



READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER

To Be Read in All the Churches, Dec. 12 to 21, 1947

A Message From the General Conference

"Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." Mark. 14:38.

These words of Jesus are written for His praying children who are struggling with the powers of darkness. The days of eternity are drawing nearer, and the battle is steadily growing in intensity. The deceptions of Satan are becoming more subtle and crafty, because he knows that his time is short. Therefore the admonition of Jesus for our time.

In thankfulness we leave another year of grace behind us, and our hearts are lifted up to Him who has so graciously led us thus far. In this Week of Prayer we have again the privilege to kneel down at the feet of Jesus, and worship Him who has carried us on hands of love and with great patience.

The work of the Lord is making wonderful progress in many lands. A goodly number of souls have been added to the ranks of the believers in the past year. Our greatest need in the cause of God today are self-denying workers, who are willing to go forth into the vineyard of the Lord. Many souls are crying for help, and it is our solemn duty to bring the message of salvation to those who are lost. Let us especially in this Week of Prayer petition the Lord that He may send forth laborers into the field. The words of Jesus: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest," John 4:35, are also a reality today. May God grant that many may be willing to enter the service of Christ.

The last Sabbath of the Week of Prayer has been set aside as a day of fasting. The offerings for the Week of Prayer will be dedicated to the Mission work in far off lands.

Let us especially pray for those brethren who are still in great difficulties and trials.

May the Lord bless all brethren and sisters who bow their knees before His throne of grace, and who surrender their hearts to Him, Amen.

THE BRETHREN

(Reading for Friday, December 12)

Prepare to Meet Thy God

By A. MUELLER

"Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O, Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 4:12.

It is a great privilege that we can come to the Lord in these days of prayer. We meet with the Creator of Heaven and earth, who has also created, loved, and redeemed us. One year of grace has again passed into eternity, and another year lies before us. The Savior invites us again to meet Him.

The words found in Rev. 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me," are of great importance to us in this hour. Why? Because the Lord wants to unite with us and meet us with His grace. He has something special to say unto us on this occasion. He wants to point out to us what is still lacking in our life, and what is necessary for us to do. He will tell us about our defects in character so that we may remedy them and be ready to meet Him when He comes in great glory.

Two Classes

When Jesus shall come again the whole world will meet Him. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1:7. What a meeting will that be for the wicked. "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Rev. 6:14-17.

At this meeting the strangest prayer that has ever come from human lips will be prayed. But it is too late, forever too late. In the time of grace men did not seek to meet the Lord, who always sought to meet them. They constantly went out of His way, and why? Because they did not want to give up their pride and surrender their heart. Now they pray to the mountains to fall upon them

and hide them before His face, but it will then be forever too late.

For the children of God this meeting with Christ at His coming brings great joy. They will say from a joyful heart: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

Wherein lies the secret that the children of God can meet Jesus with a joyful heart? They have met Him so often in their life on this earth. They have learned to know Him, to love Him and have followed Him in sorrow and in joy. For His name's sake they have endured tribulation, and they are now forever rewarded. The question for you and me is: To what class shall we belong?

Experiences of Men Who Met With the Lord

The great men of the Bible had many experiences in their personal life of meeting with the Lord. Let us take as an example Abraham, the father of the faithful. When the Lord called him to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, he obeyed the voice of the Lord and went. He had no excuse to offer. As was the beginning of his life of faith, so was also his end. For him there was only one thing to do, and that was to obey the commands of the Lord.

The Lord could therefore make true His promises to Abraham. "Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Gen. 26:5. Through his faithful obedience Abraham became the friend of God and the father of all the faithful.

We all know about the meeting which Jacob had with the Lord and the wonderful experience he was permitted to make. We see him on the ford Jabbok where he met the Lord at night, and how this meeting ended in complete victory. On this occasion Jacob became a true Israelite. In his true conversion lies the secret of his victory. "Yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there He spake with us." Hosea 12:4.

He was fearful about the reconciliation with his brother Esau. He was concerned about his family, the conversion of his sons, and also that he might prove faithful in his life and receive the blessed assurance of life eternal. This anxiety of

Jacob will be repeated with God's remnant people in the time of the end. The prophet points to this time in the following words: "Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jer. 30:7.

Now we shall consider another meeting with the Lord. Peter had denied His Savior three times, the cock crew when the eyes of Jesus met those of Peter. This meeting helped Peter to see himself, for he "went out, and wept bitterly." Luke 22:62. A few days later Jesus met Peter at the sea of Tiberias. This meeting brought Peter into full harmony with Jesus, and he became a faithful worker in the vineyard of the Lord. Jesus did ask Peter: "Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me?" This question was put to him three times for he had denied his Savior thrice. Jesus did not ask him about his faith, but about his love. Peter could only answer: "Lord, thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." John 21:17.

Dear brethren and sisters, the great question that comes to us in the battle of faith which we have to fight on earth is: Do you love the Lord with all your heart? This is the final question we must answer. If we love the Lord with our whole heart, we shall also keep His command-

ments, we shall love His church, health reform, the Bible, the Testimonies and all the principles of truth. We shall love the work of saving souls, we shall love sinners and take an active part in the spreading of the gospel. We shall then become friends of Christ and we help Him because He is always willing to help us.

Soon the great day when all shall meet the Lord will come, and how will it be? Will it be as in the parable of the wedding where one was found without a wedding garment? He was cast into outer darkness. The king did ask him: "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" Matt. 22:12.

The Lord wants to meet us in love. He is ready to help us overcome our sins. But what is our attitude toward this meeting. How do we meet the Lord when He comes to us with various trials? O, how many have gone over to the side of the enemy, and have met Jesus like Judas once did, betraying Him with a kiss.

The Lord may give grace that we may meet Jesus at the right time, so that we may not be disappointed at that great meeting when Jesus comes to gather His children home. This is my desire and prayer.

(Reading for Sabbath, December 13)

Faith and Prayer

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE

What is Faith?

FAITH is trusting God—believing that He loves us, and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life's success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles.

Every good impulse or aspiration is the gift of God; faith receives from God the life that alone can produce true growth and efficiency.

How to Exercise Faith

How to exercise faith should be made very plain. To every promise of God there are conditions. If we are willing to do His will, all His

strength is ours. Whatever gift He promises, is in the promise itself. "The seed is the word of God." As surely as the oak is in the acorn, so surely is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift.

Faith that enables us to receive God's gifts is itself a gift, of which some measure is imparted to every human being. It grows as exercised in appropriating the word of God. In order to strengthen faith, we must often bring it in contact with the word.

In the study of the Bible the student should be led to see the power of God's word. In the creation, "He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast," He "callesh those things which be not as though they were;" for when He calls them, they are.

Results of Faith

How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have with-

stood the power of the whole world,—Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation; Noah and his household against the men of his time, men of the greatest physical and mental strength and the most debased in morals; the children of Israel at the Red Sea, a helpless, terrified multitude of slaves, against the mightiest army of the mightiest nation on the globe; David, a shepherd lad, having God's promise of the throne, against Saul, the established monarch, bent on holding fast his power; Shadrack and his companions in the fire, and Nebuchadnezzar on the throne; Daniel among the lions, his enemies in the high places of the kingdom, Jesus on the cross, and the Jewish priests and rulers forcing even the Roman governor to work their will; Paul in chains led to a criminal's death, Nero the despot of a world-empire.

Such examples are not found in the Bible only. They abound in every record of human progress. The Vaudois and the Huguenots, Wycliffe and Huss, Jerome and Luther, Tyndale and Knox, Zinzendorf and Wesley, with multitudes of others, have witnessed to the power of God's word against human power and policy in support of evil. These are the world's true nobility. This is its royal line. In this line the youth of today are called to take their places.

In Daily Life

Faith is needed in the smaller no less than in the greater affairs of life. In all our daily interests and occupations the sustaining strength of God becomes real to us through an abiding trust.

Viewed from its human side, life is to all an untried path. It is a path in which, as regards our deeper experiences, we each walk alone. Into our inner life no other human being can fully enter. As the little child sets forth on that journey in which, sooner or later, he must choose his own course, himself deciding life's issues for eternity, how earnest should be the effort to direct his trust to the sure Guide and Helper!

A Shield From Temptation

As a shield from temptation and an inspiration to purity and truth, no other influence can equal the sense of God's presence. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and can not look on iniquity." This thought was Joseph's shield amidst the corruptions of Egypt. To the allurements of temptation his answer was steadfast: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Such a shield, faith, if cherished, will bring to every soul.

God's Protecting Presence

Only the sense of God's presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden. Let him fix in his memory the promise, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Let him read that wonderful story of Elisha in the mountain city, and, between him and the hosts of armed foemen, a mighty-encircling band of heavenly angels. Let him read how to Peter, in prison and condemned to death, God's angel appeared; how past the armed guards, the massive doors and great iron gateway with their bolts and bars, the angel led God's servant forth in safety. Let him read of that scene on the sea, when to the tempest-tossed soldiers and seamen, worn with labor and watching and long fasting, Paul the prisoner, on his way to trial and execution, spoke those grand words of courage and hope: "Be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." In the faith of this promise Paul assured his companions, "There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you." So it came to pass. Because there was in that ship one man through whom God could work, the whole ship-load of heathen soldiers and sailors was preserved. "They escaped all safe to land."

These things were not written merely that we might read and wonder, but that the same faith which wrought in God's servants of old might work in us. In no less marked a manner than He wrought then will He work now wherever there are hearts of faith to be channels of His power.

Help for the Distrustful

Let the self-distrustful, whose lack of self-reliance leads them to shrink from care and responsibility, be taught reliance upon God. Thus many a one who otherwise would be but a cipher in the world, perhaps only a helpless burden, will be able to say with the apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The Guardian of Right

For the child also who is quick to resent injuries, faith has precious lessons. The disposition to resist evil or to avenge wrong is often prompted by a keen sense of justice and an active, energetic spirit. Let such a child be taught that God is the eternal guardian of right. He has a tender care for the beings whom He has loved as to give His dearest Beloved to save. He will deal with every wrong doer.

"For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye."

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. . . . He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee; for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.

Complete in Christ

The compassion that God manifests toward us, He bids us manifest toward others. Let the impulsive, the self-sufficient, the revengeful, behold the meek and lowly One, led as a lamb to the slaughter, unretaliating as a sheep dumb before her shearers. Let them look upon Him whom our sins have pierced and our sorrow burdened, and they will learn to endure, to forbear, and to forgive.

Through faith in Christ, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.

"Ye are complete in Him."

"Believe That Ye Receive"

Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that every one who would make his life-work a success must understand. Christ says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and what ever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.

For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received.

We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most.

Secret Prayer

To live thus by the word of God means the surrender to Him of the whole life. There will be felt a continual sense of need and dependence, a drawing out of the heart after God. Prayer is a necessity; for it is the life of the soul. Family prayer, public prayer, have their place, but it is secret communion with God that sustains the soul-life.

It was in the mount with God that Moses beheld the pattern of that wonderful building which was to be the abiding-place of His glory. It is in the mount with God,—in the secret place of communion,—that we are to contemplate His glorious ideal for humanity. Thus we shall be enabled so to fashion our character-building that to us may be fulfilled His promise, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

The Saviour's Example

It was in hours of solitary prayer that Jesus in His earth-life received wisdom and power. Let the youth follow His example in finding at dawn and twilight a quiet season for communion with their Father in heaven. And throughout the day let them lift up their hearts to God. At every step of our way He says, "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand; . . . fear not, I will help thee." Could our children learn these lessons in the morning of their years, what freshness and power, what joy and sweetness, would be brought into their lives!

A Cause of Doubt

These are lessons that only he who himself has learned can teach. It is because so many parents and teachers profess to believe the word of God while their lives deny its power, that the teaching of Scripture has no greater effect upon the youth. At times the youth are brought to feel the power of the word. They see the preciousness of the love of Christ. They see the beauty of His character, the possibilities of a life given to His service. But in contrast they see the life of those who profess to revere God's precepts. Of how many are the words true that were spoken to the prophet Ezekiel:

Thy people "speak one to one another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto Thee as the people cometh, and they sit before Thee as My people, and they hear Thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love; but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, Thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear Thy words, but they do them not."

The Bible to Shape the Life

It is one thing to treat the Bible as a book of good moral instruction, to be heeded so far as is consistent with the spirit of the times and our position in the world; it is another thing to regard it as it really is,—the word of the living God,—the word that is our life, the word that is to mould our actions our words, and our thoughts. To hold

God's word as anything less than this is to reject it. And this rejection by those who profess to believe it, is foremost among the causes of skepticism and infidelity in the youth.

Time for Prayer

An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in money-making, in the contest for power, in the struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. "Be still and know that I am God."

Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work.

These workers can never attain the highest success until they learn the secret of strength. They must give themselves time to think, to pray, to wait upon God for a renewal of physical, mental, and spiritual power. They need the uplifting influence of His Spirit. Receiving this, they will be quickened by fresh life. The wearied frame and tired brain will be refreshed, the burdened heart will be lightened.

Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him,—this is our need, Happy will it be for the children of our homes and the students of our schools when parents and teachers shall learn in their own lives the precious experience pictured in these words from the Song of Songs:

"As the apple-tree among the trees of the world,
So is my Beloved among the sons.
I sat down under His shadow with great delight,
And His fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting-house,
And His banner over me was love."

(Reading for Sunday, December 14)

Sanctification Through Obedience to the Truth

By A. W. DOERSCHLER

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." John 17:17.

"True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the truth."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 565.

SANCTIFICATION is a Bible subject, and as such it demands our serious attention. The importance of this subject appears from the fact that it is God's will that we should be sanctified. Says inspiration: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. 4:3. The object of God in giving a revelation to man, was to sanctify a people unto Himself; and as many as have spoken and written by inspiration, have dwelt on the necessity of sanctification.

Anciently God commanded His people to be holy. "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." Lev. 11:44. And under this dispensation the Lord says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15. In the face of these plain truths, it cannot be

expected that those who love the Bible will be disposed to let this subject pass unnoticed.

Spurious Sanctification

"The sanctification now gaining prominence in the religious world, carries with it a spirit of self-exaltation, and a disregard for the law of God, that mark it as foreign to the religion of the Bible. Its advocates teach that sanctification is an *instantaneous work*, by which, through faith alone they attain to perfect holiness. 'Only believe,' say they 'and the blessing is yours.' "—*The Great Controversy*, p. 471.

Finding in Acts 26:18 that Jesus has spoken of "them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me," there are those who claim sanctification by faith alone. Only believe in Christ and you are sanctified. Others there are who claim sanctification by the Holy Spirit alone. They say that Paul teaches that believers are to be "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Rom. 15:16. Both of these claims are wrong. And if sanctification

should be claimed by both faith and the Spirit, still it would be a false claim.

It is true that Jesus sent Paul to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Acts 26:18. It is also true that Paul wrote that "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit." 2 Thess. 2:13. And it is equally true that Christ Himself prayed to the Father for His disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." John 17:17. All three of these expressions are true. And when they are taken together, and met according to the purpose of God, true genuine sanctification will be the inevitable result. But when the attempt is made to take either of them alone, or any two of them together, the grace of sanctification is perverted, and a spurious sanctification, a terrible deception, is the sure result.

"Sanctified By Faith"

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Heb. 11:6.

Faith is the foundation upon which Christian character is built. Faith is the beginning and to it all other graces come in addition. It is by faith alone that we must be justified. It is only by faith in Christ that we can obtain the forgiveness of sins. Therefore it is plain that the first thing in sanctification is faith in Christ. When that faith is exercised, then the forgiveness of sins is received. The young convert stands on the platform of faith. He has seen sin in its true light, has repented of his sins, and has been cleansed from the same by faith in the merits of the blood of Christ, and now rejoices in His Savior. It is then that the Holy Spirit is imparted to the believer.

"Sanctification of the Spirit"

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Eph. 1:13.

As circumcision, outwardly, of the flesh, was the seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had; so circumcision, inwardly, of the heart, in the Spirit, is the seal of righteousness of the faith which we have in Christ.

It is the object of the Holy Spirit to "guide you into all truth." John 16:13. The Holy Spirit is to teach us the things that Christ has said, this is to say that the Holy Spirit is to teach us the word of God. The Holy Spirit therefore,

as teacher of the word of God, as guide into the word of God, is to take these things of God and show them to us, that we may know how to apply them to our lives and conform our ways to them. It is a plain fact that the Holy Spirit is given to us to teach us to obey the written word of God, and that true sanctification of the Spirit is unto "obedience to the truth." Any sanctification that is not unto "obedience to the truth," is spurious sanctification.

"Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth"

"The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is, and how it is to be attained. The Saviour prayed for His disciples, 'Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.'"—*The Great Controversy*, p. 469.

True sanctification is through the truth. The other two steps are only preparatory to this final one. The sanctification of faith is unto receiving the Holy Spirit, sanctification of the Spirit is unto "obedience to the truth," and having obeyed the truth through the Spirit, we are sanctified. He who rests solely upon faith, and claims to be sanctified, is deceived. He who rests alone upon the Spirit, and claims to be sanctified, is deceived. Likewise he who rests upon both faith and the Spirit, and claims to be sanctified, is deceived. He who rests upon nothing short of faith, and the Holy Spirit, and obedience to the truth, he alone is truly sanctified. It is by obedience to the truth that we are to be sanctified. The man who is living in obedience to the whole truth is wholly sanctified. Please notice the following testimony.

"The psalmist says, 'Thy law is truth.' By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is 'holy, and just, and good,' a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says, 'I have kept My Father's commandments.' 'I do always those things that please Him.' The followers of Christ are to become like Him,—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 469.

But we cannot by our own strength keep the holy law of God; neither can we cleanse ourselves from our transgressions of God's law. Therefore God in mercy provides the faith of Jesus, which presents to our view the fountain opened for uncleanness, and all those helps and means of grace that cluster around the death of the blessed Son of God, and by which the humble penitent sinner can obtain strength to bring all the powers of his being in subjection to the law of God.

Sanctification A Progressive Work

"Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 560.

Thus it is plainly stated that sanctification is a progressive work. It is not the work of a moment, but of a lifetime. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of Jesus, the Christian life has just begun. Now he is to "go on unto perfection;" to grow up "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" We know that as long as we are in this world we must grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. In order to grow in grace, there must be new faults discerned in ourselves, and additional victories gained. In order to grow in knowledge, there must be additional truths learned from the word of God, and as they are learned they must be obeyed, if we would be sanctified. Says the wise man, "The paths of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:18.

As the child of God contemplates the truth, he gradually beholds in it the glory of God and the beauty of His lovely character. Under the influence of divine truth he grows up in Christ and becomes assimilated into His likeness. Day by day he becomes more stronger and stronger, more and more holy in imitating the perfect Pattern, and thus he is changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ.

Sanctification may be well represented by the growth of plants. It commences with the seed, the grain, and grows up into the lofty tree. It is receiving with meekness the word of God, and growing thereby in grace and in the knowledge of the truth unto perfection in Christ Jesus. Christians are sanctified or perfect as far as they understand and practice the truth, but as the light increases the work of sanctification progresses.

"As God is holy in His sphere, so fallen man, through faith in Christ, is to be holy in his sphere."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 599.

True Sanctification No self-Exaltation

"There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and this thought will lead them to self-abasement. Those who will live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Savior."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 471.

The only safe position for any of us to take is to consider ourselves sinners, daily needing divine grace. Mercy through the atoning blood of Christ is our only plea. No condition is so hopeless as that of insensibility to personal defect and sin. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless.

"Let not God be dishonored by the declaration from human lips, 'I am sinless; I am holy.' Sanctified lips never give utterance to such presumptuous words."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 561, 562.

The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. The language of the meek is never that of boasting. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are continually hungering and thirsting for more righteousness. Sin will appear to them exceedingly sinful. It is one thing to profess sanctification, and quite another thing to live sanctification. Our walk must accord with our profession. We are admonished, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3.

Sanctification and Prayer

"Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that comes in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the supplicant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, 'Ye shall receive.'"—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 564.

Prayer is communion with God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of strength. A holy life is a sure evidence of continual prayer. Let me say dear brethren and sisters that our entire dependence upon God for victory and strength, to stand amidst the increasing perils of the last days, should lead us to close communion with the Lord. The Christian who prays much, makes rapid advances in the divine life. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Isa. 40:31. Prayer gains for us that strength which enables us to gain the victory over every sin. If we pray for victory over our sin, our prayers will be immediately answered. This Week of Prayer affords us another opportunity to seek the Lord unitedly for strength to obtain complete victory. It is the noble and exalted privilege of the real Christian to enjoy this blessed and saving communion with God. Prayer is a source of unending comfort to the Christian,

whatever his lot may be. He knows that through prayer God will make him successful in the conflict with sin. Through prayer the work of sanctification shall make continual progress in his life until he shall reach perfection in Christ.

Sanctification Embraces Entire Being

"The sanctification set forth in the Scripture embraces the entire being,—spirit, soul, and body. Paul prayed for the Thessalonians, that their 'whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'—*The Great Controversy*, p.473.

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly sanctified. Sanctification cleanses the mind from sinful thoughts. It changes the current of thought. It transfers the mind from carnal to spiritual things, from sin to holiness. The heart or mind is the spring of action, the foundation from whence all the words and actions flow. If the fountain is pure the stream that flows from it will also be pure. And if the mind is sanctified, if the thoughts are holy, the works and the actions, the whole life will be holy.

It was Paul's desire that the church should be wholly sanctified. The church is made up of the individual, and if the individual is wholly sanctified the church will likewise be wholly sanctified. A partial sanctification is not sufficient. Our whole spirit and soul and body, should be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord. The mind, the life and the body constitute the whole man, and when a person is sanctified in a Bible sense, these parts are set apart to the glory of God, and employed in the service of the Creator.

We are living in the time when the work of sanctification must be fully accomplished in the

lives of those who are waiting for the appearing of Jesus in the clouds of heaven. Before probation closes God's true children will have attained unto perfection. The Lord will bless them with the "latter rain" through which the work on earth will be finished. Note carefully the following testimony:

"We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the Judgment. We are preparing to meet Him who escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes, He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our character, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy, will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects, and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process, and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 355.

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. 4:3. Is it your will also? May God grant it! We thank God for the grace of sanctification, but we pray to be forever delivered from every kind of sanctification that is not "through obedience to the truth." The peace of God be with you all, Amen.

(Reading for Wed., December 17)

Are You Ready?

By K. KOZEL

An Open Letter

"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart . . . Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." 2 Cor. 3:2, 3, 16.

THE WORLD in all its ways and doings lies open before the eyes of God. Nothing, not even the smallest thing is hidden from Him. This is not changed in the least by the fact that the powers of evil, in the battle between light and darkness, for almost 6000 years have tried to conceal themselves. The beginning was already made by Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3:8). If this was already

so in the beginning, how much more it is true today in this time of the end.

It is sin that leads us to hide ourselves. Today more than ever. Soon it will reach its climax. Even God's professed people are no exception in this evil work. "Then He said to me: 'Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? How is the faithful city become an harlot' " *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 250. This should make us sad and cause us to think seriously because we are living in the most solemn time, the time of judgment in heaven. We must all appear like an open letter before the great Judge. "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:10.

If this is so, then do you not believe my dear brother and my dear sister, that it is high time to do away with our trifling and concealment of sin, and to fight it seriously? All heaven is at work to bring those who want to be saved to self examination. Let us in these solemn days of judgment not forget that we are like an open letter before the eyes of God. Will He graciously accept or reject our letter? Of course we are all accused: "which accused them before our God day and night." Rev. 12:10. But we have an advocate: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4:15. He will defend us under one main condition, that we humbly and honestly acknowledge and confess our sins.

Do not try to hide yourselves from the face of the Lord in this serious time of the end. Be honest and confess your sins, without shame or deceit. Hold back nothing for God knows all our ways and our doings. Only those who are upright in heart will be victorious. We cannot deceive the Lord. Do not repeat, my dear brother and sister, the sad story of Adam and Eve. The results are too terrible that we may lightly pass them by. God's all-seeing eye penetrates everywhere. It pierces also your heart. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it." Jer. 17:9. Come today and surrender your heart to Him. He only can cleanse it through the precious blood of His beloved Son. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."—John 1:7.

Deceitful wrong and sinful is our concealment before God, but the plan of redemption in favor of fallen and unthankful men is simple, compassionate, glorious and great. Therefore let us all come and lay on the bosom of our Saviour, like John, and with tears humbly and honestly confess our sin. He will then speak with the Father that our so openly presented letter may receive His approval and at last the seal of God promised to the overcomer.

Are you ready, am I ready? These are questions which should move our hearts while reading this short article for the Week of Prayer. Many among God's people today are being betrayed by the powers of darkness, because they consider themselves much better than they really are. The condition of the world is serious and sad. But much more sad is the decaying spiritual condition and way of thinking among God's professed people. The judgment of God over Laodicea as found in Rev. 3:13-20, is the saddest declaration in this time of the end. Only those who see their undone condition and repent will escape this judgment. Do not trust in yourselves or in your own wrong opinions, but believe the word of God which brings about a decision, an awakening and a better life. Read and examine today your own letter. Can it be placed everywhere openly? Are the words of our dear Brother Paul also true in your case when he says: "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ." 2 Cor. 3:3. Our letter must fulfill seven conditions in order to be the epistle of Christ and to receive the seal of God promised to the overcomer.

1. Absolute honesty. Prov. 2:7.
2. Watching and praying. Matt. 26:41.
3. True self-examination. Luke 18:13.
4. Repentance and a continual humble sorrow for sin. Matt. 3:2.
5. Exactness in living up to the principles of truth, established upon the word of God. Rev. 14:6-12; 2:10.
6. To stop murmuring and complaining. Num. 21:4-6.
7. To reach the highest attainment in self-denial, love, faith, goodness and mercy. Gal. 5:22, 23; Matt. 10:38, 39.

If we know ourselves as we really are, and have learned through the Spirit of God to read us as an open letter, all deceit, hypocrisy, pride, hatefulness, strife, hardness, carelessness, negligence, unexactness, uncomplying, selfishness, etc., will be seen in its true light and repented of. The evil powers of darkness will then have lost their battle of concealment and beguileness against us. The covering will then be taken away. (2 Cor. 3:16). The final true conversion has taken place, and the letter will lay open and clean before the judgment seat. We are then ready for the latter rain.

Examine yourselves today and see whether your letter has any mistakes in writing, any spots, any false expressions, or anything else of the above mentioned things. Think about it that the angels will read your letter day by day, and will control whether it will be free of mistakes. They are the ones who continually report to the great

Judge. You may have a good disposition and be fully satisfied with yourselves, and yet may not know that your case will be at this very moment thoroughly examined, and soon be fully decided upon for good or evil. No case is hopeless. Jesus can send a mighty angel to help us when we realize our danger and earnestly pray for help. I experienced wonderful moments when a short time ago I had the privilege in company with my dear brethren Mueller and Stabel, to visit the home of our dear and faithful Sister White. When we walked through the rooms we were told that the angel of Gabriel had visited Sr. White a number of times in one of the rooms. I shall never forget this experience. We would gladly have expressed our feelings there in earnest prayer and with tears. Our hearts were deeply moved.

It is also something wonderful when brethren can dwell together in unity. After being separated from one another for twenty years it is especially encouraging when we can discuss our letters personally. How did I rejoice to see my brethren again after such a long time. Only tears of thankfulness can express our true feeling at such a time. May we soon all be forever united with the Lord. Then we shall have the privilege to take Jesus into our arms as an expression of thankfulness for His help in our battle against sin. Then our letters will have been cleansed through the precious blood of Jesus. Let us pray to Him for this cleansing, so that soon the 144,000 letters will be clean and open before the judgment seat. In faithfulness and humbleness we must continue our battle against sin, until Jesus has finished His work in us.

(Reading for Friday, December 19)

Our Personal Preparation and the Finishing Work

By OTTO WELP

"Be ye always ready, in the evening, in the morning, and at noon, that when the cry is heard, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh! go ye forth to meet Him,' you may, even though awakened out of sleep, go forth to meet Him with your lamps trimmed and burning."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 84.

IN THE contemplation of this subject our attention is at once called to the wonderful experiences of God's children on the day of Pentecost. The opening of the gospel was attended by powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and a mighty work was accomplished in the work of saving souls. As the work of the everlasting gospel began with the fulness of the Holy Spirit, so the work will likewise be finished with the same power. Concerning the finishing work we should all remember the well known text: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord, of hosts." Zech. 4:6. Here the power is revealed by which the work of God will be finished on earth, not in the power of human strength, but in the power of the Holy Spirit will the work be finished. This mighty power will be manifested in the lives of those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. We are told by the servant of the Lord: "We cannot use the Holy Spirit; the Spirit is to use us." *Gospel Workers*, p. 285. Through this power all things will be brought to

a final decision. God's Holy Spirit—the Finisher of the Work—will separate the good from the evil, the righteous from the unrighteous; the just from the unjust, and He shall fully reveal the mystery of all iniquity before a fallen world. It is almost impossible to fully comprehend all the different ways and means of the Holy Spirit in the finishing work. We can only look back to the wonderful manifestations of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to get a glimpse of the work which is to be accomplished in our day. It was then that some spoke in different tongues; others were caught up by the Holy Spirit and brought to those who were hungering for the message of truth; and still others were impressed by the same Spirit to repentance without any human aid. "The same work," so writes the inspired servant of the Lord in *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 507, "only in a greater degree, must be done now." The earth shall be lighted with the glory of God.

Preparation of Our Personal Life

To the finishing of the work of God on earth belongs the important work of our personal preparation. The standard of a true Christian is to reach perfection in Christ. This is the condition which must be fully met before we can expect to receive the fulness of the Spirit, and thereby be enabled to have a part in the finishing work. Even though it is a wonderful privilege

to have a part in this reform movement—to be united with those who keep the commandments of God and are willing to walk in the light which the Lord has so graciously given—yet, it will be a still far greater privilege if we prove faithful in the work of our personal preparation, and shall then be permitted to have a part in the finishing work. How poor and imperfect would be our own power, how dark the outlook of our personal efforts, if not the all important power of the Highest—the Holy Spirit—were promised for this work. Praise be to God for this wonderful gift!

The promises of God await our demand and reception, yet some are indifferent to the wonderful gifts of grace that are promised unto us. The eternal inheritance before us; the love of Christ, the judgment of the righteous and the wicked, all these things should inspire us to greater zeal and earnestness in the work of our personal preparation. We must reach God's standard if we expect to receive an entrance into His kingdom. We must love Jesus if we expect to be with Him throughout eternity. We must live a life that is pleasing in His sight if we do not want to come under condemnation in the day of judgment. The fast fulfilling signs of the times tell us in unmistakable language that only a short time remains in which we can prepare ourselves to meet God. In these signs a reproof is likewise found for those who are not earnest in the work of preparation, those who do not appreciate the time of grace that has been allotted unto us. May the Lord help us to be more in earnest than ever before, that when He comes we may be found ready to meet Him.

We are now one year nearer the end since our last Week of Prayer, and we should individually ask ourselves the question: Have I during the past year made continual progress in the divine life? Is the work of Jesus—to reflect His image fully—daily being accomplished in my life? We should consider these solemn thoughts, and examine ourselves. May the following words of admonition be fully accepted by one and all.

"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil . . . Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule

over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" Joel 2:12, 13, 15-17.

The spirit of a true and genuine reformation is here vividly placed before us. If we heed these admonitions we are well on our way to holiness. We should therefore lay aside all indifference in regard to the work of our personal preparation. With "fear and trembling" we should work out our salvation. Each day we should petition the Lord earnestly for divine help to reach this high standard. He is a holy God, and only those who attain unto holiness will ever dwell in His presence. The call of the Lord is: "Arise, arise." Arise to earnest and persevering prayer. Arise, and lay aside all those things which are displeasing to God. Be faithful in all things. Weigh your words before you open your mouth to speak. Examine yourselves carefully, and see whether your daily actions are interwoven with the love to serve your blessed Lord and Master.

The great manifestations of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost will be repeated in our day, but before these wonderful manifestations will be seen in God's true church, the thorough preparation which preceded this wonderful work will likewise be repeated.

Before the Lord can bless us with the fulness of the Holy Spirit a thorough preparation must take place in our life. We must gain the victory over every besetment, and over every wrong word and action. This is a personal work, that can only be accomplished through the power of Jesus Christ, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The following testimony reveals the sad condition of many professed Christians:

"I saw that it is the privilege of every Christian to enjoy the deep movings of the Spirit of God. A sweet heavenly peace will pervade the mind, and you will love to meditate upon God and Heaven. You will feast upon the glorious promises of His word. But know first that you have begun the Christian course. Know that the first steps are taken in the road to everlasting life. Be not deceived. I fear, yea, I know that many of you know not what religion is. You have felt some excitement, some emotion, but you have never seen sin in its enormity."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 159.

The last part of this testimony is of utmost importance. Many, the Spirit of prophecy declares, "have never seen sin in its enormity." We can not trifle with sin and expect to escape its punishment. Sin is enormous and must be put aside. We should often be found at the foot of the cross, and consider the great sacrifice which has been brought in our behalf in order to be better able to understand how heaven looks upon

sin. To become perfect in Christ Jesus is our high and holy calling. This means that your will must be entirely surrendered to the will of God. It requires a knowledge of our weaknesses, so that in the power of Christ we can overcome them. Let us not deceive ourselves. Let us not consider ourselves better than what we really are. Our only safety is to recognize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to abhor it.

The transformation that must take place in our life is accomplished through the new birth. Some have accepted the theory of the truth, but have never felt its saving power. If one is born again, he is a new creature in Christ Jesus. He is gentle, loving, patient, longsuffering; in brief, all the fruits of the Spirit are manifested in his life. He will love his neighbor and God above all. The word of God gives us clear instructions in regard to what the Lord expects of those who are truly born again. Our downfall begins "with the neglect of secret prayer." Therefore, prayer in the closet, is of the utmost importance in the work of our personal preparation.

If one is not converted, his heart is like a stone, and that is the reason why so much hardness of the heart is seen everywhere today. The poor are neglected; old age is not respected, and the spirit of brutality is prevalent in all the lands. These signs show unmistakably that the Spirit of the Lord is being withdrawn from the earth. Having the world under his control, it is now Satan's special aim to destroy the love and the unity of God's true church. We should always be on the alert against the fiery darts of the wicked, and pray the Lord earnestly that He may especially protect our youth from the snares of the enemy. We should all be wide awake, that the devil may not succeed to come in among us. The enticing methods to follow evil; the call to court the world and enjoy its pleasures; must all be firmly resisted. All the promises which the world gives are only deceptions. If someone is praising or flattering you, tell him, that all glory belongs to God. If someone is taking it upon himself to condemn and to judge others, let him remember that "him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12.

When we consider all these details which are necessary for our personal preparation; and remember that the blessings of the Lord can only rest upon us if we faithfully heed the admonitions; we shall strive most earnestly to reach God's standard, that in so doing we may be qualified to have a part in the finishing work.

Burden For Souls

Not one shall have a part in the final redemption of God's people who has not been active in the work of saving souls. We do not need to be ministers in order to engage in this

blessed work, for to every true follower of Christ has been given a place in which he must labor for His Master. If we engage in earnest work for the salvation of souls, we shall be better able to overcome all selfishness. In faithfully working for others we shall begin to understand the true value of a soul. If through much effort and untiring labor a soul has been won to Christ, we shall have cause for rejoicing. But those who have no burden for souls, are usually the ones who in one way or another become instruments to drive precious souls from the fold. Such have not a clear knowledge of the great sacrifice of Christ. If because of our unchristian behavior souls are being led astray, the blood will be required from our hands. Unless such experience a real conversion, there will be no place for them in the kingdom of God.

But a true burden of souls will be manifested in our walk of life. We must be a living testimony for Christ. How is it with your testimony, dear brother, dear sister? How is your burden of souls manifested among your neighbors, your children, your relatives and friends? Do you make earnest efforts in working for their salvation? If so, the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you. If all the members of the church faithfully perform their duty in this respect, the work will soon be finished on earth in righteousness. The power of the Holy Spirit will then be manifested among us, and the earth will be lightened with the glory of God. The sick will be healed, and signs and wonders shall follow the believers. The last message of mercy will then be accepted by those who are honest in heart, and they will gladly take their stand with God's remnant people.

Let us follow the example of the disciples before the day of Pentecost. Let us put away all differences and draw closer and still closer together in Christian fellowship. Let us be filled with the spirit of prayer, and God shall send us showers of blessing.

Please consider carefully the timely admonition given us in the following scripture:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong, in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all

the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Eph. 6:10-18.

Let those who are gathered for prayer at this time bow their knees in the presence of God, and petition the Lord earnestly for a willing heart in this work of our personal preparation, that the power of the Holy Spirit may take full control of our life, and finish the work.

Ministers And People

Every soul that has been added to the ranks of the believers becomes a co-worker with Christ. A working church is a living church. Dead, heartless professors, should have no place in the church of God. If we are alive unto God the Holy Spirit will pervade all our churches. Lights will be burning everywhere for Christ, and coldness and formality will disappear. All will be one heart and one soul. God's faithful servants will work earnestly for those who are still in darkness. Their example will inspire the believers to rally to the work. This is the only way in which the work shall come to a glorious finish. Please notice the following testimony:

"Every one on whom is shining the light of present truth is to be stirred with compassion for those who are in darkness. From all believers light is to be reflected in clear, distinct rays. A work similiar to that which the Lord did through His delegated messengers after the day of Pentecost He is waiting to do today. At this time, when the end of all things is at hand, should not the zeal

of the church exceed even that of the early church? Zeal for the glory of God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Should not this zeal fire our hearts with a longing to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? Should not the power of God be even more mightily revealed to-day than in the time of the apostles?"—*Testimonies*, Vol 7, p. 33.

Yes, we should earnestly pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this power the work shall be finished, and it will enable us to stand through the last great conflict. When this power takes a hold of our life, we shall not cling to our own opinions, but will be firmly united upon the eternal platform of truth. The battle to be fought will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. God's children will fight under the banner bearing the inscription: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. Under this banner all the faithful will rally to meet the foe, and with Christ they will be gloriously victorious.

In closing, I like to pray you dear brethren and sisters, "be ye ready." Do not neglect one precious moment of this time of grace. It is my earnest desire that the Holy Spirit may take full charge of all our churches. May He cause the admonitions which have been given to be heeded, that our life may be a living testimony for the truth. May God grant that when the work is finished we may be found among those who shall be able to say: "Lo, this our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9

(Reading for Sabbath, December 20)

The Need of True Education

By W. KORPMANN

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6. This language is positive. The training that Solomon enjoins is to direct, educate, develop. But in order for parents to do this work, they must themselves understand the 'way' the child should go. It is impossible for parents to give their children proper training unless they first give themselves to God, learning of the great Teacher lessons of obedience to His will."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 108.

HERE, the great responsibility of parents in the training of their children is clearly set before us. We are told that: "It is impossible for

parents to give their children proper training unless they first give themselves to God." We cannot teach our children the "way" in which they should go, unless we have first learned ourselves to walk in the way of the Lord. The instructions which we have received from the great Teacher, we can in turn teach to our children. Godly parents will not only instruct their children by word of mouth, but will realize that it is far more important to teach them by living a life in harmony with the will of God. Such living testimony will have effect upon the life of our children. Children who are blessed with such godly parents will develop a Christian character

that will stand for time and eternity. Concerning our children the psalmist declared:

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth." Ps. 127:3, 4. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Ps. 144:12.

"Children are an heritage of the Lord." To godly parents children are a blessing. Children have been given us as a sacred trust, and God will hold us responsible for the education of our children. This is not a matter which can be treated in a light and careless manner. A solemn responsibility rests upon the parents, and unless they are faithfully performing their duty in the education of their children they can hardly expect to be saved themselves. Please note the following testimony:

"Parents, I say that unless you awake to the eternal interest of your children, they will surely be lost, through your neglect. And the possibility that unfaithful parents will be saved is very small. —*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 135.

The Home School

We, the people of God, who are living in these last days of earth's history, should have a special burden for our children and youth. Parents who have given their children a Christian education will find that God's promises are true. If we do not work faithfully for the salvation of our children, we shall never be qualified to work for others. True missionary work begins at home. The Lord Himself established the family school. We read:

"The system of education instituted at the beginning of the world, was to be a model for man throughout all after-time. As an illustration of its principles a model school was established in Eden, the home of our first parents. The garden of Eden was the schoolroom, nature was the lesson-book, the Creator Himself the instructor, and the parents of the human family were the students." —*Education*, p. 20.

"In His wisdom the Lord has decreed that the family shall be the greatest of all educational agencies. It is in the home that the education of the child is to begin. Here is his first school. Here, with his parents as instructors, he is to learn the lessons that are to guide him throughout life,—lessons of respect, obedience, reverence, self-control. The education influences of the home are a decided power for good or for evil. They are in many respects silent and gradual, but if exerted on the right side, they become a far-reaching power for truth and righteousness. If the child is not instructed aright here, Satan will educate

him through agencies of his choosing. How important then, is the school of the home!" —*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 107.

Moses, Joseph, Daniel, and other great men of God received their Christian education in the family school. In the home they were faithfully instructed in the principles of the word of God. It was here where the foundation of their character was laid. And because they had been trained by their parents in the "way" of the Lord, He could use them for a special work. These worthy examples should inspire us to train our children according to God's plan, so that they may be prepared to have a part in the finishing work.

The Importance of a Christian Education

"Nothing is of greater importance than the education of our children and young people." —*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 165.

Upon parents is resting the great responsibility of giving their children a Christian education. It is wrong for parents to assume that the church, or a school, is responsible for the education of their children. This important work the Lord has in the first place entrusted to parents, and He will hold them responsible for the Christian education of their children. It is at home where the character is molded for good or for evil. The home influences will have a telling effect upon the lives of our children. If Christian influences are continually at work in the home, our children will learn to love the Lord and His word. The Christian education which our children receive at home will be a bulwark to them against worldly influences. We know that Satan is especially at work to take our children captive, and we must be ever on the alert to prevent our children from becoming ensnared. Let us carefully consider the following testimonies:

"Before the overflowing scourge shall come upon the dwellers of the earth, the Lord calls upon all who are Israelites indeed to prepare for that event. To parents He sends the warning cry, Gather your children into your own houses; gather them away from those who are disregarding the commandments of God, who are teaching and practicing evil. Get out of the large cities as fast as possible . . . Where are your children? Are you educating them to discern and to escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust? Are you seeking to save their souls, or are you by your neglect aiding in their destruction." —*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, pp. 195, 196.

"If ever we are to work in earnest, it is now. The enemy is pressing in on all sides, like a flood. Only the power of God can save our children from being swept away by the tide of evil. The responsibility resting upon parents, teachers, and church members, to do their part in co-operation with

God, is greater than words can express."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 166.

These are solemn words of warning which must be heeded if we expect our children to be saved. It is our duty to keep our children away from worldly influences. Parents should ask themselves the question: Where are our children? If parents faithfully discharge their duty in the education of their children the blessing of God will rest upon them. But while this great responsibility has first been placed upon parents, the teachers and church members are to co-operate with them. May the Lord grant that we all do our part in the Christian education of our children that they may be saved for time and eternity.

Mistakes in Education

"For some reason, many parents dislike to give their children religious instruction; and they leave them to pick up in Sabbath-school the knowledge which it is their privilege and duty to impart. Such parents fail to fulfil the responsibility laid upon them, to give their children an all around education."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 109.

It is a serious mistake if parents neglect to give their children religious instruction. Many parents are so busily occupied with the cares of this life that they have no time for the education of their children. If they continue to pursue such a course, they can not expect to escape the penalty. May God help such parents to change their course before it is too late.

Again we read in the Spirit of prophecy:

"By a misconception of the true nature and object of education, many have been led into serious and even fatal errors. Such mistake is made when the regulation of the heart or the establishment of principles is neglected in the effort to secure intellectual culture, or when eternal interests are overlooked in the eager desire for temporal advantage. To make the possession of worldly honor or riches our ruling motive, is unworthy of one who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ. It should rather be our aim to gain knowledge and wisdom that we may become better Christians, and be prepared for greater usefulness, rendering more faithful service to our Creator, and by our example and influence leading others also to glorify God. Here is something real, something tangible,—not only words, but deeds. Not only the affections of the heart, but the services of the life, must be devoted to our Maker."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 49.

There is a vast difference between worldly education and Christian education. Even Christians sometimes do not realize this difference to the fullest extent. Worldly education is inspired by "the eager desire for temporal advantage." It is the aim of worldly education to acquire

wealth or fame. Such worldly wisdom is foolishness in the sight of God, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matt. 16:26. But the ruling motive of a Christian education is to become better Christians, and to be better prepared for greater usefulness in the service to our Creator. A worldly education prepares us for a life of selfishness. The contrast of a Christian and a worldly education is clearly set before us in the following testimonies:

"At such a time as this, what is the trend of the education given? To what motive is appeal most often made?—To self-seeking. Much of the education given is a perversion of the name. In true education the selfish ambition, the greed for power, the disregard for the rights and needs of humanity, that are the curse of our world, find a counter-influence."—*Education*, pp. 225, 226.

"Unselfishness underlies all true development. Through unselfish service we receive the highest culture of every faculty. More and more fully do we become partakers of the divine nature. We are fitted for heaven; for we receive heaven into our hearts."—*Education*, p. 16.

In this time and age the desire for temporal advantages and personal gain are predominantly displayed. As Satan knows that the time is short, he leads men on to be more and more selfish and covetous. He promises them wealth and fame if they will only bow down and worship him instead of the living God. He places before them in a most favorable light the need of an education in institutions of learning as a means of obtaining glory and riches. He knows as long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. But amid such corrupt and evil influences the Christian must develop a character that is fit for heaven. He will only succeed in this important task if his eyes are constantly fixed upon Christ. He is our perfect pattern. His life was without selfish interest, but ever marked with disinterested benevolence. By beholding Him we shall become changed into His likeness. It will then be a pleasure for us to serve others, and we shall be better fitted to safeguard the lives of our children.

God Will Use Children In The Finishing Work

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." Matt. 21:16.

"Who are our children? They are only our younger brothers and sisters in the family that God acknowledges as His. We are dealing with the members of the Lord's family."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 366.

It must be encouraging for the children to know that they are our younger brothers and sisters of the Lord's family. Jesus had a tender regard and love for children. He said: "Suffer

little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Luke 18:16. And again He said: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3. These words express clearly that Jesus considered the children as younger members of the Lord's family. Let us now consider carefully the following testimonies which show that God has a definite work to do for our children.

"God's purpose for the children growing up beside our hearths is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision has comprehended. From the humblest lot those whom He has seen faithful have in time past been called to witness for Him in the world's highest places. And many a lad of to-day, growing up as did Daniel in his Judean home, studying God's word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts, as a witness for the King of kings."—*Education*, p. 262.

"As the children sang in the temple courts, 'Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,' so in these last days, children's voices will be raised to give the last message of warning to a perishing world. When heavenly intelligences see that men are no longer permitted to present the truth, the Spirit of God will come upon the children, and they will do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do, because their way will be hedged up."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, pp. 202, 203.

"In the closing scenes of this earth's history, many of these children and youth will astonish

people by their witness to the truth, which will be borne in simplicity, yet with spirit and power. They have been taught the fear of the Lord, and their hearts have been softened by a careful and prayerful study of the Bible. In the near future, many children will be endued with the Spirit of God, and will do a work in proclaiming the truth to the world, that at that time cannot well be done by the older members of the church."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 166, 167.

"Children will be impelled by the Holy Spirit to go forth to declare the message of heaven. The Spirit will be poured out upon those who yield to His promptings. Casting off man's rules and cautious movements, they will join the army of the Lord."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, p. 27.

The end is approaching rapidly, and the work of God is soon finished on earth in righteousness. Doors which are now still open to the proclamation of the gospel will in the near future be closed to the older workers. But thank God that He has made provisions for just such an occasion. Children,—the younger members of the Lord's family—will then take up the work and proclaim the last message of warning. This realization should move fathers and mothers to a greater earnestness in the preparation of their children for such an important work. O, that God may help us all as parents to be faithful to our trust in the education of our children, that when Jesus shall ask us the question: "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" Jer. 13:20, we shall be able to say: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion." Isa. 8:18.

(Reading for Sunday, December 21)

Complete Surrender

By W. O. WELP

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

This solemn admonition was given by the Lord through the apostle Paul. It was this apostle who was especially concerned about the spiritual growth of God's children. The desire and aim of this man of God was, to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. 1:28. But in order to be able to do this work successfully, it was necessary, that each soul should be willing to make a complete surrender to the Lord. If the children of God

today are willing to submit their will under the will of God, we shall continually grow in holiness and the image of Jesus will be fully reflected in us.

When we consider the conversion of the apostle Paul, we find that a great change took place in his life. On his way to Damascus the Lord appeared unto him, and when he beheld this bright light he cried with trembling lips: "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts 9:6. These must be the words of every truly converted soul. On this occasion Saul became Paul, and from his own experience he was able to say: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed

away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17. Before he had served the enemy in persecuting God's children, but now he was ready to give willing service to the salvation of souls. "And straightaway he preached Christ." Acts 9:20. All who have experienced true conversion, will bear witness that a great change took place in their life, and Jesus came into their heart. But all those who lack this experience may know that they are not truly converted.

What is the Meaning of Complete Surrender?

In our text of introduction the admonition is given: "That ye present your bodies a *living sacrifice*." We see by these words that the Lord desires that we surrender unto Him our bodies as a *living sacrifice*. Let us consider this text a little further, if we understand it right, we shall know what is meant by a complete surrender. First of all the admonition is given: "That ye *present* your bodies." God compels no one. As our Creator He would have the right to claim our bodies, but He wants willing obedience. He desires that our service to Him springs from a heart filled with love, because only such service is pleasing to Him. When we have obeyed this admonition and have presented to the Lord our bodies as a living sacrifice, everything else that we possess will likewise be placed upon the altar to be used in the service of Christ. It is sad indeed that many professed Christians bring to the Lord only a dead sacrifice. They are willing to give of their means, but their life,—the most important thing they possess,—is not placed upon the altar of sacrifice. If we withhold this gift, our other sacrifices will not be pleasing to the Lord. May God grant, that we as reformers of the last days, in this solemn Week of Prayer, are willing to present our bodies anew as a living sacrifice. Such a sacrifice is well pleasing to Him.

What Will Take Place When We Present our Bodies as a Living Sacrifice?

When we present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God, the spiritual life will awaken within us. We have prayed the Lord Jesus: "Come, my Redeemer come, and live in me," and Jesus has gladly entered our heart. He begins now to live His life in us, and we, as a result, will continually grow on the inward man. This is the mystery of the gospel: "Christ in you." Col. 1:27. This gospel: "Christ in you," "shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. "The word of God is quick." Hebr. 4:12. Christ, the Word, became flesh and dwelt among us. When we as God's children accept the word of God in our heart, it will become spirit and life in us. This living witness of the gospel shall be preached unto all nations. Do we want to wait until the gospel is preached to all nations by word of

mouth? If so, we may know that in this way the work will never be finished on earth. But when every member of the church is a living witness for Jesus and the truth, the work shall be finished on earth in righteousness. Yes indeed, a short work will the Lord do upon the earth. Please consider the following words of God's servant:

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69.

Then, when the church of God reflects the image of Jesus fully, the Lord will come. *Then*, when the gospel "Christ in you" is preached unto all nations, the end is at hand. *Then*, when we as God's children have reached the high standard of perfection, the refreshing will come from the face of the Lord. The questions which we should all ask ourselves individually are: Have we presented our bodies to God as a living and holy sacrifice? Have we surrendered ourselves completely to the Lord? Or is there still something in our life which we hold too dear to place upon the altar of sacrifice? It may be possible that we do not know our own condition. May we then say with David: "Search me, O God, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Ps. 139:23,24.

Faithful Service

We have thus far found in our study how we can best please the Lord, and it is true that only those who have reached this noble condition can render faithful service. The apostle calls such service our "reasonable service," which is well pleasing to the Lord. The church that brings forth such service, will have the following marks of divine approval.

1. The members will love one another as Christ has loved them, and "by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples." John 13:35.
2. Every member in the church of God is a living stone in the temple of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:5.
3. They will all have the same spirit of faith, and because of this they are in perfect unity. 2 Cor. 4:13.
4. The church, of which Christ is the head, will "grow up into Him in all things." Eph. 4:15.

When the church of God is found in such a condition we may know that God is in the midst of her. The church will then present to the enemy a united front. But on the other hand, if souls are still found in the church who are spiritually dead, the blessings of the Lord will be held in

restraint. O, may we in this Week of Prayer, answer the prayer of Christ as found in John 17:23, in a special way. May this oneness exist among us as it is seen between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. May we all come unitedly before the throne of God, so that our petitions will be acceptable unto Him. Let us strive earnestly to protect the perfect unity of the church, and the Lord will answer our prayers and send us the Holy Spirit.

Love The Motive To Sacrifice

It was love and love alone which caused our dear Saviour to give His life for us. God the Father did not need to plead with His Son to give His life as a ransom; nay, instead the Son pleaded with the Father to accept His life as a sacrifice. It was love to God which prompted Abraham to perfect obedience in sacrificing his only son Isaac. It was love in all the men of God who were willing to lay down their life for the sake of truth, and it must be love which inspires us to bring sacrifices unto the Lord. Only those sacrifices which are brought from a heart full of love will prove a blessing to mankind and to the giver. When we consider the great sacrifice which Christ brought in our behalf, our heart will be touched, and we will be made willing to return the love of Christ. The Lord Jesus gave all He had for sinful men, and it will cost us all we have to obtain salvation. For such souls who are willing to sacrifice all, the time will soon come when they would gladly give all to Christ, but it will then be too late. May we therefore be faithful stewards over the talents which the Lord has entrusted to us, so that when He comes we may be found faithful. When we consider the many urgent calls for help from those who are searching for the truth, and then look at the carelessness of those who have means which might be used to bring the truth to others, our heart is made sad. O, may such souls be impressed to begin today to place all they have upon the altar of Christ for the salvation of souls. How great will be the happiness of those who have given their all to the service of the Lord, when they shall meet souls on the earth made new who have received the light because of their sacrifices. Christ left all the glories of heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. If there had only been one soul to save, Christ would have given His life for that one soul. This shows the great love of Christ for lost sinners. May the following words of inspiration touch our heart:

"Never can the cost of our redemption be realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer before the throne of God. Then as the glories of the eternal home burst upon our en-

raptured senses, we shall remember that Jesus left all this for us, that He not only became an exile from the heavenly courts, but for us took the risk of failure and eternal loss."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 131.

The Saviour says: "This I did for you, what will you do for Me." Are we willing to answer the call to sacrifice? Do we have such a burden for souls as Jesus had? Soon, yes soon, the door of probation will close. Let us therefore work while it is still day. May we be willing today to sacrifice all, so that when Jesus comes He will say to us: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. 25:21.

The Time is at Hand

If we have spiritual eyes, we can clearly see that the coming of Jesus is nigh at hand. On the one hand we see the terrible and hopeless condition of this world. God's Spirit is being withdrawn and His wrath will soon be poured out on the wicked without mercy. On the other hand we see the sad condition among professed Christianity as definite signs of the end. But the greatest of all signs that Jesus is coming soon is, that God is doing a special work through the Holy Spirit in all the earth to gather the faithful into the one true fold. We have the promise of the Lord that He will shorten this work in righteousness. Looking forward to this time of the end the Saviour said to His children: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then *look up*, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

What a wonderful admonition does Christ give us in these words, "When these things begin to come to pass," the things which are now being fulfilled before our eyes, "*then look up*." This is our only safety. We must keep our eyes constantly fixed upon Jesus. We must "*look up* to the hills from whence cometh our help." Ps. 121:1. We must seek the things which are *from above*, because "every good and perfect gift cometh *from above*." James 1:17. The Saviour told His disciples to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power *from on high*." Luke 24:49. This is also our greatest need. We shall not receive power from on high if we keep our eyes fixed on things below. When we heed this admonition and look unto Jesus, we shall be transformed into His image, and the gift of the Holy Spirit will become a blessed reality. Let us therefore lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. The Lord will soon come and send deliverance to all those who are waiting for His coming. But the most important question is:

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Are you Ready?

This question we should ask ourselves individually. Each soul, so says the Spirit of prophecy, will be so thoroughly examined in the day of judgment as though there was not another soul living upon the earth. On that great day all things will be revealed. No one will have an excuse to offer in the day of judgment. The lips of those who are not ready will be still. Who shall be able to stand? is the question which should touch our heart. Today we still have the opportunity to let the Holy Spirit transform our life, so that we may be found ready when Jesus comes. If we surrender ourselves completely to the Lord, the following words of promise will be our experience:

"Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. The Lord says, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee.' Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master-worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory—character—of Christ, will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

Are these not wonderful words? Do we have that peace which passeth all understanding? "In

perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest." If we have given ourselves fully to the Lord, then we shall have this peace, this rest. Nothing in the world will be able to mar our happiness in Jesus. We feel safe in the arms of Jesus. In confidence and patience we shall wait for the day of our final redemption. Dear brother, dear sister, if this is not as yet your experience then arouse. Today, if you hear the loving voice of Jesus open the door of your heart and let the Saviour in. Order your life to be in complete harmony with His will, and this experience will also be yours. Jesus has promised that "when the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." O, how we yearn for this happy day. May we in these days of prayer make our calling and election sure, for if we do this, we shall never fall.

May God help us to fully understand the meaning of a complete surrender. May He make us willing to surrender our bodies unto Him as a living and holy sacrifice. May we grow in holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. May we serve the Lord from a heart filled with love, and may we also be willing to lay all that we possess upon the altar of God. May we love Jesus as He has loved us, and labor for those who are lost in sin. And at last may we be found ready when He comes to gather His children home. The apostle Paul was able to say on the end of his journey: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. May God grant that we likewise may have this blessed assurance of life eternal. This is my earnest desire and prayer. Amen.

(Note: At the conclusion of the last Service of the Week of Prayer, a liberal thank-offering should be made. Let us all prepare for this).

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple."

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