

Changing Cleveland One By One

Bishop Stephen D. Lewis

Message Notes

Your Heavenly Father Knows

There is need of constant watchfulness, a daily reconversion, that our individual traits of character shall be wholly sanctified to God. All our powers are to be purified from the dross of sin, and trained for service. There are many who, while professing to be the servants of God, and to be looking for the soon return of Christ, are not having the experience that all must have who stand without fault before God. They are making mistakes in the work of character building. To continue to make these mistakes is a costly business, for they hinder the progress in the divine life

Our religious obligations begin in serving God faithfully in the home life. I am urged to bear earnest testimony to parents in public and private, that they may be led to devote all their powers in sanctified service for Christ. I am instructed to urge upon our people the need of being imbued with the Spirit of God. This Spirit will teach believers to work in harmony with Christ whenever and wherever opportunity offers. As different families among our people have been presented before me, I have been shown their great need of the converting power of God...

Religion in the home is of vital importance. Upon fathers and mothers rest to a large degree the responsibility for the mold of character that their children receive.... If parents will teach their children to conduct themselves according to the principles of the Word of God, these children will unconsciously teach others what it means to be Christians. Let parents maintain true Christian dignity before their children, and they will be greatly aided in their work of upbuilding the kingdom of Christ.

The apostle Paul, describing the children living in these last days, declares them to be “disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.” It is important that parents realize the tendency of the age, and labor untiringly to educate their children away from those things, preparing them, by teaching them to love and copy the life of Christ, for a place in the future life of holiness. {Letter 90, October 25, 1911}

Jesus is your best Friend. Live by daily faith on the Son of God. Let your course of action be such that God can approve. Then you will be a blessing to others.... Do not outgrow the simple faith and trust of your childhood. When

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sick, your first request was, “Father, Mother, pray that the Lord will heal me and forgive my sins.” When prayer was offered in your behalf, you made your simple prayer and thanked the Lord He had heard and answered, and with perfect faith and confidence you said, “I shall get well. The Lord has blessed me.” You slept in perfect peace, in confidence that holy angels would guard your bed.

Be a child again. Cast all your burdens and sorrows on Him who alone can give rest to the weary heart and peace to the troubled soul. If you would learn anew the precious secret of happiness in this life and how you may attain the future, immortal life, be assured you must again be a child in trust, in obedience, in love. If you only do your duty bravely, yet cheerfully, as a happy child of God, you will reflect rays of sunshine upon others.

I charge you as one who knows, look up to God with the simple faith you had in your childhood and say, “Father, I am weary, give me rest. Unite my ignorance to Thy wisdom, my weakness to Thy strength, my frailty to Thy enduring might. Shield me with Thy protecting hand in life’s conflicts. Save me from the vigilant foe who haunts my steps.” Then believe, my son, and you will realize even more than you expected.

Our only safety now is to live a life of faith and good works. Your heavenly Father knows your every trial. He is acquainted with all your infirmities. He will be to you an ever present help in time of need and He will withhold no good thing from them that fear and love Him. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Our compassionate Saviour will never be indifferent to any pain or sorrow or grief His children suffer...

All that you lose and all that you gain, prosperity and adversity, let it make you more like Jesus, the divine Pattern. Your happiness will be secured in preserving your childlike trust, cherishing always the beauty and loveliness of a meek and quiet spirit. {Letter 56, October 28, 1874}

A terrible contest is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding its wings, preparing to step down from the golden throne and leave the world to the control of Satan, the king it has chosen, a murderer and a destroyer from the beginning.

The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against all who serve Him, and soon, very soon, is to be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The

earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.

Christ came to this earth in human form that He might stand as the Captain of our salvation, so that we should not be overcome by Satan’s power. And when the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working in mercy and power to counteract his designs.

Determined to efface the image of God in man, Satan works with an intensity of effort to hide God from view. Not openly does he work, but secretly, mingling the human and the divine, the spurious and the genuine, so seeking to bring confusion and distress. But in proportionate power divine mercy is revealed to counteract this wicked working, and bring to light the enemy’s hidden purposes.

God’s people are to hear a bold, decided testimony for the truth, unfolding the purposes of God by the witness of pen and voice. In place after place they are to proclaim the message of God’s Word, arousing men and women to comprehend the truth....

There is a reality in sound doctrine. It is not as a vapor, which passes away. Light is to shine forth from the Word of God. God calls upon His people to draw near to Him. Let no one interpose between Him and His people. Christ is knocking at the door of the heart, seeking for entrance. Will you let Him in? {Letter 153, October 26, 1901}

When the Holy Spirit works human minds, there will be a much higher standard in speech, in ministry, and in spirituality in our churches than is now seen. Then our church members will be refreshed by the waters of life, and the laborers, working under the one Head, Christ, will reveal their Master in word, in spirit, in every form of ministry, and will encourage one another in the grand, closing work in which they are engaged. There will be a healthful increase of unity and love, which will bear testimony to the world that God has sent His Son for our redemption. There will be a pruning of the branches of the vine, and a bringing forth of much fruit. The branches that bear not the precious fruit of the Spirit—Christlike words and deeds—will be cut off from the parent stock. Divine truth will be exalted, and, as it shines forth as a lamp that burneth, we shall understand it more and still more fully. {Manuscript 83, October 29, 1903}