

THE PRESENT TRUTH

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Greater Concern and Zeal Needed for Soul Winning

I find, after our American mail is closed up and gone, a letter written to you. Well, I am sorry, but will put it in the mail for the next steamer to convey to America.

My mind is exercised day and night in regard to our missionary work. I am alarmed because there is so little genuine burden for perishing souls. The church knows her duty well, if she would only contemplate the situation. There is work to be done in home missionary efforts. There is work to be done in far-off lands. Why are there not hundreds giving themselves to the performance of the work, where [now] there is [but] one? The truth of God which they profess to believe should sanctify the soul, stirring every power that God has given them--the deep and living fountains of motives and sympathies, that they will cooperate with the heavenly intelligences. It is the Holy Spirit that accomplishes the work. [Said Jesus], "Without Me, ye can do nothing" [John 15:5]. Keep this before every congregation, that it is earnestness, wholeness of purpose, that God will accept.

But what is the matter, that the church does not arouse and seek with earnest prayer and determined effort to set their people in the church to work? Are elders of these churches carrying any burden? Do they feel any love for the souls of the sheep of God's pasture? Do they humble their hearts before God and by faith lay hold on the grace of Christ and put away their sins, and believe their repentance is accepted of God? Have they piety? Have they devotion to God? Will the elders of the church--the officers of the church--draw nigh to God? Will they now, in probationary time, learn the lessons of Jesus Christ and practice them, until they shall ascend the high places of faith and command a clearer, more spiritual view of the situation?

There has been an abundance of slipshod work done. The only conclusion the world can come to is that those who profess to believe the end of all things is at hand do not really believe the tremendous truth that Christ is at the door. Do they believe the mission of Christ was to save the lost and perishing, that Christ is the only remedy for sin, and that the world's Redeemer came to the world, all seared and marred with the curse, to lift up fallen man, to reveal to the perishing the love of the Father and bring them to look and live and thereby bring many sons and daughters to glory? But everyone must strive lawfully to win the crown of everlasting life. They must believe the only name "given among men, whereby we must be saved" [Acts 4:12] is Jesus Christ. And this must be no pretentious faith, but that faith that makes Christ a personal Saviour.

There has been very little deep piety and wholeness to God. When the spirit of Christ takes possession of the heart, then there is a missionary for God. The most grievous sin of idolatry exists in the church. And he who interposes between the professed Christian and his wholehearted service to God, takes the form of an idol, and the most grievous sin of idolatry is idolatry itself.

The testimonies of God's word are plain and clear in regard to the snares of the devil. Yet there are not only church members on the devil's ground, but those who are opening the Scriptures to others practice evil and defile the soul and body. They are guilty before God because they are unholy. Were the church living by faith, had the oil of faith been in their vessels with their lamps, their guilty repose would end. They who believe the sacred, elevating truths for this time cannot sleep over them. A burden is upon them to reiterate the words of Christ, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

I look over the large fields here in Australia and New Zealand, destitute of laborers, calling for laborers, and this is an English-speaking people, and our brethren in these places are disappointed because no laborers are sent to them.

Many in America who can, might move their families into different towns and cities and there lift the standard of truth. From the light given me of God, there is need of workers, and there has been existing the same need for years even from the commencement of the work in Australia and New Zealand. There can be persons, lay members of the church, who can for Christ's sake move to these places and raise the standard of truth in the islands of the sea.

"Ye are the light of the world." Is this addressed exclusively to a few men who have been ordained to the ministry? No! but to every Christian, young or old, rich or poor. If Christ has forgiven them of their sins, if the truth has made them free, have they not a work to do for the Master? If they are Christians, they will present the truth to others. They will not consider that all that they have to do is to serve themselves--to please themselves and glorify themselves. They will have a sense that they are Christ's, bought with a price, and will concentrate their energies to the work of building up a kingdom of God by raising souls that are ready to perish, seeking to save the lost. When believers are rejoicing in God because they see the beauty there is in Jesus, because they see He is Chief among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely, do they consider how many know nothing of the saving grace of Christ? Many have not the joy and happiness of anticipating the heaven of bliss awaiting the faithful. While the church is indolent, not doing the work God has given it to do, men are sickening and dying without a ray of saving light, without being pardoned of their sins.

And what are we as a people doing, to whom Christ has entrusted precious light and a knowledge of the truth? Jesus has made us the depositories of sacred truth, but so many are burying their talents in the earth, and point not out the antidote for sin. If they thus

neglect their duty, God will pronounce them slothful servants, and will not, cannot, commend them. They will not receive the benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Elder Haskell, our testimony must be clear cut--there must be no daubing with untempered mortar. Sins of a grave character are cherished in our borders, and unless there is an awakening such as we have not seen for some time, which will convict and convert professed Sabbathkeepers, they will die in their sins. The punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah will be light in comparison with that of those who have had great light and precious opportunities, and have been earthly-minded, corrupt in thoughts and practices, and have not purified their souls by obeying the truth.

Now we see [the] need of workers in the opening fields before us, but where are the men that can be trusted? Where are the men who year by year have been growing into a better knowledge of God and His ways and the movings of His providence? I want to sound in the ears of these sleepy, half-paralyzed souls the words spoken to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" [John 3:5]. There is need to seek God with all the heart. Elevate the standard. The commonness, the cheapness of conversation, reveal the measure of the spirituality of members of the church.

Now, those who have had years in this same experience, know not God nor Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and should such go forth as representatives of Jesus Christ? These men will never give the right mold to other minds; they have not grown up to the full stature of men and women in Christ. They simply have the name of Christians but are not fitted for the work of God, and never will be until they are born again, and learn the A.B.C. in true religion of Jesus Christ. There is a little hope in one direction: ***Take the young men and women, and place them where they will come as little in contact with our churches as possible, that the low grade of piety which is current in this day shall not leaven their ideas of what it means to be a Christian.***

The worshipers of God are in need of transforming grace to subordinate the world to religion. In the place of making the temporal interests first, exhausting soul, body, and spirit to secure temporal advantages, Jesus points us to the heavenly treasure, and tells us to lay not up treasures in this earth, which will perish, but "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," which will not perish, "for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Jesus would have all who profess to believe in Him deal in the currency of heaven, handling those things upon which God has stamped His image and superscription. These He presents before us as of infinite value. We see the need of a deep and thorough work in our churches but the Lord alone can by His Spirit make the hearts that are as steel, soft and sympathetic and true to the service of Christ. We are far behind because the churches have folded their hands in a peace-and-safety attitude, and are at ease in Zion, doing almost nothing.

When the living zeal should be in their hearts, now as before, Satan is stirring the powers from beneath to make one last desperate effort to convert the world to his principles. He has his plans laid with satanic subtlety, and destruction cometh suddenly, while those who have the light, the warnings that such a crisis is before us, are almost unmoved.

I can but feel deeply over the indifference of those who claim to be the repositories of sacred truth. They seem to be blinded in the way they view sin. They cannot see afar off, and have forgotten they were purged from their old sins. Why? Because they did not advance in the knowledge of the truth. They did not practice the truth; they were not sanctified through the truth. The Pattern was before them but they did not copy the Pattern. So perfect was the example and life of Christ, that not the least jot of inconsistency existed between His instructions and His life. Now, what a marked contrast is seen to exist in the truth we profess to believe as a people, and the life and character!

Then there is not a vigilant supervision over self. There is not felt a necessity of placing self under the control of the Spirit of God, and of shunning as they would a serpent all facilities and temptations to evil. The Holy Spirit alone can be the positive remedial agent. We can put no confidence in humanity. Perfect humanity without Christ does not exist in human society. Watch it, and degeneracy will be revealed. Active agencies are at work to pollute and stain the soul. The cross, the cross of Calvary, presented again and again and plainly dwelt upon in every discourse, will prove the life-healing balm; [it] 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. Their hearts are not sound. They are not at enmity with Satan. The heart is the treasure house of sin. Not being expelled, sin is hidden until an hour of opportunity, and then it is revealed and springs into action. The first work is with the heart. Truth-- the love of Jesus--must supply the vacuum. Said Christ, "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good"

Elder Haskell, the Lord is waiting to do great things for His people. But they must be pure in heart before they can see God or know Him as a pure and holy God. Jesus led His disciples into the audience chamber of the Most High; He impressed upon their minds what was to be the burden of their prayer. They were to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which would supply every need of the soul, for it would work by love and purify the soul. The Spirit taking His abode in the heart, will transform the entire being, conforming it to the likeness of Christ. Let us humble our hearts before God and believe He has pardoned all our transgressions and forgiven all our sins. We cannot honor God unless we do believe this, and make Jesus our personal Saviour. We must as a people rise up from our formality. We must enter the strait gate.

Satan has placed his active agents along the passage to dispute the way of every soul. Christ has encouraged His followers not to be intimidated. Press on; urge your way through. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and

shall not be able" (Matt. 13:24). Darling, cherished idols will have to be given up, and the sins that have been indulged, even if it comes as close as the plucking out of the right eye or cutting off the right arm. Agonize! Force your way through the very armies of hell that oppose your passage.

Oh! we must be terribly in earnest to impress upon every soul that there is a heaven to win and a hell to shun. Every energy of the soul must be aroused to force their passage, and seize the kingdom by force. Satan is active, and we must be active too. Satan is untiring and persevering, and we must be the same. There is no time to make excuses and blame others for our backslidings; no time now to flatter the soul [that] if circumstances had only been more favorable, how much better, how much easier [it would be] for us to work the works of God. We must tell even those who profess to believe in Christ, that they must cease to offend God by sinful excuses.

Jesus has provided for every emergency. If they will walk where He leads the way, He will make rough places plain. He, with His experience, will create an atmosphere for the soul. He closes the door and brings the soul into seclusion with God, and the needy soul is to forget everyone and everything, but God. Satan will talk with him, but speak aloud to God and He will drive back the hellish shadow of Satan. With humble, subdued, thankful hearts they will come forth saying, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." The sincere seeker comes forth from the alliance with God, rich in the assurance of His love, to go forth to distill a heavenly prayer wherever he goes. He can talk of the righteousness of Christ; he can talk [of] the love of God with sincerity. He has trusted and he knows the Lord is good.

Thus, work is to be done in all our churches. Christ--His love, His forgiveness, His purity--is to be the theme upon which we are to dwell.

The charms of Jesus are to be kept ever before our minds. Charged with the elevated character of the True Model every soul must copy, let us turn our eyes from everything that would dishearten or discourage.

Satan will work to distort everything to our vision, and make a mountain of a molehill. Our eyes must be steadfastly fixed upon Jesus. The Lord Jesus is our leader; we must follow where He leads the way. We are not to commence to plan for the second step. We are not to say, "Lord, after I take that step, then what shall I do? for I shall meet with difficulties." But by faith we must take that one step, come what will, and trust in Jesus.

Elder Haskell, the reason our ministers are so inefficient is because they go to their work and come from their labors, if they have any success, full of themselves. The disciples of Christ did this when they said, "Even the spirits are subject unto us." Jesus could discern their danger, and He said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." Come out of the din of battle, away from the conflict, and hold communion with God. Thus it is with many workers. They are too strong, too full of self. The Lord cannot lead them or teach them or use them to His glory, for they are wise in their own conceits, and vainly imagine that the Lord cannot do without them. Self must be buried. We must educate the people to seek the Lord. We must speak plain words to ministers who are walking in the sparks of their own kindling.

Praise of men and flattery makes ministers hungry for more until they think, as did Elder [E. P.] Daniels, that the praise of man is of more value than the approval of God. We must, if saved, imbibe the Spirit and power of Christ. Self must be hidden in Christ, and Christ alone appear. Our work is to elevate, not by praising anyone, but by upholding Jesus. Bring the mind to Jesus; lift Him up, the Man of Calvary, before the people and He can do all things for the humble, trusting believer.

P.S. I enclose this matter to you. Will you please send copy of the general matter in [the] letter to you, as Marian wants to make note of some things in it. {12 Manuscript Release Pages 328-338}

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