the Red Sea.[2]

Miriam As Choir Leader--Like the voice of

the great deep rose from the vast hosts of Israel that sublime ascription. (See Exodus 15:1-16) 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 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.”[3]

Song of Moses--These words [the song of Moses] were repeated unto all Israel, and formed a song which was often sung, poured forth in exalted strains of melody. This was the wisdom of Moses to present the truth to them in song, that in strains of melody they should become familiar with them, and be impressed upon the minds of the whole nation, young and old. It was important for the children to learn the song; for this would speak to them, to warn, to restrain, to reprove, and encourage. It was a continual sermon.[4]

Songs as Prophecy--The more deeply to impress these truths [In Moses' farewell speech to the children of Israel, he set before them the results

of obedience versus disobedience, a choice between life and death.] upon all minds, the great leader embodied them in sacred verse. This song was not only historical, but prophetic. While it recounted the wonderful dealings of God with his people in the past, it also foreshadowed the great events of the future, the final victory of the faithful when Christ shall come the second time in power and glory. The people were directed to commit to memory this poetic history, and to teach it to their children and children's children. It was to be chanted by the congregation when they assembled for worship, and to be repeated by the people as they went about their daily labors.[5]

God's Commandments in Song--As the people journeyed through the wilderness, many precious lessons were fixed in their minds by means of song. At their deliverance from Pharaoh's army the whole host of Israel had joined in the song of triumph. Far over desert and sea rang the joyous refrain, and the mountains re-echoed the accents of praise, "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously." (Exodus 15:21) Often on

the journey was this song repeated, cheering the hearts and kindling the faith of the pilgrim travelers. The commandments as given from Sinai, with promises of God's favor and records of His wonderful works for their deliverance, were by divine direction expressed in song, and were chanted to the sound of instrumental music, the people keeping step as their voices united in praise.

Thus their thoughts were uplifted from the trials and difficulties of the way, the restless, turbulent spirit was soothed and calmed, the principles of truth were implanted in the memory, and faith was strengthened. Concert of action taught order and unity, and the people were brought into closer touch with God and with one another.[6]

Words of the Law in Music--Moses directed the Israelites to set the words of the law to music. While the older children played on instruments, the younger ones marched, singing in concert the song of God's commandments. In later years they retained in their minds the words of the law which

they learned during childhood.

If it was essential for Moses to embody the commandments in sacred song, so that as they marched in the wilderness, the children could learn to sing the law verse by verse, how essential it is at this time to teach our children God's Word! Let us ... do everything in our power to make music in our homes, that God may come in.[7]

Memorial Songs--The dealings of God with His people should be often repeated. ... Lest they should forget the history of the past, He commanded Moses to frame these events into song, that parents might teach them to their children. ... We need often to recount God's goodness and to praise Him for His wonderful works.[8]

Music in the Schools of the Prophets--The chief subjects of study in these schools were the law of God, with the instruction given to Moses, sacred history, sacred music, and poetry. ... Sanctified intellect brought forth from the treasure house of God things new and old, and the Spirit of

God was manifested in prophecy and sacred song.[9]

Sacred Melody for Students--The art of sacred melody was diligently cultivated. No frivolous waltz was heard, nor flippant song that should extol man and divert the attention from God; but sacred, solemn psalms of praise to the Creator, exalting His name and recounting His wondrous works. Thus music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which was pure and noble and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and gratitude to God.[10]

Music for a Holy Purpose--Music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which is pure, noble, and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and gratitude to God. What a contrast between the ancient custom and the uses to which music is now too often devoted! How many employ this gift to exalt self, instead of using it to glorify God! A love for music leads the unwary to unite with world-lovers in pleasure-gatherings where God has forbidden His children to go. Thus

that which is a great blessing when rightly used, becomes one of the most successful agencies by which Satan allures the mind from duty and from the contemplation of eternal things.[11]

David's Psalm a Continuing Inspiration--

The communion with nature and with God ... were not only to mold the character of David, and to influence his future life, but through the psalms of Israel's sweet singer, they were, in all coming ages, to kindle love and faith in the hearts of God's people, bringing them nearer to the ever-loving heart of Him in whom all His creatures live.[12]

David's Worship in Song--Daily revelations of the character and majesty of his Creator filled the young poet's heart with adoration and rejoicing. In contemplation of God and His works, the faculties of David's mind and heart were developing and strengthening for the work of his after-life. He was daily coming into a more intimate communion with God. His mind was constantly penetrating into new depths for fresh themes to inspire his song and to wake the music of

his harp. The rich melody of his voice, poured out upon the air, echoed from the hills as if responsive to the rejoicing of the angels' songs in heaven.[13]

Music From Heaven for King Saul--In the providence of God, David, as a skillful performer upon the harp, was brought before the king. His lofty and Heaven-inspired strains had the desired effect. The brooding melancholy that had settled like a dark cloud over the mind of Saul was charmed away.[14]

Consolation in Music--He [David] had been in the court of the king, and had seen the responsibilities of royalty. He had discovered some of the temptations that beset the soul of Saul, and had penetrated some of the mysteries in the character and dealings of Israel's first king. He had seen the glory of royalty shadowed with a dark cloud of sorrow, and he knew that the household of Saul, in their private life, were far from happy. All these things served to bring troubled thoughts to him who had been anointed to be king over Israel. But while he was absorbed in deep meditation, and

harassed by thoughts of anxiety, he turned to his harp, and called forth strains that elevated his mind to the Author of every good, and the dark clouds that seemed to shadow the horizon of the future were dispelled.[15]

David as Song Leader--The men of Israel followed, with exultant shouts and songs of rejoicing, a multitude of voices joining in melody with the sound of musical instruments; “David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord ... on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.” (See 2 Samuel 6)[16]

Music for the Ark Procession--The triumphal procession approached the capital, following the sacred symbol of their invisible King. Then a burst of song demanded of the watchers upon the walls that the gates of the holy city should be thrown open: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.” A band of singers and players answered, “Who is this King of glory?” From another company came the response, “The Lord

strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.”

Then hundreds of voices, uniting, swelled the triumphal chorus, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.”

Again the joyful interrogation was heard, “Who is this King of glory?” And the voice of the great multitude, “like the sound of many waters,” was heard in the rapturous reply, “The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.”[17]

Songs of David’s Experience--The fifty-first psalm is an expression of David’s repentance, when the message of reproof came to him from God.... Thus in a sacred song to be sung in the public assemblies of his people, in the presence of the court--priests and judges, princes and men of war--and which would preserve to the latest generation the knowledge of his fall, the king of Israel recounted his sin, his repentance, and his hope of pardon through the mercy of God.[18]

Music a Means of Freedom From Idolatry--

The service of song was made a regular part of religious worship, and David composed psalms, not only for the use of the priests in the sanctuary service, but also to be sung by the people in their journeys to the national altar at the annual feasts. The influence thus exerted was farreaching, and it resulted in freeing the nation from idolatry. Many of the surrounding peoples, beholding the prosperity of Israel, were led to think favorably of Israel's God, who had done such great things for His people.[19]

Songs for Deep Trial--What were the feelings of the father and king, so cruelly wronged, in this terrible peril [the rebellion of Absalom]? "A mighty valiant man," a man of war, a king, whose word was law, betrayed by his son whom he had loved and indulged and unwisely trusted, wronged and deserted by subjects bound to him by the strongest ties of honor and fealty--in what words did David pour out the feelings of his soul? In the hour of his darkest trial, David's heart was stayed upon God, and he sang. (See Psalm 3:1-8)[20]

Part of the Sanctuary System--In bringing to the temple the sacred ark containing the two tables of stone on which were written by the finger of God the precepts of the Decalogue, Solomon had followed the example of his father David. Every six paces he sacrificed. With singing and with music and with great ceremony, “the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place.”... As they came out of the inner sanctuary, they took the positions assigned them. The singers--Levites arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps--stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. (See 2 Chronicles 5:7, 12)[21]

Songs for the Battle--“Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.”

Early in the morning they rose and went into the wilderness of Tekoa. As they advanced to the battle, Jehoshaphat said, “Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.” “And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness.” (2 Chronicles 20:14-21) These singers went before the army, lifting their voices in praise to God for the promise of victory.

It was a singular way of going to battle against the enemy’s army--praising the Lord with singing, and exalting the God of Israel. This was their battle song. They possessed the beauty of holiness. If more praising of God were engaged in now, hope and courage and faith would steadily increase. And would not this strengthen the hands of the valiant soldiers who today are standing in defense of truth?[22]

Nehemiah’s Record of the Levites’ Songs--

The Levites, in their hymn recorded by Nehemiah, sang “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things therein, ... and Thou preservest them all.” (Nehemiah 9:6)[23]

God’s Care for Israel--And the Levites’ hymn, recorded by Nehemiah, vividly pictures God’s care for Israel, even during these years of rejection and banishment: “Thou in Thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst Thou sustain them in the wilderness Their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.” (Nehemiah 9:19-21)[24]

Praise in Ezra’s Day--Then from the assembled throng [during the Feast of Trumpets in Ezra’s time after the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s

wall], as they stood with outstretched hands toward heaven, there arose the song: “Blessed be Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee” (Nehemiah 9:5, 6). The song of praise ended, the leaders of the congregation related the history of Israel, showing how great had been God’s goodness toward them, and how great their ingratitude.[25]

Songs on Journeys to Jerusalem--The journey to Jerusalem [when Jewish families attended the feasts], in the simple, patriarchal style, amidst the beauty of the springtime, the richness of midsummer, or the ripened glory of autumn, was a delight. With offerings of gratitude they came, from the man of white hairs to the little child, to meet with God in His holy habitation. As they journeyed, the experiences of the past, the stories that both old and young still love so well, were

recounted to the Hebrew children. The songs that had cheered the wilderness wandering were sung. God's commandments were chanted, and, bound up with the blessed influences of nature and of kindly human association, they were forever fixed in the memory of many a child and youth.[26]

Music at the Feast of Tabernacles--With sacred song and thanksgiving the worshipers celebrated this occasion. A little before the feast was the Day of Atonement, when, after confession of their sins, the people were declared to be at peace with Heaven. Thus the way was prepared for the rejoicing of the feast. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever" (Psalm 106:1) rose triumphantly, while all kinds of music, mingled with shouts of hosanna, accompanied the united singing.

The temple was the center of the universal joy. Here was the pomp of the sacrificial ceremonies. Here, ranged on either side of the white marble

steps of the sacred building, the choir of Levites led the service of song. The multitude of worshipers, waving their branches of palm and myrtle, took up the strain, and echoed the chorus; and again the melody was caught up by voices near and afar off, till the encircling hills were vocal with praise.

At night the temple and its court blazed with artificial light. The music, the waving of palm branches, the glad hosannas, the great concourse of people, over whom the light streamed from the hanging lamps, the array of the priests, and the majesty of the ceremonies, combined to make a scene that deeply impressed the beholders. But the most impressive ceremony of the feast, one that called forth greatest rejoicing, was one commemorating an event in the wilderness sojourn.

At the first dawn of day, the priests sounded a long, shrill blast upon their silver trumpets, and the answering trumpets, and the glad shouts of the people from their booths, echoing over hill and valley, welcomed the festal day. Then the priest

dipped from the flowing waters of the Kedron a flagon of water, and, lifting it on high, while the trumpets were sounding, he ascended the broad steps of the temple, keeping time with the music with slow and measured tread, chanting meanwhile, “Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.” (Psalm 122:2)

He bore the flagon to the altar, which occupied a central position in the court of the priests. Here were two silver basins, with a priest standing at each one. The flagon of water was poured into one, and a flagon of wine into the other; and the contents of both flowed into a pipe which communicated with the Kedron, and was conducted to the Dead Sea. This display of the consecrated water represented the fountain that at the command of God had gushed from the rock to quench the thirst of the children of Israel. Then the jubilant strains rang forth, “The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song”; “therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” (Isaiah 12:2, 3)[27]

Song at Jesus' Triumphal Entry--From the multitudes gathered to attend the Passover, thousands go forth to welcome Jesus. They greet Him with the waving of palm branches and a burst of sacred song.[28]

Praise at the Last Supper--Before leaving the upper chamber, the Saviour led His disciples in a song of praise. His voice was heard, not in the strains of some mournful lament, but in the joyful notes of the Passover hallel. (See Psalm 117)[29]

Notes:

1. Education, 161.
2. Education, 162.
3. Patriarchs and Prophets, 288, 289.
4. Evangelism, 496, 497.
5. Patriarchs and Prophets, 467, 468.
6. Education, 39.
7. Evangelism, 499, 500.
8. Testimonies for the Church 6:364, 365.
9. Education, 47.
10. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 97, 98.

11. Patriarchs and Prophets, 594.
12. Patriarchs and Prophets, 642.
13. Patriarchs and Prophets, 642.
14. Patriarchs and Prophets, 643.
15. Patriarchs and Prophets, 644.
16. Patriarchs and Prophets, 704, 705.
17. Patriarchs and Prophets, 707, 708.
18. Patriarchs and Prophets, 724, 725.
19. Patriarchs and Prophets, 711.
20. Patriarchs and Prophets, 741, 742.
21. Prophets and Kings, 38, 39.
22. Prophets and Kings, 201, 202.
23. Patriarchs and Prophets, 115.
24. Patriarchs and Prophets, 406, 407.
25. Prophets and Kings, 666.
26. Education, 42.
27. The Desire of Ages, 448, 449.
28. The Desire of Ages, 571.
29. The Desire of Ages, 672.

Chapter 72

Song at Christ's Resurrection and Ascension

Heaven's Welcome to the Risen Lord--At the resurrection they [the soldiers guarding Jesus' tomb] saw the brightness of the angels illuminate the night, and heard the inhabitants of heaven singing with great joy and triumph.[1]

Songs by the Angel Host--They [the soldiers guarding the tomb] see Jesus come forth from the grave, and hear Him proclaim over the rent sepulcher, "I am the resurrection, and the life." As He comes forth in majesty and glory, the angel host bow low in adoration before the Redeemer, and welcome Him with songs of praise.[2]

Praise to Christ at His Ascension--All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection

followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

As they drew near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels--“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.”

Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond--“Who is this King of Glory?” This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise--“The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle! “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.”

Again is heard the challenge, “Who is this King of glory?” for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply--“The Lord of hosts; He is the King of glory.” (Psalm 24:7-10)

Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music. ...

He presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. He approaches the Father, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing. ...

With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” (Revelation 5:12)

Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found.

Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Revelation 5:13)[3]

Notes:

1. The Desire of Ages, 780.
2. The Desire of Ages, 780.
3. The Desire of Ages, 832-835.

Chapter 73

Song in the Last Great Crisis

Song of the Angels Now--“Whoso offereth praise,” says the Creator, “glorifieth Me.” (Psalm 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.” (Psalm 146:2; 67:5)[1]

In Shadows of Affliction--In the full light of day, and in hearing of the music of other voices, the caged bird will not sing the song that his master seeks to teach him. He learns a snatch of this, a trill of that, but never a separate and entire melody. But the master covers the cage, and places it where the bird will listen to the one song he is to sing. In the dark, he tries and tries again to sing that song until it is learned, and he breaks forth in perfect melody.

Then the bird is brought forth, and ever after he can sing that song in the light. Thus God deals with His children. He has a song to teach us, and when we have learned it amid the shadows of affliction we can sing it ever afterward.[2]

Hope in the Last Crisis--Amidst the deepening shadows of earth's last great crisis, God's light will shine brightest, and the song of hope and trust will be heard in clearest and loftiest strains.[3]

Triumphant Song at Jesus' Coming--Through a rift in the clouds [in the time of the end, when God's people are delivered], there beams a star whose brilliancy is increased fourfold in contrast with the darkness. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law. Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them.

A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” (Psalm 46:1-3)[4]

Notes:

1. Patriarchs and Prophets, 289, 290.
2. The Ministry of Healing, 472.
3. Education, 166.
4. The Great Controversy, 638, 639.

Chapter 74

Songs of the Redeemed

A Preview of Heaven--Then I was pointed to the glory of heaven, to the treasure laid up for the faithful. Everything was lovely and glorious. The angels would sing a lovely song, then they would cease singing and take their crowns from their heads and cast them glittering at the feet of the lovely Jesus, and with melodious voices cry, "Glory, Alleluia!" I joined with them in their songs of praise and honor to the Lamb, and every time I opened my mouth to praise Him, I felt an unutterable sense of the glory that surrounded me.[1]

Songs of the Saints--And we all cried out, "Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!" and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring.[2]

Songs by the Sons of God--All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a tribute of

praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. The years will move on in gladness. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.”[3]

Choir of the Redeemed and the Angels-- Stand on the threshold of eternity and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have cooperated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake. With the angels, they cast their crowns at the feet of the Redeemer, exclaiming, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.... Honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Revelation 5:12, 13)

There the redeemed ones greet those who

directed them to the uplifted Saviour. They unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven, as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain” and hath redeemed us to God.[4]

Song of Moses and the Lamb--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.” (Revelation 15:2, 3)

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake.” (Psalm 115:1) Such was the spirit that pervaded Israel’s song of deliverance, and it is the spirit that should dwell in the hearts of all who love and fear God. In freeing our souls from the bondage of sin, God has wrought for us a deliverance greater than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Like the Hebrew host, we should praise the Lord with heart and soul and voice for His “wonderful works to the children of men.” Those who dwell upon God’s great mercies, and are not unmindful of His lesser gifts will put on the girdle of gladness, and make melody in their hearts to the Lord.

The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude. What compassion, what matchless love, has God shown to us, lost sinners, in connecting us with Himself,

to be to Him a peculiar treasure! What a sacrifice has been made by our Redeemer, that we may be called children of God! We should praise God for the blessed hope held out before us in the great plan of redemption, we should praise Him for the heavenly inheritance, and for His rich promises; praise Him that Jesus lives to intercede for us.[5]

The King in His Beauty--Those who, regardless of all else, place themselves in God's hands, to be and do all that He would have them, will see the King in His beauty. They will behold His matchless charms, and, touching their golden harps, they will fill all heaven with rich music and with songs to the Lamb.[6]

Anthems of the Blessed--Angels are looking forward with earnest expectation to the final triumph of the people of God, when seraphim and cherubim and the "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" shall swell the anthems of the blessed and celebrate the triumphs of the mediatorial achievements in the recovery of man.[7]

The Victor's Palm and Shining Harp--In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skillful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains. Rapture unutterable thrills every heart, and each voice is raised in grateful praise: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." (Revelation 1:5, 6)[8]

Sound of Music in Heaven--The prophet caught the sound of music there, and song, such music and song as, save in the visions of God, no mortal ear has heard or mind conceived. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10) "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." (Isaiah

51:3) “As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there.” (Psalm 87:7) “They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord.” (Isaiah 24:14)[9]

Song of the 144,000--These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father’s name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.[10]

Acclamation in the New Earth--Upon its summit His feet will rest when He shall come again. Not as a Man of sorrows, but as a glorious and triumphant King He will stand upon Olivet, while Hebrew hallelujahs mingle with Gentile hosannas, and the voices of the redeemed as a mighty host shall swell the acclamation, Crown Him Lord of all![11]

Praise From One Sabbath to Another--When there shall be a “restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy

prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21), the creation Sabbath, the day on which Jesus lay at rest in Joseph’s tomb, will still be a day of rest and rejoicing. Heaven and earth will unite in praise, as “from one Sabbath to another” (Isaiah 66:23) the nations of the saved shall bow in joyful worship to God and the Lamb.[12]

An Eternal Chorus of Praise--And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on

the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Revelation 5:13)

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.[13]

Notes:

1. Early Writings, 66.
2. Early Writings, 17.
3. The Ministry of Healing, 506.
4. The Ministry of Healing, 506, 507.
5. Patriarchs and Prophets, 289.
6. Evangelism, 503.

7. My Life Today, 307.
8. The Great Controversy, 646.
9. Prophets and Kings, 730.
10. Prophets and Kings, 591.
11. The Desire of Ages, 830.
12. The Desire of Ages, 769, 770.
13. The Great Controversy, 678.