

shall forsake all for Christ, knowing that, unless they do, there will be a final and eternal separation. The true Christian cannot, while with unbelieving friends, be light and trifling. The value of the souls for whom Christ died is too great.

He “that forsaketh not all that he hath,” says Jesus, “cannot be My disciple.” Whatever shall divert the affections from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. Its golden chain binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of others. These are Satan’s snares, set for unwary feet. But these slavish bands must be broken; the flesh must be crucified with the affections and lusts. We cannot be half the Lord’s and half the world’s. We are not God’s people unless we are such entirely. Every weight, every besetting sin, must be laid aside. God’s watchmen will not cry, “Peace, peace,” when God has not spoken peace. The voice of the faithful watchmen will be heard: “Go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.”

The church cannot measure herself by the world nor by the opinion of men nor by what she once was. Her faith and her position in the world as they now are must be compared with what they would have been if her course had been continually onward and upward. The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting.

The light has been shining clear and definite upon her pathway, and the light of 1882 calls her to an account. If her talents are unimproved, if her fruit is not perfect before God, if her light has become darkness, she is indeed found wanting. The knowledge of our state as God views it, seems to be hidden from us. We see, but perceive not; we hear, but do not understand; and we rest as unconcerned as if the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, rested upon our sanctuary. We profess to know God, and to believe the truth, but in works deny Him. Our deeds are directly adverse to the principles of truth and righteousness, by which we profess to be governed.

{Testimonies to the Church Volume 5, Pg.80-84}

Changing Cleveland One By One

Bishop Stephen D. Lewis

Few Have Fought and Conquered Self

The patience of God has an object, but you are defeating it. He is allowing a state of things to come that you would fain see counteracted by and by, but it will be too late.... Who knows whether God will not give you up to the deceptions you love? Who knows but that the preachers who are faithful, firm, and true may be the last who shall offer the gospel of peace to our unthankful churches? It may be that the destroyers are already training under the hand of Satan and only wait the departure of a few more standard-bearers to take their places, and with the voice of the false prophet cry, Peace, peace,” when the Lord hath not spoken peace. I seldom weep, but now I find my eyes blinded with tears; they are falling upon my paper as I write. It may be that ere long all prophesyings among us will be at an end, and the voice which has stirred the people may no longer disturb their carnal slumbers.

I am filled with pain and anguish as I see parents conforming to the world and allowing their children to meet the worldly standard at such a time as this. I am filled with horror as the condition of families professing present truth is opened before me. The profligacy (shamelessness, reckless extravagance) of youth and even children is almost incredible. Parents do not know that secret vice is destroying and defacing the image of God in their children. The sins which characterized the Sodomites exist among them. The parents are responsible; for they have not educated their children to love and obey God. They have not restrained them nor diligently taught them the way of the Lord. They have allowed them to go out and to come in when they chose, and to associate with worldlings. These worldly influences which counteract parental teaching and authority are to be found largely in so-called good society. By their dress, looks, amusements, they surround themselves with an atmosphere which is opposed to Christ.

Our only safety is to stand as God’s peculiar people. We must not yield one inch to the customs and fashions of this degenerate age, but stand in moral independence, making no compromise with its corrupt and idolatrous practices.

It will require courage and independence to rise above the religious standard of the Christian world. They do not follow the Saviour’s example of self-denial; they make no sacrifice; they are constantly seeking to evade the cross which Christ declares to be the token of discipleship.

What can I say to arouse our people? I tell you not a few ministers who stand before the people to explain the Scriptures are defiled. Their hearts are corrupt, their hands unclean. Yet many are crying, Peace, “peace;” and the workers of iniquity are not alarmed. The Lord’s hand is not shortened that He

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cannot save, nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear; but it is our sins that have separated us from God. The church is corrupt because of her members who defile their bodies and pollute their souls.

If all of those who come together for meetings of edification and prayer could be regarded as true worshipers, then might we hope, though much would still remain to be done for us. But it is in vain to deceive ourselves. Things are far from being what the appearance would indicate. From a distant view much may appear beautiful which, upon close examination, will be found full of deformities. The prevailing spirit of our time is that of infidelity (marital disloyalty, unfaithfulness) and apostasy--a spirit of pretended illumination because of a knowledge of the truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. There is a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit. There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God. {*Testimonies to the Church Volume 5, Pg.77-79*}

The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Those who have rendered supreme homage to "science falsely so called" will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. There are precious ones now hidden who have not bowed the knee to Baal. They have not had the light which has been shining in a concentrated blaze upon you. But it may be under a rough and uninviting exterior the pure brightness of a genuine Christian character will be revealed. In the day time we look toward heaven but do not see the stars. They are there, fixed in the firmament, but the eye cannot distinguish them. In the night we behold their genuine luster.

The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne

away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness.

When trees without fruit are cut down as cumberers of the ground, when multitudes of false brethren are distinguished from the true, then the hidden ones will be revealed to view, and with hosannas range under the banner of Christ. Those who have been timid and self-distrustful will declare themselves openly for Christ and His truth. The most weak and hesitating in the church will be as David--willing to do and dare. The deeper the night for God's people, the more brilliant the stars. Satan will sorely harass the faithful; but, in the name of Jesus, they will come off more than conquerors. Then will the church of Christ appear "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

The seeds of truth that are being sown by missionary efforts will then spring up and blossom and bear fruit. Souls will receive the truth who will endure tribulation and praise God that they may suffer for Jesus. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." When the overflowing scourge shall pass through the earth, when the fan is purging Jehovah's floor, God will be the help of His people. The trophies of Satan may be exalted on high, but the faith of the pure and holy will not be daunted.

Elijah took Elisha from the plow and threw upon him his mantle of consecration. The call to this great and solemn work was presented to men of learning and position; had these been little in their own eyes and trusted fully in the Lord, He would have honored them with bearing His standard in triumph to the victory. But they separated from God, yielded to the influence of the world, and the Lord rejected them. Many have exalted science and lost sight of the God of science. This was not the case with the church in the purest times.

God will work a work in our day that but few anticipate. He will raise up and exalt among us those who are taught rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the outward training of scientific institutions. These facilities are not to be despised or condemned; they are ordained of God, but they can furnish only the exterior qualifications. God will manifest that He is not dependent on learned, self-important mortals.

There are few really consecrated men among us, few who have fought and conquered in the battle with self. Real conversion is a decided change of feelings and motives; it is a virtual taking leave of worldly connections, a hastening from their spiritual atmosphere, a withdrawing from the controlling power of their thoughts, opinions, and influences. The separation causes pain and bitterness to both parties. It is the variance which Christ declares that He came to bring. But the converted will feel a continual longing desire that their friends