

## Message Notes

# Changing Cleveland One By One

Bishop Stephen D. Lewis

## Do You Really Know?

When God's presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not. Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, they still regarded themselves as the chosen of God. The ministration in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people guilty of the blood of God's dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers and apostles. So when the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God. *{The Great Controversy pg. 615}*

Many have unsubdued, unhumiliated hearts, and think more of their own little grievances and trials than of the souls of sinners. If they had the glory of God in view, they would feel for perishing souls around them; and as they realized their perilous situation, would take hold with energy, exercising faith in God, and hold up the hands of His servants, that they might boldly, yet in love, declare the truth and warn souls to lay hold upon it before the sweet voice of mercy should die away. Said the angel, "Those who profess His name are not ready." I saw that the seven last plagues were coming upon the shelterless heads of the wicked; and then those who have stood in their way will hear the bitter reproaches of sinners, and their hearts will faint within them. *{Early Writings, pg 120}*

There are a large number of professed Christians who would feel surprised and deeply injured if they were shown the light in which God regards them. They are spiritually dead, while professing to live. They are false lights--signs that point in the wrong direction. To these I would lift

my voice in warning. Study your Bibles, analyze your motives and principles, before it is too late. When you repent and become converted, you will see and appreciate the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The half-hearted, pleasure-loving professor of religion is the very best agent Satan has to allure souls away from the straight gate and from the narrow path. Such have proved the ruin of souls they might have saved had they walked in the footprints of the Light of life. *{The Review and Herald, 10-27-96}*

Satan leads many to believe that God will overlook their unfaithfulness in the minor affairs of life; but the Lord shows in His dealings with Jacob that He will in no wise sanction or tolerate evil. All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan. The more exalted their profession and the more honorable the position which they hold, the more grievous is their course in the sight of God and the more sure the triumph of their great adversary. Those who delay a preparation for the day of God cannot obtain it in the time of trouble or at any subsequent time. The case of all such is hopeless. Those professed Christians who come up to that last fearful conflict unprepared will, in their despair, confess their sins in words of burning anguish, while the wicked exult over their distress. These confessions are of the same character as was that of Esau or of Judas. *{The Great Controversy, Pg. 620}*

Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected. There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for willful blindness. . . . *{The Review and Herald, April 25, 1893}*

God will not condemn any at the judgment because they honestly believed a lie, or conscientiously cherished error; but it will be because they neglected the opportunities of making themselves acquainted with truth. The

infidel will be condemned, not because he was an infidel, but because he did not take advantage of the means God has placed within his reach to enable him to become a Christian. *{Testimonies to Ministers, Pg. 437}*

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 16:25. Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God. A man is traveling and comes to a place where there are several roads and a guideboard indicating where each one leads. If he disregards the guideboard, and takes whichever road seems to him to be right, he may be ever so sincere, but will in all probability find himself on the wrong road. *{The Great Controversy, Pg.597}*

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