

# As a Little Child

Deepening Your Walk with God

BY VANCE FERRELL

“If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God;

if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service,

—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved.”

—*Mount of Blessing, 101*



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*As a Little Child*

by Vance Ferrell

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“If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessing that we know we have,—the great mercy and love of God,—we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God.

“Then let us educate our hearts and lips to speak the praise of God for His matchless love. Let us educate our souls to be hopeful, and to abide in the light shining from the cross of Calvary. Never should we forget that we are children of the heavenly King, sons and daughters of the Lord of hosts. It is our privilege to maintain a calm repose in God.

“ ‘Let the peace of God rule in your hearts; . . . and be ye thankful.’ Colossians 3:15. Forgetting our own difficulties and troubles, let us praise God for an opportunity to live for the glory of His name. Let the fresh blessings of each new day awaken praise in our hearts for these tokens of His loving care. When you open your eyes in the morning, thank God that He has kept you through the night. Thank Him for His peace in your heart. Morning, noon, and night, let gratitude as a sweet perfume ascend to heaven.”

— *Ministry of Healing, 252-253*

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# *Time to Come Home*

You can do it! It is not hard to do the right when you have the Lord on your side.

*Far better than living in a halfway house, somewhere between God and the world.*

And far too often you then slip on down into the miseries of the devil's camp.

*I plead with you: Take this opportunity, break loose—and come out. Be done with mediocre, meaningless living, uncertain as to what eternity holds for you.*

**Come over to the cleft in the Rock, and crawl in. There is only room for a little child inside.**

***There you will find the peace of heart you have always wanted. It is worth any cost. And what do you set aside? Things not really worth keeping.***

**And what becomes yours? The sweetness of being close to your Father.**

***Isn't that what you have always wanted?***

Jesus loves me, this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so;  
Little ones to Him belong,  
They are weak, but He is strong.

Jesus loves me! He who died,  
Heaven's gate to open wide;  
He will wash away my sin,  
Let His little child come in.

Jesus loves me; He will stay,  
Close beside me all the way,  
If I love Him, by and by  
He will take me home on high.

Yes, Jesus loves me,  
Yes, Jesus loves me;  
Yes, Jesus loves me,  
The Bible tells me so.

# Contents

## **PART ONE THE DEEPER EXPERIENCE**

Preface	6
Introduction	7
Symbols of the Relationship	8
Children of the Father	12
Deepening the Walk	18
Basic Principles	24
Through the Portals	24
When in Danger of Slipping	25
Finding it Again	26
Is the Deeper Walk a Necessity?	28
Additional Symbols	29
Others Who Have Gone before	34
1 - Enoch	34
2 - Jacob	35
3 - Joseph	36
4 - Moses	36
5 - Solomon	37
6 - Elijah	37
7 - Daniel	37
8 - John the Baptist	38
9 - John	38
10 - Martin Luther	38
11 - Ellen White	38

## **PART TWO INSPIRED COMMENTS**

Spirit of Prophecy: Submitting the Will to God	40
Spirit of Prophecy: The Possibilities Held out before Us	41
Spirit of Prophecy: More Sweet Promises	47

Bible: Promises for Those Who Draw Closer	52
1 - Pressing in	52
2 - The Children of God	53
3 - Sons and Heirs	54
4 - Walking with God	55
Spirit of Prophecy: The Father and His Children	56
1 - God's Love for His Children	56
2 - Adoption and Heirship	59
3 - Our Wonderful Father	61
A Spirit of Prophecy Blueprint for Coming to God	62
1 - Have You Been Converted?	62
2 - Evidences of Genuine Conversion	63
3 - Godly Sorrow Worketh Repentance	64
4 - Repent and Turn Away from Sin	65
5 - Put on the Wedding Garment	66
6 - He will Make You a New, Obedient Child	67
Spirit of Prophecy: Preparing for the Future	69

## **PART THREE APPENDIXES**

Questions, Answers, and Facts	76
More Questions and Answers	79
Postscript: The Joy of the Lord is Your Strength	84

## Preface

The power of this concept first came to mind in the summer of 1962, when I helped deliver my second child in a country farmhouse, and it strengthened over the following several months. The extremely close relationship of the infant to its mother seemed to match several passages in the Bible which compared God's people to children who could throw their whole weight of burden upon the Lord. At the time, with no financial backing, I was preparing to begin the *Great Controversy* radio broadcasts, and needed such encouragement.

It was obvious that the concept involved a fabulous submission and closeness to God. In both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, I found indication that only a few of God's people seem to push in for the closer relationship with their heavenly Father.

Amid the passing years and the many perplexities which they brought, the concept dimmed somewhat in my thinking, but strengthened in the early 1980s, as I began writing.

*God was my Father and I was His little child.* I must yield my life to Him, and obey and defend His Word, regardless of the consequences. Pilgrims Rest was the result.

As my children grew up and gradually left my home, the experience continued to deepen. All I had was God, and He was my wonderful Father in whom I could trust.

Surely, I thought, this concept could be no secret; for it is clearly presented in both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. Yet I rarely heard a mention of it—either in sermons, books, or magazine articles. However, the test of time had, in my own experience, proved the concept to be a

most solid one. One could, indeed, be as a little child with His heavenly Father! A deeper relationship was possible! This was especially confirmed by the fact that, *over the years, I had found no other approach to God as sweet, close, and strong.*

At this crucial time in history, how much God's people need the strength, which the closer relationship imparts, to boldly defend God and His Word in an evil, scoffing world.

The general silence on the subject eventually caused me to think: Could it be that I am like the two lepers outside the walls of Jerusalem, who, having found a rich treasure, suddenly said, "We cannot keep this news to ourselves; we must share it with others" (*2 Kings 7:3-10*)!

So here it is. If you wish to save time, set this book aside; simply read Matthew 18:2-4 and do it. The whole message is there. Why should there be anything startling in the concept? The problem arises in entering the experience and maintaining it. It is not done very often. Yet anything God asks of us, in His enabling strength, can be done.

The smaller we acknowledge ourselves to be, in our relation to God, the more fully we are likely to submit to His plan for our lives; and the more willing we will be to study His Word, obey His Inspired directives, and defend Him.

Why? because this concept enables us to enter a fuller reality: We are as nothing in the universe; He is everything. All we have and are is to be given to Him. Yet this can only be realized as, in utter humility, we fall before Him and accept and acknowledge the truth: We are His little children.

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

—Matthew 18:2-4

# Introduction

This volume is not intended to be theological. It is practical, providing information you can begin applying to your own life immediately.

- Do you want a deeper experience with God?
- Do you want an ongoing walk with Him?
- Do you want to overcome besetting sins?
- Do you want the sweet peace of oneness

which the relationship can bring?

There is a way it can be done, and it is entirely Biblical and in full agreement with Spirit of Prophecy counsels.

The reason it works so well, is twofold:

- First, it is the way God wants you to relate yourself with Him.
- Second, this relationship with God brings together the various phases of Christian concepts and objectives needed in your every-day life. It can do this because it is the most basic and fundamental aspect of Christian experience.

This book is not the presentation of a dry theory, but a personal life experience practiced for many years.

The present writer searched for a closer walk with God, *and—in one way far more than any other—he found it*: the relationship with God described in this little volume. What you will find

here is the result of extensive Scripture study, applied to personal experience. The result is a simple, practical way to live closer to God.

The plan of this book is to rather quickly introduce you to this key, and then afterward expand on it by showing how it is connected with other aspects of experience and to God's Word.

Truly, there is nothing complicated about the matter. Indeed, you will probably say, "Well, I knew this all along." *However, the key to success is more than knowing about it.* It is making this attitude the consistent foundation of your contacts with God.

If this little volume helps you do that, it will have fulfilled its mission.

Some walk closer to God, and some walk a little more distant. Some are fervent while others are more staid. Yet both may sincerely love and serve God and, in His strength, obey His law. Let none say that others will be lost because they do not seem to have a certain depth of experience. This is not for us to judge.

Why then seek the closer walk discussed in this book? Each can choose for himself. Some will want it. For those who do not, this book is not for them.

“If you call God your Father, you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest. It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father and to every member of His family.”

— *Mount of Blessing, 105*

— Part One —

# The Deeper Experience

## Symbols of the Relationship

### **What is thought to be a good relationship with God, a solid Christian experience?**

The typical good Christian prays to God in the morning and, hopefully, again in the evening. He believes in God. Once in a while he has troubles, and prays again.

At religious meetings, he sings hymns and listens as someone else prays and talks about the Bible.

Most of the time, he is a pretty good person. He is a “Christian.” And that pretty much summarizes it.

If that is what you think Christianity is all about, this book will provide you with some startling information. Yet, as you will learn, it has a solid Scriptural foundation.

### **What kind of relationship are we focusing on in this book? Not your relations with your family, your friends, or your church, but the position, the stance you take toward God. How you approach Him, how you relate yourself to Him. In your view, what is He to you, and what are you to Him?**

**In this book, we are getting down to the heart of genuine Christian experience.**

### **What are the Biblical symbols, used by God, to represent the close relationship we, individually, can have with Him?**

You will recall the parable of the lost coin. An urgent search was made for it; and, when found, the householder and her friends rejoiced.

This symbol beautifully portrays the love that

God has for us. When He finds us, He holds us close to Himself. Yet the symbol is incomplete, for it does not show our part in the relationship. There are other symbols which we should also consider.

### **What member of the plant family did God use to symbolize His people?**

Someone will reply that He used the evergreen tree. That is true (*3BC 1142*). Yet this is a description of the Christian in relation to life around him, in regard to both adversity and success.

Far more frequently, we find another botanical species used to describe His people—and *this one is used to describe their relationship to Himself*.

Not the mighty oak, but as branches of a tender vine.

“I am the reality; I am the True Vine . . . The branch cannot live separated from the vine; no more can you live unless you are abiding in Me.”—*5 Testimonies*, 230.

Although there are many different types of vines throughout the world, few plants are more delicate than the vine. Why would God use this plant to represent His faithful followers? The answer is simple: *It clings*. The tendrils wrap around and hold to something stronger outside of itself. No other type of plant in the world has this special quality.

God Himself selected this plant to represent His people. It represents the relation they are to sustain toward Him. *It is not an off-and-on touch; it is an ongoing, persistent clinging*.

“The connection of the branch with the vine, He said, represents the relation you are to sustain to Me. The scion is grafted into the living vine, and fiber by fiber, vein by vein, it grows into the vine stock. The life of the vine becomes the life of the branch.”—*Desire of Ages*, 675.

“This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, ‘Abide in Me, and I

in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.' This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the root to the branches is unobstructed and constant."—*Desire of Ages*, 676.

"The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.

"The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches . . . When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our life; not one will be missing."—*Desire of Ages*, 676.

"Our professions are worthless unless we abide in Christ; for we cannot be living branches unless the vital qualities of the Vine abound in us. In the genuine Christian the characteristics of his Master will appear, and when we reflect the graces of Christ in our lives and characters, the Father loves us as He loves His Son."—5 *Bible Commentary*, 1144.

It is sometimes said that we are the individual branches, the church is the stock, and Christ the root. It is true that there is another, separate, symbol about Israel being a vine (*Isaiah 5:1-7; Romans 11:17-21*), but those references clearly reveal that we—not a church—are the branches and Christ is the stock. *In this symbol, everyone is engrafted into Christ*, the vine; for none of Adam's children were born into Christ.

This is a beautiful picture of Christian experience, yet it is only a plant. Is there not another, more complete symbol which God used to describe the personal relationship of each of His children to Himself?

### **What member of the animal kingdom did God use to symbolize His people?**

He did not select a powerful beast like a tiger or elephant, nor even one that is cunning and resourceful, like the fox. Of all the animals to represent His people, God selected the sheep.

It is quite well-known that *the sheep is one of the most defenseless of all creatures*. Indeed, it should long ago have been slain by its enemies. However, God gave the sheep the warmest and sturdiest of all fur: wool. And He placed it in massive amounts on the sheep. That wool is highly valued.

The Lord did this so the sheep would, from the most ancient times, be cared for by shepherds. Without such tender care, the flock would die. *The sheep senses its utter dependence on the shepherd*, and meekly lets it lead him from place to place.

Adding to the difficulty of the situation, the sheep does not know how to protect the grass it eats. Unlike other foragers, sheep will quickly overgraze and ruin limited pasture. You cannot just put a flock in an enclosure near your house, as you could with other farm animals. Sheep require too much space. *So the shepherd must constantly go before them*, leading them to new sources of food. This means that new streams and water holes have to be found. The shepherd must spend his full time providing for all their needs.

"As the shepherd leads his flock over the rocky hills, through forest and wild ravines, to grassy nooks by the riverside; as he watches them on the mountains through the lonely night, shielding from robbers, caring tenderly for the sickly and feeble, his life comes to be one with theirs. A strong and tender attachment unites him to the objects of his care. However large the flock, the shepherd knows every sheep. Every one has its name, and responds to the name at the shepherd's call."—*Desire of Ages*, 479.

We are like sheep. We cannot make it alone. *We need God's help—every moment of every day.*

"For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 *Peter 2:25*.

"As the shepherd goes before his sheep, himself first encountering the perils of the way, so does Jesus with His people. 'When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them.' The way to heaven is consecrated by the Saviour's footprints."—*Desire of Ages*, 480.

Yet sheep can become lost; and, when a predator comes, they may scatter in fear.

"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."—*Ezekiel 34:12*.

"In the parable, the shepherd goes out to search for one sheep—the very least that can be numbered. So if there had been but one lost soul, Christ would have died for that one."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 187.

About 20 years ago, when the present writer and his family lived in southern Illinois, they made the acquaintance of a nearby family that had sheep. We were amazed to learn that an adult sheep is so defenseless that, if a passing coyote jumps up on its side, the sheep will fall over sideways—and cannot thereafter get back on its feet! Its heavy coat of wool makes its sides so rounded, it will lay there with its feet off the ground until it dies.

This helplessness is all the more remarkable when we consider the goat. Although the sheep is totally dependent on its shepherd for care, yet the Lord could have arranged matters differently. The goat has many characteristics the sheep has, yet the goat is surefooted, and quite able to take care of itself. So much so, that the shepherd sometimes uses a goat to help lead the sheep.

*In view of these facts, it is somewhat astounding that the Lord would use the sheep to represent His people!* He did this to teach them a powerful truth, one they are slow to learn.

When speaking to His disciples about the coming judgment, when the wicked and righteous are all gathered together for the final separation, Jesus said:

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”—*Matthew 25:31-33*.

In the final judgment, Jesus, Himself—the great Master Shepherd,—will separate the sheep from the goats. Why does He prefer the sheep over the goats? Surely, the goats are more capable!

Goats are the most independent of all grazing, foraging livestock. They are so independent, that it is with difficulty that they can be kept within enclosures. While goats can take care of themselves, the sheep cannot. They look to their shepherd to care for them.

Goats go through a lifetime managing their own lives. They break out of fences, and do whatever they are inclined to do. Much of the time it seems to be the wrong thing.

In marked contrast, the sheep, ever on the brittle brink of disaster from predators, spend a lifetime of conscious dependence on the shepherd.

Although it can and does get randomly lost, the sheep knows enough not to run away from the shepherd tending it (unless the arrival of the wolf suddenly frightens it).

Goats are stubborn delinquents; *sheep are submissive children, ever ready to be guided by their master*. Of all the animals in the world, *they alone have a special child-parent relationship with the person caring for them*.

Even though the sheep is a fine symbol of our relationship to God, yet it lacks the part our human intelligence has in maintaining that close association. The shepherd must lead out in caring for the sheep. The animal is too ignorant to have much say in the matter. *But, in real life, you and I have a key role in remaining close to God*. A sheep lacks the proper understanding for this task. Another symbol helps explain this relationship.

**What bird did God use to symbolize His people?** Tiny chicks! The weakest and most helpless of all.

This is what God wants to do for all of us:

“How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.”—*Matthew 23:37*.

How kindly and full of goodness and mercy is our God, to use such an illustration! Unlike the sheep, *the tiny chicks are extremely alert to stay near their mother and run to her in time of danger*.

In late afternoon as the sky is darkening somewhat, the mother hen calls to her little ones,—and they hurry to her! Then, leading them to a safe place, she crouches down somewhat, leaving just enough space beneath her for the chicks to hide securely. One by one, they press beneath her soft feathers.

This is what God wants to do for you and me. *He wants us very close to Himself, where we will be safe*. What a powerful truth is thus illustrated.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!”—*Luke 13:34*.

In another passage, the Lord likens Himself to an eagle—*yet in the same sense of guarding and holding us close to Himself*, as though the eagle were a mother hen!

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.”—*Exodus 19:4*.

This recalls to mind a parallel passage:

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”—*Deuteronomy 33:27*.

### **What other symbol did God use to represent the relationship He sustains toward us?**

The God of heaven bends low and tells us—who are so far inferior to Him—that He will be our Father, *and accept us as His sons and daughters!* Wonder of wonders, that God would accept us as part of His family!

Here are several sample statements:

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”—*Galatians 4:7*.

“And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”—*Malachi 3:17*.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.”—*1 John 3:1*.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”—*1 John 3:2*.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.”—*Revelation 21:7*.

“The infinite God, said Jesus, makes it your privilege to approach Him by the name of Father. Understand all that this implies.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 105*.

“‘I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters . . .’ What a promise is here made upon condition of obedience! . . . He promises to be a Father unto you. Oh, what a relationship is this! higher and holier than any earthly tie . . . God adopts you into His family; you become members of the royal household, sons and daughters of the King who rules in the heaven of heavens.”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 14*.

But there are responsibilities on our part that accompany such a relationship.

“Divine sonship is not something that we gain of ourselves. Only to those who receive Christ as their Saviour is given the power to become sons and daughters of God. The sinner cannot, by any power of his own, rid himself of sin. For the accomplishment of this result, he must look to a higher Power.”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 12*.

“In order to become the sons and daughters of God, we must separate from the world. ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate,’ the Lord says, ‘and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.’”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 8*.

Although it is an excellent symbol of how we relate to God, yet the Father-son (daughter) relationship is inadequate *for showing the crucial dependence* which you and I must sustain to God every day, in order to avoid the devil, that roaring lion who is constantly going about seeking to devour us. One more illustration is needed.

### **What is that special symbol which God uses to portray the extremely close relationship which we must intelligently maintain daily, hourly?**

“And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”—*Matthew 18:2-4*.

This concept is repeated, in similar language, in several other passages. We will quote them later in this study.

There can be no question that this symbol is used to specifically describe the relationship we ought to maintain toward our heavenly Father.

The vine clings, but does not know what it is clinging to. It knows nothing about the vine-dresser who cares for it. The sheep has a limited understanding of its need to remain close to the shepherd. Older youths in the home may be rather independent. But the small child is well-aware of the situation; and, while able to choose otherwise,—when properly trained, he is extremely submissive and obedient to its parent.

Here are several sample quotations:

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.”—*Psalms 103:13*.

“It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there shall they be called the children of the living God.”—*Romans 9:26*.

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”—*Romans 8:17*.

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”—*Romans*

8:21.

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”—1 *John* 4:4.

In a sense, by creation, everyone in the world is God’s child. But, in reality, the experience is only entered—as we choose to enter and maintain it. Our heavenly Father always stands ready, waiting. It is our decision whether we shall be, in the fuller sense, His little children.

The following statements reveal conditions to being the children of God:

“The great God, whose glory shines from the heavens, and whose divine hand upholds millions of worlds, is our Father. We have only to love Him, trust in Him, as little children in faith and confidence, and He will accept us as His sons and daughters, and we shall be heirs to all the inexpressible glory of the eternal world. All the meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way. If we will walk in obedience to His will, learn cheerfully and diligently the lessons of His providence, by and by He will say: Child, come home to the heavenly mansions I have prepared for you.”—4 *Testimonies*, 653.

“Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly, in God. We are His little children, and thus He deals with us. When we draw near to Him, He mercifully preserves us from the assaults of the enemy. Never will He betray one who trusts in Him as a child trusts in its parents. He sees the humble, trusting souls drawing near to Him, and in pity and love He draws near to them, and lifts up for them a standard against the enemy.”—*Our High Calling*, 85.

“When the children of God are struggling with temptation, battling against the passions of the natural heart, faith connects the soul with the only One who can give help, and they are overcomers.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 161.

“In order to walk without fear, you must know that your hand is firmly held by the hand of Christ. You must not for a moment think there is no danger for you. The wisest make mistakes. The strongest sometimes falter.”—2 *Selected Messages*, 169.

Yes, there are conditions. No one floats down the river into heaven. We must do our part. It is an hour-by-hour, moment-by-moment matter.

“Obedience and submission to God’s requirements are the conditions given by the inspired apostle by which we become children of God, members of the royal family.”—3 *Testimonies*, 365.

“God proposes to accept you as His child and

make you a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King, upon conditions that you come out from the world and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. The Monarch of heaven would have you possess and enjoy all that can ennoble, expand, and exalt your being and fit you to dwell with Him forever, your existence measuring with the life of God.”—3 *Testimonies*, 458.

“We cannot be half the Lord’s and half the world’s. We are not God’s children unless we are such entirely.”—*Steps to Christ*, 44.

“The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God’s Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 75.

“His children must follow where He has led the way; at whatever sacrifice of ease or selfish indulgence, at whatever cost of labor or suffering, they must maintain a constant battle with self.”—*Gospel Workers*, 135.

“Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 155.

Additional symbols of the closeness of this relationship, which we may have with God, will be found in a later chapter in this book.

## Children of the Father

**Narrowing down the symbolism.** This child-parent relationship is a special kind of experience. The lives of many children do not provide suitable examples of the unique relationship which you and I want to sustain toward our God. So let us narrow the scope of what we have in mind:

- *It is not a baby-parent relationship.* We are not abject, helpless creatures in a crib. We

are, at all times, able to totally reject God's leading and even His parental status. We have thinking minds beyond that of an infant.

- *It is not childishness.* Childishness is selfishness, acting independently for selfish ends. It is a self-centered attempt to either control the parent or rebel against that authority.

- *It is not the increasing, normal independence we find in a youth.* Not even worthwhile growth, in self-reliance, in children is a fitting example of the relationship God wants us to enter with Him. Here on earth, as he matures, the child can do more things independently of his parents. That is normal. But, in our Christian walk, our experience is to be different. (Of the two sons in the parable, neither one provided a really good example. See *Matthew 21:28-31*.)

- *We must not mistake the relationship we are seeking for a teenager-parent relationship.* That is not what it is. By the teen years, the youth is growing into adulthood, and doing many things without the direct say-so of his parents. To some extent, he needs these opportunities to meet the tests of life—and strengthen his ability to independently reject the perils of worldliness and choose the standards and faith of his parents. But our experience is to be a different kind of growth.

**What kind of growth?** Many believers imagine that Christianity is a growing up experience. It very definitely is a growing out of selfishness into unselfish living for others. Yet, in regard to our personal relationship with God, *we grow into Him, not out of Him.* The dependence deepens; it does not lessen.

Some think that “imparted righteousness” enables them to become more capable, as they increase in “spiritual maturity” and become better able, *by themselves*, to decide for the right from force of habit and bestowed righteousness. They begin to think that they do not need God's constant help as much.

This is an error. Years of doing the right may, indeed, have leaned some of the neuron paths in your brain toward better choices,—but do not count on it! You can suddenly fall—fast. *God's plan for your life is that you are to be His little child throughout your earthly life on earth!* In relation to your Father, you will never grow up into a capable, independent adult son or daughter. Although there is growth in grace, you will never even begin to reach that point where you can act independently of your kind Father!

Not in this world,—and not in the next!

*None of the angels in heaven act independently of God.* They are all His little children, loved and constantly guided by Him. So with all the beings on the other planets. Every creature, animate and inanimate, lives by submission to God. Only on Planet Earth do we find rebellion. Only here do we find the glorifying of independence.

Unfortunately, down here, there are people who want an experience above that of the angels of heaven!

But this does not mean that we are not to think. In relation to Him, we are in total submission; yet, even when closest to Him, *we have the greatest freedom to think and act* in right lines, stand for the right, and defend and promote the cause of God. Our minds are liberated to expand and use their full powers when we are in a child-parent relationship to God.

### **What then is this special relationship like?**

*It is the attitude of a loving, trustful, submissive four- or five-year-old toward his always good, wise, and very capable father.* This child shares everything with his father; and, if he finds he has started to forget Him, he runs back to His side. The child does this because he loves his father with deepest love and wants to ever be near Him. He not only wants to be with his parent in time of danger; he wants to be with Him all the time.

Obviously, it would not be best for a normal child, here on earth, as he matures to think he must constantly be with his earthly parent! But our relation to our heavenly Father is distinctly different in this respect. It will ever be one of utter dependence. And *the greater our sense of dependency, the happier the experience, the fuller our life, and the better guidance and protection that will be ours.*

**This sense of connectedness has another helpful effect:** Aside from your morning and evening worship time with God, your ongoing love for Him makes you want to pause and read more in the Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy, during breaks here and there through the day, than you otherwise would do. Because you love Him, you love His words to you. You love to stop and read, even a paragraph now and then, as you have opportunity.

Entering the child-parent relationship deepens your interest in spiritual things. Of course,

this would be so, for we are not discussing an observer, hearer, or professor Christianity.—It is the real thing; so real, so natural, that your loved ones will notice the change—even though they may not admit it and may resist the hallowed influences of God’s Spirit for a lengthy period of time. It makes you a sweet, kind person.

**The only safe, worthwhile relationship we dare sustain toward God is that of a small child.** Several months ago, a friend was visiting at the same time that my daughter Ruth and her two children stopped by. As we were sitting there, Ruth went from one couch, where one son was, to the other to momentarily care for the older one. At this, the younger one (which was at that stage where he needed to be with his mother all the time) cried, climbed down off couch, and crawled crying over to his mother. He was, literally, *in an agony of concern* lest he not reach her.

As he crawled across the floor, I spoke to our visitor, *“This is righteousness by faith.”* Clinging to her leg as though an imaginary ocean might somehow wash him away, he climbed to his feet while he clung tightly to her. Only then could he begin to have peace of heart. All the while, happily, she had been speaking lovingly to him. Yet kind words were not sufficient; he had to be right there with her.

*This is the child-parent relationship we are talking about.* When a young man asked Socrates, how he could get wisdom, Socrates is said to have pushed his head into a bucket of water and held it there awhile. When the young man finally came up sputtering and gasping, Socrates said, “When you want wisdom as much as you want air, you will find it.”

*When you and I want God as much as that small child wanted his mother, we will have an abundance of Him in our lives.*

**This child-parent relationship is a living experience** which makes you a son or daughter of the God of heaven! What a noble bloodline to be a member of! How would you like to be the son of Sam Walton or Bill Gates? *God offers you something better:* sonship/daughtership to the King of the universe and joint heirship to the planet!

In this experience, you love Him, trust Him implicitly, and obey Him promptly and happily. You come to Him with all your problems, trials,

questions, hurdles, challenges, disappointments, pains, and hurts.

Indicative of how genuine is the experience, you spend a sizeable amount of your “together time” sharing your joys with Him and praising Him for His goodness and all the blessings you have. *You are not just asking for something! You love to just be with Him!*

As you have opportunity, you talk to Him throughout the day. No longer do you wonder what that verse about “pray without ceasing” means (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*). You are experiencing it—not as a routine or form, but as part of a happy time with your Best Friend, your Lord and your God. It is a sweet, peaceful, happy relationship, even though others may be trying to cause you grief. As did David, when his men considered stoning him (*1 Samuel 30:6*), you encourage yourself in the Lord and are prepared for whatever may happen.

This is not just dry talk; I am telling you of an experience I have come upon, one which is superior to any other pattern of “Christian living.”

**Do not imagine that, just because you have entered upon this relationship, that you are certain to remain in it very long.** The Lord does not blot out your thinking, deciding mechanism. The choice is ever yours, and that is where the problem lies. It is so easy for Satan to draw us away to neglect, depression, unbelief, fearfulness, worry, overeating, pride, envy, anger, intemperance, or indulgence in wrongdoing on a variety of levels. A bad diet and inadequate rest does not help the situation. Meat eating, gluttony, staying up late at night; there are so many factors which can cloud the mind and keep souls from God.

Thus we have the choice continually with us. We also have the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy to point us in the right direction. God has given us standards to protect us.

The secret is, in His strength, to put all those bad things away—and quietly, humbly, enjoy the ongoing walk with Him. *There is great strength in clinging to Him!*

**A crucial requirement for maintaining the relationship is spending some time every day reading in God’s Inspired Books!** The audible part of much of your daily walk with God consists of your words and thoughts toward Him. It is when you sit down with *His Word*, that you

receive a great deal of instruction and comfort from Him. Give up the idea and shut this book, if you have no intention to read the Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy every day. A one-sided conversation will not work.

**Each one reading this has had times when, as a pleading child, he has sought the Lord—yet it has generally been only when a serious problem exists.** We are so accustomed to entering this child-parent relationship only when we want something or when we have a problem, that it never occurred to some that God wants us to maintain such a close relationship all the time. We thought that, like some small children, we only sought Him out when we wanted candy or protection from a bully. The rest of the time we ought to be free to grow up like Topsy.

*Yet the child of God who maintains the closest walk is the one who does so because he truly loves God—for what God is, regardless of presents He might bestow.* He wants to be with his Father all the time!

What do you think of the child who is only nice to his parents when he wants something from them? You will reply, "He is selfish and probably does not respect them very much." That is true. You and I want to live above that.

**The best experience is one that is filled with thankfulness.** When you are with God because you want to be with Him, you will find that many of your conversations consist of praise to Him. Soon it becomes an atmosphere of praise, rejoicing, thankfulness, and singing.

For the loving child of God, all the evidences of God's care provide much to think about and talk to Father about. Thankfulness and praise go together, and there is plenty of both in this special experience. But, of course, there is much pleading for guidance, strength, and help. We live in an alien world.

**In this relationship, there are things you do for your heavenly Father which you would not do for an earthly parent.**

*First, you are frequently expressing praise to your Father.* Although we should thank others for what they do, praise (which is different) always injures them. Yet we can praise our heavenly Father all we want, and we are blessed all the more for having done so. It deepens the relationship, as it quickens our thoughts to how truly wonderful He is. When you praise God, you are telling the truth; it is not flattery.

*Second, you worship and adore Him as your Creator, your Saviour, and your God.* We may deeply appreciate our earthly parents, but we are not to worship them.

*Third, you are continually seeing evidences in the world about you of His tremendous care, love, and power.* Praise also includes seeing in everything around you subject matter for wonder at His goodness, thankfulness for His providential mercies, and marvel at His creative power. You have a most wonderful Father, and you love Him all the more because of it. Our earthly parents may be fine, but our heavenly Father is the provider of everything good in the universe!

**This experience is a marvelous simplifier of life's problems.** Every day we encounter situations which we can work through with our Father's help. **Here are twelve ways this close walk will help you all day long:**

- *Each morning as you arise, you begin talking to Him, expressing your love, and asking the question, "What do You want me to do today?"* Happy in His presence, you start the day with Him.

(You may prefer to say, "What dost Thou want me to do?") Because there is a lot of such conversation, the author varies back and forth between both forms. The *Thou* form is more reverential; He is our God. The *You* form is more personal; He is our closest Companion. When the conversations are frequent enough, it is easy to forget the more reverential form.)

- *If you run into a problem, you cry to Him, "Father, what do You want me to do?" "Father, take care of this problem; I know You will. Tell me whatever You want me to do."*

- *If there is something to be done, you say, "How do I do this?" "Please, help me do it—and in the right way,"* and then you set to work. The task may appear difficult, but ways will open so it can be dealt with. Thoughtfully read COL 354.

- *If nothing can be done about the problem, perhaps it is a wall confronting you.* Then you patiently await the unfolding of events. In His time, the Father will tell you what to do or arrange circumstances to solve it for you. Clinging to Him, you are always safe.

The present writer has consistently found that the more he spends his time working for the Lord—and *doing His work*,—the less problems he has to divert his attention. When they come, they have a way of dissolving over a pe-

riod of time. Put God first in your life, and He will work out the details.

- *You meet someone you could talk to about Christ. How should you approach him?* You send up a prayer to your kind Father, “What should I say?” And the words are given you.

Yet, even in the midst of guidance, we can still err. We are not infallible; only God’s Word is. Seeing our mistakes, we sense our utter weakness and run back to Father—and, frankly, snuggle the more closely into His arms. You recall how you loved to do it with your parents, when you were very little. Do it again now. Be little again. (You really are.) Father is waiting for you. We know we are safe when we are with Him.—If it is all right for a sheep to be in the arms of Jesus, it is all right for you and me! We are His little children.

Such experiences we all can have. The Lord is not slack concerning His promises. He wants to help His earthly children.

- *You learn of someone needing help.* How should you best go about giving it to him? Talk it over with your ever-kind Father. He will guide you as to the best way to go about doing it, and help you with your words.

- *When tempted to enter upon a wrong course of action,* you are so thankful that God is near. You ask Him for help and He grants it. “Help me, Father; do not let me dishonor Thee!”

- *When you sense that discouragement is near,* then it is time to do as David. Comfort yourself in the Lord. Rejoice, I say, rejoice! Praise God and sing a sweet song, such as *Sweet Hour of Prayer, Just as I Am,* or *Holy, Holy, Holy*. The angels draw near and the devil’s clouds vaporize.

However, when negative thoughts begin to buffet you, do more than pray! Think. What have you been doing wrong? You may find that you overate that day or you did something else which weakened your hold on God or diverted your attention. Perhaps you were unkind to someone, and that opened the door for the devil to tempt you with discouragement.

If we want Jesus to do His part, we must cooperate. We must be kind and live temperately, so we will remain close to Him.

Know that recalling God’s blessings, showered on you continually, and praising Him for them—wafts away the dark clouds.

- *When you have been hurt by another,* run to Father. Tell Him all about it. Pray for the one

who was unkind, and frequently you may find that situations soon improve. The Lord can move on hearts.

- *In time of physical injury or sickness,* God is still near, ready to comfort and help. He is the Healer, the only Healer. How frequently we hear of individuals who were guided to a natural remedy which helped them.

- *Amid the great trials,* if you truly love your Father for Himself and not for His presents, you will say, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (*Job 13:15*). That is a magnificent statement, and the motto of those closest to their kind Father. They have learned to trust Him, and are not worried. Whatever the situation, whatever the problem, they know their kind Father can bring solutions. Patience in suffering is needed. Those times come to all of us. They came to Elijah, Paul, Ellen White, and Jesus. They have, and will continue to, come to you.

- *You may have questions about the future.* Whatever they may be, when you are in Christ they are solved.

Philosophers say there are three great questions of life: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? In God’s Word and in a personal walk with Him, all three are solved! As God’s little child, you understand origins and that you are here to live for Him. And *you know* where you are going!

Yes, besides the thankfulness and requests, living with your Father involves a lot of questions. This list will afford you a better understanding of how practical the relationship is.

What should I do next?

Should I do it?

Where do I begin?

When should I stop and rest?

What is the right thing to do?

Who needs my help?

How can I best help them?

What should I say?

Where can I find it in the Books?

How long should I stay?

Where should I go next?

It needs to be said again: **Do not imagine that, having entered this experience, it will automatically continue.** It is not like a windup clock.

Walking with God (and that is what we are talking about, when we speak of a child-parent relationship) is like growing a plant. It takes building the soil, careful watering, the right

amount of pruning and weeding, the proper amount of sunlight. We must do our part each day to maintain the presence of our heavenly Father.

Anything worth having is worth working for. Keeping this ongoing life with Father is worth all the attention you give it.

It is not an experience to be neglected or ignored. It can easily be lost. *It will easily be lost if you do not value it enough to keep clinging to God!* YOU are the key person here. It is *your decision*, today, tomorrow, every day which will decide to what extent this happy walk will continue.

**There will be times when, for awhile, you will be busy with your duties.** But if, while you are going about your work, this happens, do not count it a sin. Just run back to Him. He is your understanding Father, and does not want you to feel under condemnation. *Keep pushing the relationship.* In a sense, you must lead out. Christ has described Himself as knocking at the door (*Revelation 3:20*). He does not open it; you do.

(In reality, He is leading out; for, without the help of the angels and the Holy Spirit, you would not have the slightest inclination to depart from the chains Satan wishes to bind you with.)

When you need help, cry for it. But **when you do not need help, just rest in the knowledge that you are with Him**—let a sweet sense of peace fill your heart that He is there with you.

You will find that, even when you plead for help, a brief pause of thoughtful waiting will bring renewed assurance into your heart that He is going to work everything out for the best.

He is not like people on earth. He loves you and means best for you. Your loving Father is ever watching over you, guarding you, trying to save you from yourself.

**Have happy times with Him.** Walking with God is a sweet experience. Keep noticing things to thank Him for. If no one is around, audibly thank Him. When you see an interesting little bug on the grass or a beautiful butterfly nearby, laugh and say, “Oh, how wonderful; thank you Father!” *Enjoy life with Him.* It will make a world of difference if your walk with Him is joyous or just droopy and sad. He means for you to be happy with Him. Christianity is not sighs and strictures. It is happiness in the presence of your God. That is the way it will be throughout eternity. Let heaven begin here.

It is a remarkable fact that there can be such

happiness amid such obedience and submission. But that is the way God’s plan for you will be—if you will but accept it day by day.

**There are special times in the day when you can do the most sharing with your Father.** What would these be? Here are some examples:

Your thoughts turn to Him as you arise, *and the conversing begins*—

As you do your morning preparations before breakfast and worship time. Throughout the day when you are alone with Him. When you are walking. When you are sitting. When are driving down the road. When you are walking or working outside. When you are relaxing between tasks. When you are sitting, standing, and doing something. When you are with someone else and there is not much conversation. When you are with someone and there is conversation—and you need to know what to say to that person. When you have a problem. When you do not have a problem. When you are struggling with a difficult situation, load, or perplexity. When you are confronted with a crisis—financial, relationship, employment, housing, or otherwise. When you have no problems at all, and are quite happy about how everything is going.

The above paragraph illustrates that there are many times every day when there are opportunities to commune with God, as a little child with His parent. Is there a time when it is inappropriate to talk with Him? Even in the middle of a conversation with another person, you can do it! Nehemiah did so (*Nehemiah 2:3-6*).

“We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand. We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our hearts’s desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul’s desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard.”—*Gospel Workers*, 258.

Try talking to someone while praying to God at the same time. You will find it is easy to do.

**As you have opportunity, sing songs to Him** and about Him. He loves to hear your little praises and expressions of appreciation and happiness. *You are His beloved child!* Rejoice in the fact. Your squeaky voice is heard in heaven,

and angels join in the song.

**Keep fresh in your thoughts how wonderful God is**, and how good He is to you and all the world—in divine care, providences, the created things which provide us with food, shelter, the beautiful things of nature, in the structure and function of our bodies, in the stars overhead, and in everything that exists which Satan has not tainted.

**Do not feel you may be selfish in taking time with God**, when there is so much else to do. This is the reason for which you were created. It is the basis of your existence. It is the way you are to live through all eternity.

In addition, the closer your walk with God, the more you will be able to help others. Your very presence, words, and prayers lift and point them in the right direction. Father will guide with the right words at the right time. He will help you to be a far greater blessing—because you make sure He is with you wherever you go—than you could accomplish by “working for Him” at a distance.

## Deepening the Walk

**How can you deepen this experience?** Here are several pointers:

**Take time to pray.** The Bible says you should pray three times a day (*Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10*). If at all possible, do so. But more than that is needed. Although both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are clear that, both in public worship services and private worship devotions, we should kneel when we pray,—do not imagine that is the only place to converse with Him! When not in a time of personal or public worship, the greater number of our prayers occur as we sit, stand, walk, or work.

“There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God . . . In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God, and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes.”—2 *Selected Messages*, 316.

Far too often we think that prayer is only for

asking for things. It is too easy to fall into an unbalanced “gimme” religious life. But if you love someone and like to be with him, *you talk to him about all kinds of things*.

**A significant amount of your time with God is spent in sharing joys and discoveries about how wonderful He is.** There is a lot of thankfulness and praise in such a life. It would injure a human being to keep telling him how wonderful he is, but it does not hurt God; and, doing so, it greatly helps you.

**When you cry to Him for help, always have the attitude, “If it be Thy will.”** You have needs, and you will want to call upon Him for help. He delights to provide your needs. But remember that it chokes off the experience if all you ever do is talk to Him when you want something. Let there be lots of expressed thanks, hopefully, more than there is beseeching Him for help. Such a ratio will greatly strengthen your hold on Him! But never be afraid to ask Him for help. He waits to hear and answer. Many times, amid this walk, He will help before you call—or are even aware of the problem.

**Be cautious about the kind of music you like to listen to and sing**, if you would guard the closeness of your experience with God. Avoid the wild music, even though it may be called “Christian.” Screaming music, pagan drumbeats, feverish tempos do not help anyone draw near to God. All they do is give you an artificial, shallow excitement. But excitement for its own sake is worldly. You want to hear the still, small voice. Exciting music militates against one’s walk with God. This is a key diagnostic factor: Is it calm or does it tend to be wild? Also beware of gloomy mood music.

Your time with your Father is calm, peaceful, sweet, and happy. You no longer need artificial props to keep you from depression. Those days are gone, as long as you remain close to God. Now you have the real thing; you have your wonderful Father with you.

**Peacefully sing the sweet hymns and gospel songs.** They will bring you both courage and a sense of Father’s presence. There is more strength from singing a little song to God—even though your voice may be unsteady,—than in listening to one; yet both can be helpful.

When possible, at times **keep a songbook open** nearby where you work; and, noting a title,

sing one from memory as you work or drive. If you have a hard time recalling songs to sing, buy a small pocket notebook, and jot into it a number of gospel song and hymn titles. Open it, catch a title, close the book and begin singing happily (or softly, depending on your surroundings) to your Father. It matters not if you remember the words. Make up new words as you go. The writer does this all the time.

**Keep a Bible or Spirit of Prophecy book open.** Every so often read a few sentences, and then think about it as you work.

**Play Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy tapes.** Hearing the Word of God is far more powerful, in helping you maintain a closer walk with God, than hearing music. Do not forget that. The pure words of God are also better than sermon tapes. Listen to Bible and Spirit of Prophecy audiocassettes as you have opportunity. Have one ready to turn on, as you work around the house or drive in the car.

You can obtain Alexander Scourby readings of the Bible from the American Bible Society or other outlets.

American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023 / 800-32-BIBLE (4253) / Fax: 202-891-8088 / OT KJV: #102963; 51 cassettes in 3 vinyl albums, currently \$89.95 / NT KJV: #102960; 15 cassettes in 1 album, currently \$39.95 / Also available in Spanish.

Spirit of Prophecy tapes can be obtained from various outlets. The author has found the five-volume *Conflict Series*, *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Ministry of Healing*, *Messages to Young People*, and *Education* to be especially helpful.

**Never, never, never doubt God!** Never question His Word, what He does, or what He does not do. **Never mistrust Him, and never blame Him.** Always believe that everything He does is good and right, for it always is. God is, in no way, responsible for much that happens in our world. He does not cause the accidents. It is the devil who produces the terrible storms and cataclysms which kill innocent people. Scripture is clear that God will finally destroy the incorrigibly wicked [see the author's 42-page *The Terrible Storm*, now in our 172-page *Offshoots Tractbook*, \$13.00, plus p&h]. But He never, never does anything to injure the innocent. A temptation to question God may be presented to you, but recognize it for what it is: a device of

the devil to take possession and destroy you.

**It brings strength to keep your eye on the future, immortal life.** Yes, there may be problems down here; but, on the other side, every question of our earthly life will be resolved. It is of interest that, the closer your walk with God, the fewer questions you will want Him to answer in heaven. The problems of life are generally the result of mistakes and sins, either ours or others. God is not to blame.

**Spend your time finding ways to help others.** There is a world of difference between the person who lives for himself and the one who is trying to help someone else. The more you are trying to help others, the closer your walk with God. Living merely to gather for yourself, adorn yourself, and keep for yourself—will destroy you. Self-centered living dries up the soul.

**Share your experience with others.** Tell them how good God is, what He has done for you, and how He can help them. Point them to God's Inspired Books. Share the last-day messages, found in *Great Controversy*, with them. Share books and papers. Be a little missionary.

**Study the things of nature, and they will deepen your love for God and your walk with Him.** That is a promise. If you see an ant or caterpillar, bend down and thoughtfully watch it for a moment. Talk to your Father about it; with joy on your countenance, springing from a heart in love, praise Him for all these things. The study of natural history has been a deep source of encouragement to the present writer, in deepening the walk.

**Value your heavenly Father, and value time with Him.** Love to be with Him. Take walks with Him out-of-doors. Talk to Him about the wind in the trees, the bird songs, the sound of the cricket, the clouds overhead. Everything is a blessing, yet appreciated by so few.

**Do not let your special prayer time with God degenerate into a nothingness.** The key is His Word. If you do not have a purpose to your prayers, open the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy, read a little, and pray about what you have read. Have a prayer list and pray for those who need help.

**Try to live in the country!** Our Father never intended that any of His children live in the cities. He wants us out of them. Yet know that you

can be in a prison cell, stripped of your Bible and friends, and yet be able to maintain this experience. The promise is given, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be” (*Deuteronomy 33:25*). In the midst of most difficult circumstances, God will draw especially close to you.

**Make sure, wherever you go, that He is with you.** Only go as fast as you have time to keep Him by your side.

**Eat and live as healthfully as possible.** It makes a difference! Avoid everything which clouds the brain or animalizes the nature.

**Study healthful living.** Let every day be an experiment in how to live and eat more healthfully. Eat simply, sparingly of only good, nourishing food.

**Maintain a balanced, daily routine.** As you travel through each day, note those things which, during that time period, have weakened your hold on God. A thoughtless word, a second helping of potatoes, white sugar which got into the food. It all makes a difference. Do not be a person who cannot think. Reason from cause to effect. Each evening, consider how you could have done better that day, and determine that, with Father’s help, you will not do certain things again.

**Get enough rest at night.** As you get older, lay down and rest for a few minutes every so often through the day. There is no need to put yourself in an early grave. The Lord needs your help in the world. There is much to be done, and there are not enough to work with Him in doing it.

**Do not practice being disgusted.** While preparing lunch today, the present writer spilled some raw carrot pulp on the floor. He smiled at his foolish ways, bent down, and picked it up. Some people think they need to act disgruntled every so often. They think they need to grimace their face, speak an angry word, and thus prove their mastery of the situation. That is practicing to be like the devil. *You serve a different Master.* Act godlike. Be gentle, affable, kind.

**Refuse to be angry with your wife or husband.** Instead, humbly tell the other one you are praying for him. And mean it. Others can tell when you are sincere or being sarcastic.

**Control yourself.** Irritability is a choice, and only becomes a habit if you let it be so. Negative feelings and harsh words will stifle your experi-

ence and injure your health.

**Reduce those situations which cause you to be angry, yell, or scream.** Whatever happens, you have decided that you will no longer do it. Many mothers have a problem with this. If your child makes you scream, sit down with him and explain that, from now on, you will speak softly three times, and then you will spank. Henceforth, he will no longer think he can do as he likes—until you become angry. If your dog will not obey without being yelled at, then get rid of the dog. The canine is training you to yell. Buy a canary instead. Be serious about being a Christian.

**You cannot have God by your side if you are carrying a grudge.** Perhaps you have people you need to apologize to. Make it right.

**Choose to be cheerful.** Live a radiant, thankful, happy life. It is as easy to choose happiness as feeling miserable. So choose the sunny side. This is extremely important. Do not expect a close walk with God if you are grumpy, frequently disgusted, or sour. It cannot happen. Feeling happy is more of a choice than the result of circumstances. The presence of God is above circumstances. Even people who are bedridden can be a ray of sunshine to all around—because they have God with them. You can praise Him in spite of the physical pain. Remember that the future is extremely bright! an eternity with Christ.

Many years ago, in the ministry, the present writer conducted the funeral sermon for Sister Bell, one of his church members. For about a decade she had been bedridden, but she was a sunbeam. Beside her bed was a telephone and a local directory. Her spare time was occupied with dialing numbers at random and encouraging them in the Lord! Wherever you are, you can spread sunshine.

**Do not expect your emotions to be on a continual high.** Ongoing living with God is calm—with a quiet, peaceful sense of happiness. Do not study your emotions. Live for God, others, and the duties of the day. Choose to be cheerful, in spite of what happens. Doing something to push up the emotions only weakens and depresses the soul.

**In regard to your children, your spouse, your home, and your finances, everything will work out better if you remain with God.** Do not think that doing anything which separates you from Him, will in any way help you—or them.

For example, if the devil can get you to think that losing your temper can help you deal with a bad situation, he will give you an abundance of bad situations. If you think that a personal crisis is reason enough to temporarily abandon God and right principles, then the devil will lead you from one crisis to another.

**When others praise you for what you do, just reply, “The Lord did it.”** “Without God’s help, it could not have been done.” Avoid giving or receiving flattery. It eats the heart of everyone’s Christian experience.

**Do not let others applaud you, and do not applaud others.** No applause, verbally or with your hands. Everyone is injured by it.

**If you are not as successful in life as you would like, be content.** You have the Lord with you, and that is more important. Success separates many people from God. Sometimes He has to keep His children in lowly circumstances, because they would not know how to handle much success. Wealth ruins most people who have it.

**When Satan knocks, run quickly to your Father.** Do not parley with the devil. Do not take time to consider his enticing thoughts. The apparent “pleasures of sin” are a mirage. There is no happiness apart from God, not a particle of it. The devil knows this, and you ought to also. Flee from Satan’s temptations by running to God.

**Do not make this walk an on-again-off-again activity.** It is a bad habit to get into. Some people think they can just leave God occasionally for this or that activity and then come back to Him. All such are strengthening cherished wrongdoing, and they may lose out in the end.

**Do not dally with the devil.** *Do not sin.* There is great danger in doing this. Yes, it is true that the power to resist is totally from God, but the decision is totally yours. If you do not do your little part in rejecting the devil’s offers, God cannot do His big part in empowering you to walk away from a wrong path.

“The part man is required to sustain is *immeasurably small*, yet in the plan of God it is just that part that is needed to make the work a success.”—*Amazing Grace*, 319 [Italics ours].

“The work of the Holy Spirit is *immeasurably great*. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker of God.”—*Review*, November 29, 1892 [Italics ours].

**Be very, very careful about those more last-**

**ing decisions:** your friendships, where you live, where you work, where your recreation is, and who you marry.

**When problems arise, trust them to the Lord.** When you do not have problems, remain just as close to Him. Do not practice “foxhole religion.” Far too many people only turn to God when they have troubles. Afterward, they stumble back to relative indifference and neglect of their Creator. But you have chosen to be different. You want to be with Him all the time! And, oh, the deep awareness of peace it will bring into your heart. No strong emotion most of the time, just a calm happiness.

**When your desire, your will, conflicts with God’s, what should you do?** This will occur frequently, often deceptively—beginning with something very small. Satan has come, oh, so quietly, to call you from God. The still, small voice of duty directs you one way, but you want to resist, hold back, do something else. You are on the verge of stepping over the line from childlike reliance to childish desertion. What should be done?

Stop! Pause and refocus. What is the right thing? Then, do not dally; quickly yield! Accept God’s way, ask Him to forgive you for what you were about to do or are beginning to do. Thank Him for His love, and do what He wants. Stay in the right path.

Imagine what it would be like if God left you alone, no longer convicted you of the right, or offered the strength to do it! How horrible. You would forever be the helpless captive of Satan. When God speaks, immediately obey!

More on this topic in later chapters (*When in Danger of Slipping and Finding it Again*).

**You must spend time alone with God!** Time in prayer, time reading His Word! Without this, you cannot maintain the deeper experience.

Someone will say, “I cannot. I am crowded into a small apartment, and we have several children.” Several years ago, I heard of a woman who said something like that to an evangelist. She lived with her family in one or two rooms in the city. Her heart cried out for a way to come close to God. The evangelist told her to go home and make room for a place where she could be with the Lord. Arriving home, she walked over and pulled a dresser sideways across a corner. Then, every so often, she got behind it on her knees and cried to God in prayer. Everyone in

the home knew that when Mother got behind the dresser, they were not to bother her. Surely, your experience is not that difficult; yet, just as she succeeded, you and I may too. Remember: However you do it, you must spend time with God!

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience.”—*Gospel Workers*, 254-255.

**Go outside and pray.** If you live in a place where it is safe to do so, walk outside and pray. This is a helpful—and healthful—adjunct to your time with God. Perhaps you will want to carry a small Spirit of Prophecy book or Bible in your hand and read a sentence or two from it from time to time.

**Live to help others.** The more you are working for God, trying to help and bless others, the more your problems will tend to shrink down to a more manageable size.

**Keep in mind that the voice of duty is the voice of God** (*Ev 688; also in TM 402*). If it is your task to spend the next hour washing dishes, hoeing the garden, or scrubbing floors, that is the work God wants you to do right then. Christianity is not ivory-tower living, sitting around in splendid religious idleness—while others do the work.

When you are not sure what to do next, you will find it generally is the next duty which should be tended to.

**There will be times when you are too tired to think.** This is not some magic 24-hour-a-day experience which we are talking about. At such times, just rest in His arms. You may be driving down the road, working, sitting, or laying down. After 6,000 years of human ancestry, our bodies are often tired, physically weakened, or in pain. Trust quietly in God, rest, and keep pushing forward. He is with you as long as you want Him with you.

**Sometimes you will just be with Him in silence.** There are times you will just want to fall down on your knees by a bed or couch, not saying much—for you feel exhausted. You just want to be near Him. He fully accepts you at this time, as He did earlier in the day when you felt better.

**There will be times when Satan will draw near to depress or discourage you.** Trust in God and hold tight to Him. At times you will cry to Him for help to keep holding on. He is listening, He loves you, and He will send help. Remember the promise to Ellen, which is for us today: When you need to, you can ask Father “to send another angel”—a second angel—to guard and care for you (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, 63).

**Do not think that you have to always be on an emotional edge,** doing certain things, saying certain things. He loves you as you are. Just love Him with all your heart, and—what you do—do for Him. He will gently lead you along.

**Do not always be on the go.** Take time to just sit down and be quiet. Go for a quiet walk. Have you noticed that the more things you do in life, the more there is to do? There will be times when something has to be done, and you must move quickly and decisively. This is understandable, and God will help you. But it is neither wise nor necessary to always be on the fast track.

Remember the experience of Hezekiah. He had prepared; and, when the crisis came, he was prepared (*PK 351*). Prepare your spiritual defenses now. Acquaint now thyself with God. You know not what emergency may come tomorrow.

**Do all your daily duties as unto the Lord;** and in the process of doing the work before you carefully and well, you will grow stronger in Christ (*COL 360*).

**Do not try to be equal with God.** You were not made for it. Yes, you may be His friend, brother, heir, and joint heir—but, at the heart of the daily walk, you will always be His little child. The faithful in heaven (the 144,000 in Revelation 14:4 and all the faithful in 7:17) will be those who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, because they did it down here. That sounds like humble children following their parent—and that is what it is. Only he who is humble enough to be God’s child on earth will be His child in heaven. The big people will not be there.

**Real live Christians say “amen” and “yes” when they hear something especially good or true, in talks or prayer.** It may sound old-fashioned, but doing so will strengthen your faith and the faith of others. Indeed, we are told to do so (*5T 318; 6T 383*). It is a type of public stand for God and the right.

**Do not go beyond Scripture!** Beware. Read again about Thomas Munzer and his fanatics (GC 191-193). Fanatics combine pride and secret sin with pretended holiness and extreme views. They reject basic Scriptural truths and seek to dominate others and gain followers. Have nothing to do with them, and do not enter that treacherous path yourself. The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy provide the truths you must remain with. Any time someone demands that you accept his religious views immediately, leave and take your loved ones with you. Always be distrustful of self.

**Beware of speakers or writers who urge you to set aside the Spirit of Prophecy.** They will tell you that only the Bible is to be used, and then they twist passages and present errors. They want you to accept their interpretation of the Bible instead of the divinely inspired Spirit of Prophecy explanation of it! Any time someone downgrades the Spirit of Prophecy, beware. If a speaker does it, take your family and leave.

**The Inspired Writings (the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy) are superior to your mind.** Submit to them. They are bigger than you are. Your mind is not the arbiter of right and wrong; only God and His Word are.

**Never develop or accept supposed “new light”** which is not *clearly stated* in the Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy.

**Do not imagine that, by following the ideas in this book, you are going to rise to some superior holiness.** If you follow the rules for communion, laid out in God’s Word,—it will be your obedience, humility, and sense of self-distrust which will deepen. Fall down before God and be broken! Do not let the devil tempt you to spiritual pride. We are nothing, except to the degree we are united as little children with our Creator. You will, indeed, gain a deeper experience; but, if you are at all proud of what is happening,—the devil has placed a worm in your heart, and you will soon fall.

**Walk humbly with thy God.** Do not presume to think you are smart enough to improve on His guidance. The thought will come to mind to think or do something which a small voice will tell you to avoid. Train yourself to sense the danger in such a situation. When such a danger threatens, quickly resubmit yourself to the Lord and do what you know to be right. A favorite

approach of Satan is to suggest the thought that you are able to take care of yourself. You are not. You must remain close to your Father, or you are headed for trouble. John the Baptist had carefully studied the science of guarding against the stealthy approach of the enemy of mankind (DA 102). We must do it also.

**Recognize that Satan is always trying to lead you away.** In little ways, the devil is constantly trying to catch our attention and interest. He is constantly trying to pull you toward this or that. But taking a lowly place before God and nestling in His powerful arms—lessens the attractive power of that which Satan offers, enables us to better recognize his lures for what they are, and strengthens us to resist them.

**As His little child, you are to defend your Father!** Remember the fifth commandment. You are not to be silent when His character is reproached. You are to vigorously defend His honor, His truthfulness, and the teachings in His Word (both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy). This is a solemn duty required of God’s faithful children. A lot is involved here. Many lose all their courage when the need presents itself to stand in defense of historic beliefs and standards. Beware, when all men speak well of thee.

“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”—*Luke 6:26.*

“Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”—*Galatians 1:10.*

Thus we see that there are many ancillary points which can help us maintain a very close walk with our heavenly Father.

There will be times when the sheer realization of your position as God’s child and the glorious future He is preparing for you will sweep over you, and you will gratefully thank Him for accepting you as His little child.

My brother and sister, be faithful! We want to meet in heaven!

## Basic Principles

*Fundamental to this entire matter is this point:* It is not enough to believe in “righteousness by faith” or think you have it. It is not sufficient to consider yourself a Christian or be confident that you are obeying the commandments. *It is the humble, trusting, obedient clinging to God that counts!*

To say it another way: It is not your status, qualities, or anything you have attained to—which will count in the long haul of life. The basic question is this: *Are you maintaining a humble, trustful, obedient hold on God?* All four points are vital; none should be missing if you want a strong Christian experience.

1 - *Continual humility before God.* If you lack this, it matters not how much you know of theology, standards, or all the rest. You are going to drift away repeatedly, and perhaps ultimately. Humility before God is the only proper basis for a relationship with Him. When you are not humble in relation to Him, your mind is not working right. This point cannot be stressed enough.

“Real humility fulfills God’s purposes by depending upon His strength.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363.

2 - *Trusting all to God.* Unless you totally believe in Him and His Word—not doubting,—you will be caught repeatedly by the devil.

3 - *Obeying God’s Inspired Writings.* Without obedience by faith in Christ’s enabling grace, you are a hollow shell. Like a rotten tree out in the forest, soon you will fall over.

4 - *Constantly clinging to God.* Unless you *have to be* with God all the time, you will be sitting smugly in the devil’s camp much of the time—and not even know it.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this—and this may be the most important paragraph in this book: *The only way you can maintain all four points, all the time—is by sincerely taking a position, all the time, as a dependent, little child of God.*

None is missing or the experience quickly falls apart. These are the very traits needed to live a godly life! The author has found no other

conceptual approach to God which so firmly includes all the needed traits. The child/Father relationship does it. While in this union, you are a fortress held by God in a revolted world. Only your choice can remove you from it. And therein lies the ever-present danger.

## Through the Portals

Someone will say, “There is so much here, how can I get started?” Although some of the details of the daily walk have been noted, it is designed to guide you into a stronger union with God. Much of it will help you later as you have questions, and return to reread it.

*But let us briefly summarize a few points, so you can begin the experience right now.*

Do you want to be with God more than anything else? If so, then you are ready. (If not, get on your knees and pray for repentance until you are ready.)

**Here are five points which are fundamental to a daily experience:**

1 - *Value His presence.*

2 - *Be cheerful and thankful you are with Him.*

3 - *Study the Scriptures* (the Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy) each morning and evening.

4 - *Talk to your sweet Father.* Cheerfulness leads you to praise, and praise induces cheerfulness. *Share your problems with Him*, and cry for help and guidance.

5 - *Help others* with your words and your actions.

**Here is a basic list of points which you will want to aim at each day:**

1 - *Personal worship.* Time alone to read in the Inspired Books (only the Bible and/or Spirit of Prophecy; nothing else counts).

2 - *Obey what you know to be right.* You have Jesus to help you. Ignore those people who say you are a legalist. You are pleasing your kind Father, and that is all that counts. Without obedience, there can be no genuine walk with God. “Presumption by faith” will enable you to walk with a spirit, but it is not God’s Spirit. In Christ’s strength, control yourself. Trust your life to Him,

and keep moving forward.

3 - *Do the duties that present themselves.* God sent them: the homely duties of daily life which get the work done, which help others. God's little child is not lazy.

4 - *In Christ's strength, do not yield to the temptation held out before you.* It may just be one more bite of food. Hold tight to the divine Hand, and choose the right. The Lord will help you resist. In Him you can have the victory, and every victory is a step to yet another victory after that.

5 - *Do not imagine that the experience described in this book gives you something to be proud of, as though you were better than others.* As soon as you accept that bait from the devil, you have separated from God—and the devil has you again! The greatest man is the one least aware of his qualities; rather, he is the most humble and self-effacing.

"I looked at Christ, and the dove of peace landed on my shoulder. I looked at the dove, and it flew away."

Being a little child in Christ is somewhat like Peter walking on the water. It only succeeds as long as we keep our eyes on Jesus.

6 - *Take time to talk to your Father.* You are His little child, and you need this time with Him. Share your joys, your needs, and your problems. Tell Him about others who need help.

7 - *Keep as cheerful as you can.* There are two ways to look at everything, so keep choosing the high road. Softly sing a little, as you have opportunity.

8 - *Guard your words and your tones.* When pressed, be quiet, speak softly, and more slowly.

9 - *Do what you can to help others.* There may be few around you who are close to the Father. They need your encouragement and help. Point them to Jesus. Do what you can to lighten their load. Be kind and helpful.

10 - *Count your blessings.* Every so often, think of a way that God is good to you or others—and cheerfully thank Him for it. The evidences are all around you. Think of the wonderful future He has in store for you. You can rejoice that, as long as you remain with Him, you are on the right path. It is true that you cannot see even as far as the end of one day's journey, but He will guide you where you are to go—all the way to the heavenly shores.

11 - *Be regular in your habits and live healthfully.* Get your rest and only eat good food.

12 - *Never be presumptuous.* Just because you have hold of His hand does not mean you are armor-plated. Do not presume on His care for you and expect He will protect you when you are living dangerously. This was the second temptation which Satan presented to Christ (*Matthew 4:6*).

## When in Danger of Slipping

Although the experience is easy to enter into, it is not hard to lose. —*And you want to avoid an on-off-on-off pattern.* It is not a habit you want to develop!

The key point is this: *Are you happy to be with Him?* If you are, everything else will fall into place. If you love God more than your concern about the problems of life or the temptations Satan holds out to you, you will not have a difficult time maintaining the experience.

If you *have to be with God*, then, *as long as* that is your determination, the relationship will continue, in spite of the trials and troubles you encounter around you.

Learn to recognize the distant early warning signals—when you are moving toward separating from your Father, even a little bit. We will mention several below.

### **Here is what it is like when you are close with your Father:**

If you have made the decision that you want to be with God more than to walk away, you will experience a peaceful calm—even in the midst of temptation.

Your concerns about many things will subside. In your heart, you have the assurance that God will take care of the problems. Many of your natural fears will diminish. You will tend to matters which need tending to, but you will be far less likely to be disturbed by them.

This peace will not lessen your incentive to push forward in every day duties and ministry to others.

In the midst of all that happens, you may have the assurance of a strong Hand guiding the ship of your life. For this, you are so very thankful. The resultant peace of heart is health to mind and body.

**What are the distant early warning signals indicating that you are close to moving away from Him?**

As you get a hankering for something outside of His presence, the contented peace tends to evaporate. The process can be slow. The issue at hand may only seem to be a little thing, but there is the sense that, to do it, you will be leaving Father for a few moments or a short time at the most.

Because your conscience is still sensitive, you will probably be aware that you should hold back and not take this step. (However, if you suddenly rush impulsively, distracted, or time- or people-pressured into doing it, it can happen without your recognizing it.)

Keep your conscience tender! Do what you know to be right.

**How can you avoid slipping away?**

Do you want to be with God more than you want anything else? This is the acid test.

At the continental divide, all streams move toward one ocean or the other. The divide in your experience, at any given time, is how much you want to be with your Father. Is there anything you yearn for more than God? *Is there something you would rather do than sitting at His feet?* It might be a diversion, something you want to eat. It might even be something you want to do for *Him!* The devil will use anything to get you moving away from your Refuge.

*Do not trust your unaided ability.* Keep humble before God. Each time something new comes along, or it is time to start something, etc., ask Him in the attitude of a submissive child, “*What do you want me to do next?*” “*Should I do this?*” Etc. By doing this, you will be guarded from many pitfalls and sidetracks. Be patient, if you do not appear to receive an immediate reply.

*When in doubt, move slowly.* Pray harder and do not be quick to act. Move slowly until you have more certainty. Stop and pray.

*Watch for the stealthy approach of the tempter.* He will come with interesting things to divert you. The tinsel toys he offers will seem emotionally inviting, even exciting, more than it rationally ought to be for what it is. This in itself is frequently a clue that something is not right.

*Run to your Father,* even when you think you may not be far from Him. Do not take chances. Plead with Him for help to protect you from yourself and the mechanism of the devil.

*Settle it in your mind:* You are happier being with God than doing something else or being somewhere else.

*Is there anything you yearn for more than the Lord?* Is anything more interesting? Beware, beware. Satan can dangle it before your eyes and lead you away.

*Are you beginning to yearn for something more exciting than your peaceful walk with God?* When you find that you are being tempted in this way, you need more time reading His Word and praying over it. Talk to Him more, strengthen yourself in Him. Read again the remarkable quotations in the later chapters of this book.

**READ IN THE BIBLE AND SPIRIT OF PROPHECY!** If you do not keep doing this, you WILL slip away!

*When tempted by the devil,* cry to Jesus for help. He can vanish the temptation from your mind. Softly, and in fullest sincerity, sing, *Jesus Loves Me* (page 4 of this book) or some other sweet song—and the Holy Spirit takes over.

## Finding it Again

Overt sin will quickly take you from God; neglect may do it more slowly. What do you do when it appears that you have lost this sweet, closer experience? How can you regain it?

**You can return.** Do not treat the closer relationship as a hundred-yard dash, something you either hold to or have forever lost. *If you lose Father, do not think you cannot return.* As long as you want to return, you always can.

**Return fast.** *If you become negligent, do not pause to consider possibilities, relative gains or losses if you should return to Him. Be a little child! RUN BACK TO FATHER FAST! It is as simple as that.* Push, push the friendship. Keep at it. When you try to be with God, all you can do is win. *When you start to forget Him, hurry back; He is waiting for you with open arms.* Your Father loves you! Satan will tempt you that He does not love you; but that is a deception. God loves you with deepest love.

Read this and rejoice. I came upon this three-some a number of years ago:

**Coming to God**—“The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has to us (*1 John 4:16*); for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him.”—*Thought from the Mount of Blessing, 104-105.*

**Remaining safely with God**—“Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions and assaults of Satan.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 119.*

**Sharing what you have**—“The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 115.*

Worlds of misery and mountains of difficulties would be removed, if everyone made God the center of their lives! His love is absolutely glorious; yet Satan’s constant temptation is to underrate Him, doubt His love, and push away from Him.

*Love to be near God, and all your problems will be solved.*

But what if you slip away from Him? What if you have a steeper fall? What should you do?

**Here is how the pattern of falling away frequently occurs. There appear to be five steps downward:**

1 - *Sweet and confiding.* You sense Him close and rejoice to serve Him as His little child. In spite of the problems, your outlook is cheerful.

2 - *Diverted.* You have made the unconscious decision that having Him with you is not so important. *He isn’t so important now!* This decision is crucial! If you find yourself starting to wander, run back to Father—or you will keep heading downward!

3 - *Self-centered.* By this time, you are moving forward alone; but, if you sense His absence, you are strangely unconcerned.

4 - *Stale.* Everything seems to be crumbling. What happened? You are bewildered by increasing situations you cannot seem to handle.

5 - *Dead.* You have lost Him, and may be in serious trouble by this time. You are like the prodigal in the far country.

You got into trouble because you were no longer His little child. *You had changed your thinking—and thought you were able to push things through alone.* Instead of trusting every-

thing to Him, you began trusting yourself. You became your own little child! You make a poor ruler of your life. “Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child” (*Ecclesiastes 10:16*).

Whether you woke up on level 2, 3, 4, or 5 (above),—what should you do now?

Wherever you are, quickly, run back to Him and be His little child again! *That lowly place before God is where you belong.* It is the only safe place you can be. Do not hesitate! The longer you wait, the worse things will become.

### How do you run back?

Be like Peter: Fall at Christ’s feet with a long, clinging embrace. Peter dared not separate from Him. In view of what He is, what you are, and your great need—you have good reason to do the same.

“Peter . . . clung to the feet of Jesus, feeling that he could not be parted from Him.”—*Desire of Ages, 246.*

“In Jesus he saw One who held all nature under His control. The presence of divinity revealed his own unholiness. Love for his Master, shame for his own unbelief, gratitude for the condescension of Christ, above all, the sense of his uncleanness in the presence of infinite purity, overwhelmed him. While his companions were securing the contents of the net, Peter fell at the Saviour’s feet . . .

“Humanity, with its weakness and sin, was brought in contrast with the perfection of divinity, and he felt altogether deficient and unholy. Thus it has been with all who have been granted a view of God’s greatness and majesty.”—*Desire of Ages, 246.*

If you are where you can get down on your knees, do it. Cry to your Father over what happened. Make things right with Him. You may have sinned in the interim. Ask forgiveness; make peace with Him.

In a crisis, you can reenter the deeper walk even when other people are around. Send up a silent cry to Him, and once again accept your rightful position as His little child.

Settle it in your mind that being with Him is more important than all else besides—*including rushing through your work load.* If you are going too fast, slow down.

*Think through what happened; learn from the past. How did you begin drifting away? When did it begin? What should you have done? It is likely that Satan will try to use those same patterns on you again.*

Make needed changes in your lifestyle, so you

can better guard and close the door to Satan's entrance. Lack of rest, wrong food or too much of it, an angry temper, whatever needs to be changed, set to work. By yourself, you can do no good thing; but, crying to God for help, you can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth you.

*Your basic error was not in valuing the presence of God. He was not important enough "to keep around." He was not worth staying with.*

In returning, this is your decision; this is the single focus of your mind: *You are His little child, and must be near Him.* That concept is the center of the ongoing experience.

Try to avoid an on-again-off-again relationship. There is great strength in maintaining a *steady walk with God. It will not be dramatic; do not expect high emotion.* Excitement always fails; elevated emotions always drop. What you want is a peaceful, calm, sweet walk with your God. It will vary from pleading, encouraging, to joyful; but it will lack the wild excitement which Satan deceptively offers. That which the world offers is a mask over empty, dreary misery beneath.

*Base your relationship, not on feeling, but on two facts: God wants you and you want Him.* With that settled, the rest is taken care of. The Lord may allow problems to enter your life because of your unhealthful practices, lack of rest, or the actions of others,—but if you want Him, are submissive to His will, and reading and obeying His Written Word, He will carefully guide you to a bright future.

Satan uses every possible pretext to pester people, discourage them, and separate them from God. He will tell you that, since you have left God, your situation is hopeless. Do not dally with such thoughts. *Instead, run back to God and cling to Him!*

Satan will also tempt you to think that it is too late to return. This is not true. As long as you want to return to God you can! *The sin against the Holy Spirit occurs when you have resisted God so long that, in hardness of heart, you no longer want anything religious.* Do not wait to run back.

"The heart that does not respond to divine agencies becomes hardened until it is no longer susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons, 218.*

"When the appeals of the Holy Spirit come to the heart, our only safety lies in responding to

them without delay."—*Christ's Object Lessons, 281.*

"The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven's invitation to repent."—*Desire of Ages, 324.*

**Who are the most likely to maintain a close, ongoing walk with God?** In the lives of many of God's people, something is present in their lives which helps keep them near their Father. This is generally either the fact that they are earnestly working for the good of others or they have special problems they are suffering with.

- They may be spending time trying to help others in the home or outside of it. They may be involved in earnest prayer for a loved one at home or at a distance—someone with physical problems or who needs Christ, is finding Him, or is trying to stay with Him.

- They may have a problem which they must continually seek God about, in order to keep on top of it. This could be a physical disability, family situation, or employment difficulty.

It is the people who have real concerns, who tend to go more often to God and rely on Him for help.

## Is the Deeper Walk a Necessity?

Must we have such an extremely close walk with God in order to be saved? In order to avoid being judgmental, the author assumes that this closer clinging, trusting child relationship is not necessary to final salvation.

**1 - There are indications that there are different degrees of closeness to God among those who will be saved:**

On one hand, we have the statement, in *Great Controversy, 665*, which indicates there will have been different levels of closeness that God's people chose on earth. Nearest the throne are those who, after coming to Christ, followed Him with a deep, intense devotion. Outside of that closest circle are those who faithfully obeyed His commandments. (Obviously, those in the inner circle did also.) In the third circle are the great majority of the saved. Why are there three levels

of how close people are to God in heaven? Could it be that they sought different levels of closeness on earth?

Do not err here. We are clearly told that everyone who reaches heaven will be perfectly happy there. All will have fullest access to God's presence.

Also keep in mind the experience of the disciple John. He pressed into "still closer intimacy with Jesus," had "the most receptive spirit," and with "*more of the child's confiding trust* he opened his heart to Jesus." Because of this, John could clarify God's "spiritual teaching" to others a little better than others. This would indicate that his writings hold some especially deep truths (*Desire of Ages*, 292).

Eleven examples of men and women who pressed into a closer relationship than commonly experienced by God's people will be found in a later chapter in this book (*Others Who Have Gone Before*).

**2 - There are statements which indicate that we must, individually, come up to the highest standard or be left out.**

Many such statements will be found in the Spirit of Prophecy. And then there is that basic statement by Jesus Himself:

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—*Matthew 18:2-3*.

However, there is also verse 4:

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."—*Matthew 18:4*.

Yet a certain caution needs to be used in regard to "greatest," "less great," and "least" in the "kingdom of God." Outright commandment breakers will not be in heaven, yet they are termed "least in the kingdom of God" (*Matthew 5:19*).

**In summary then,** it would appear that everyone must become a child of God in order to be saved. But there will be degrees of closeness among the different children. Some will fervently seek the closest walk; others, although faithful, will permit the cares of life to keep them more distant from the ravishing love and closer care which God would share with them in this life. Such an intensely close experience was not one of their priorities, although being a faithful Christian was.

Thus it would appear that there may be many of God's people who will be saved who, only in time of personal crisis, sought the *deepest* walk with God. (For such reasons, they may be more likely to experience a multitude of little and big crises; they need problems in their lives to keep bringing them closer to their kind Father, lest they drift away entirely. They do not seem to maintain a moderate proximity otherwise.)

So the author assumes that none will be lost who slips away from an *extra-deep* relationship with his kind Father. Everyone who is saved will have been a trusting, obedient disciple of Christ on earth; yet there are degrees of closeness. Some choose a closer experience than others.

## Additional Symbols

We earlier mentioned the vine, the chick, and the sheep, *There are also other figures to represent the closeness which God wants to have toward each of us*. He would like it to begin at the time of initial conversion and continue uninterrupted thereafter.

**The secret cleft.** *There is a cleft in the rock close to God*. It is a sweet experience to be there. But it is only for those who urgently wish to press in for a special nearness. As with all the other blessings of God, it is not difficult to have. Our kind Father always does the most difficult part. Yet there remains a "difficult part" for us: We must choose—and keep choosing—to remain close to Him.

God wants to place you in the cleft of the rock, and draw you close to Him in blessing.

"There is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by."—*Exodus 33:21-22*.

"*There is a place by Him*." Thank God! And, in drawing close to the Ancient of Days, what is that Rock which we stand upon?

Why do we want to live apart from Him? That Rock is Christ. Doing so only makes it easier for Satan to tempt and overcome us!

"Living apart from Christ he is subject to Satan's temptations, and he makes mistakes

in his work for the Master.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 356.

*It is a special place where God wants us to remain.* For it is by Him. (Later in this chapter, we shall learn it is in Him.) When we are in the cleft, we are in the secret place—alone with Him,—and protected by His shadow.

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty . . . He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust.”—*Psalms 91:1, 4*.

**The lowly yoke.** In Matthew 11, Christ opened to His disciples an extremely important truth which we should be aware of. He said that we need to be yoked up to Him in order for us to most efficiently be used in working with Him.

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”—*Matthew 11:28-30*.

*What relationship could be closer than two oxen with their heads fastened closely together, as they pull on the load?* This metaphor also emphasizes the importance of *close cooperation* with Him. Unless we do our part, He cannot help us and work through us as effectively.

We have already learned that, in order to be closely linked with Christ we must become as little children. —But, in this symbol, Christ reveals the astonishing truth that He, also, is child-like in personality! This is a deep truth which we do not have space to explore here. But let us note that, in asking us to become as little children, God is only asking us to become like Himself. (There is a clear statement in the Spirit of Prophecy that the Ancient of Days is meek and lowly!)

And that helps explain the situation: *We can only draw close to God as we become like Him.* So we must become meek and lowly—for He is meek and lowly.

“The meekness and lowliness of Christ is the Christian’s power”—*4 Testimonies*, 559.

Yet but “few are willing to follow the Saviour’s example of meekness and humility” (*5 Testimonies*, 176).

“Lowliness of heart is the strength that gives victory to the followers of Christ; it is the token of their connection with the courts above . . .

“Those who reveal the meek and lowly spirit of Christ are tenderly regarded by God. They

may be looked upon with scorn by the world, but they are of great value in His sight. Not only the wise, the great, the beneficent, will gain a passport to the heavenly courts; not only the busy worker, full of zeal and restless activity. No; the poor in spirit, who crave the presence of an abiding Christ, the humble in heart, whose highest ambition is to do God’s will,—these will gain an abundant entrance.”—*Desire of Ages*, 301-302.

Consider the deep truth in the next two passages:

“The value of man is estimated in heaven according to the capacity of the heart to know God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 354-355.

But how can we enlarge this capacity?

“Looking unto Jesus . . . we develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 355.

What is the best way to become like God, to grow into His likeness? —by becoming His little child! Is it worth it? It surely is!

**Kept securely as jewels.** Our kind Father likens us to precious stones and jewels, upon which He gives special care.

“They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels. And I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”—*Malachi 3:17*.

In the above passage, we are likened both to jewels and to a dearly beloved son. Is it not wonderful to know that we are so special to God? Do we value closeness to Him as much?

**Give all for the pearl.** But it is a two-way contract. In order for God to count us as His jewels, we must prize Him so highly that we are willing to sell everything in order to have Him. We become His active treasure, as we make Him our treasure. And remember, “where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (*Matthew 6:21*).

“Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”—*Hebrews 11:26*.

“Provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.”—*Luke 12:33*.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he . . . for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”—*Matthew 13:44*.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”—*Matthew 13:45-46*.

“Christ Himself is the pearl of great price. In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fulness of the Godhead . . . All that can satisfy the needs and longings of the human soul, for this world and for the world to come, is found in Christ. Our Redeemer is the pearl so precious that in comparison all things else may be accounted loss.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 115*.

What must we do in order to have the pearl of great price?

“There are some who are seeking, always seeking, for the goodly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl.”—*1 Selected Messages, 399-400*.

“In the parable the pearl is not represented as a gift. The merchantman bought it at the price of all that he had . . . We are to give ourselves to Christ, to live a life of willing obedience to all His requirements. All that we are, all the talents and capabilities we possess, are the Lord’s, to be consecrated to His service. When we thus give ourselves wholly to Him, Christ, with all the treasures of heaven, gives Himself to us. We obtain the pearl of great price.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 116*.

“The price we are required to pay is not gold or silver, for this belongs to God. Abandon the idea that temporal or spiritual advantages will win for you salvation. God calls for your willing obedience. He asks you to give up your sins.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 117*.

**Sitting at Christ’s feet.** We are told that we should combine the qualities of Mary and Martha. Yet it was the devotional spirit of Mary which is especially needed. Time spent with Jesus through the day is the foundation of everything worthwhile. We need to sit at His feet and learn of Him.

“All who work for God should have the Martha and the Mary attributes blended—a willingness to minister and a sincere love of the truth.”—*6 Testimonies, 118*.

“Mary was storing her mind with the precious words falling from the Saviour’s lips, words that were more precious to her than earth’s most costly jewels. The ‘one thing’ that Martha needed was a calm, devotional spirit, a deeper anxiety for knowledge concerning the future, immortal life, and the graces necessary for spiritual ad-

vancement. She needed less anxiety for the things which pass away, and more for those things which endure forever. Jesus would teach His children to seize every opportunity of gaining that knowledge which will make them wise unto salvation . . . There is a wide field for the Marthas, with their zeal in active religious work, but let them first sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus. Let diligence, promptness, and energy be sanctified by the grace of Christ; then the life will be an unconquerable power for good.”—*Desire of Ages, 525*.

“Many who profess to be Christians are such only in name. They are not converted. They keep self prominent. They do not sit at the feet of Jesus, as Mary did, to learn of Him. They are not ready for Christ’s coming.”—*1 Selected Messages, 80*.

“The churches seem content to take only the first steps in conversion. They are more ready to engage . . . in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show. Religion must begin with emptying and purifying the heart, and must be nurtured by daily prayer.”—*4 Testimonies, 535*.

**Our hiding place.** Another symbol used in the Bible to represent our close connection to God is found in three passages:

“Thou art my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.”—*Psalms 32:7*.

“Thou art my hiding place and my shield.”—*Psalms 119:114*.

In the third passage, we find several symbols of the protection we might have as we draw close to our heavenly Father:

“Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, . . . and a Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a Covert from the tempest, as Rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land.”—*Isaiah 32:1-2*.

It is obvious that we cannot have the offered protection—unless, individually, you and I crowd in close to our God.

**Opening the door.** We are told that Jesus is standing at the door, knocking and awaiting entrance. This represents more than initial conversion. He wants a closer experience with us.

“Jesus invites us to accept His presence; we are to open the door of the heart, and let Him in. But He will not share a divided heart. If it be given to the service of mammon, if selfishness and pride fill its chambers, there will be no room

for the heavenly Guest; He will not take up His abode with us until the heavenly temple has been emptied and cleansed.”—*Our High Calling*, 55.

“Jesus will not force open the door. You must open it yourselves and show that you desire His presence by giving Him a sincere welcome.”—*2 Testimonies*, 217.

“Many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open.”—*1 Testimonies*, 143.

“In order to let Jesus into our hearts, we must stop sinning. The only definition for sin that we have in the Bible is that it is the transgression of the law.”—*Signs*, March 3, 1890.

“The Lord cannot purify the soul until the entire being is surrendered to the working of the Holy Spirit.”—*Review*, February 27, 1900.

“We must be emptied of self in order to give room to Jesus, but how many have their hearts so filled with idols that they have no room for the Redeemer of the world. The world holds the hearts of men in captivity. They center their thoughts and affections upon their business, their position, their family. They hold to their opinions and ways, and cherish them as idols in the soul.”—*That I May Know Him*, 165.

“He will not release one atom of His claim; He will not accept half worship while half the heart is given to some idol. All the heart, God requires, all the mind. You are not allowed to have the mind diverted from God and centered upon any other object.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 439.

“Every time you fail to open the door of your heart to Christ, you become more and more unwilling to listen to the voice of Him that speaketh. You diminish your chance of responding to the last appeal of mercy.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 237.

**Abiding in Christ.** Another Scriptural theme is the need to continually abide in Christ.

“Little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”—*1 John 2:28*.

“But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening . . . And He went in to tarry with them.”—*Luke 24:29*.

“Brethren, let every man . . . abide with God.”—*1 Corinthians 7:24*.

This does not mean living in a house next to Christ’s house; *this means living IN Him!*

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except you abide in Me . . .

He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.”—*John 15:4-6*.

But there are conditions to the fulfillment of this experience. *1 John 2:6* and *3:24* defines (rather, intensifies) the meaning of *1 John 3:6*. By moment-by-moment faith in the enabling grace of Christ, it can be done.

“Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not.”—*1 John 3:6*.

“And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in Him.”—*1 John 3:24*.

“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”—*1 John 2:6*.

And how are we to abide IN Him?

“Do you ask, ‘How am I to abide in Christ?’ In the same way as you received Him at first. ‘As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.’ ‘The just shall live by faith.’ You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour . . . By faith you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to give all—your heart, your will, your service—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all—Christ, the fulness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper—to give you power to obey.”—*Steps to Christ*, 69-70.

“Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand.”—*Steps to Christ*, 72.

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.”—*Steps to Christ*, 70.

“After this union is formed, it can be pre-

served only by continual, earnest, painstaking effort. Christ exercises His power to preserve and guard this sacred tie; and the dependent, helpless sinner must act his part with untiring energy, or Satan by his cruel, cunning power will separate him from Christ.

“Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access. He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ.”—*5 Testimonies*, 47.

We are to abide IN Christ. Yet, in His Word, He has symbolized the intense closeness of the relationship we are—right now—to bear toward Him—in even stronger terms.

**Drinking of Jesus.** It is an astounding fact that we are to have so close a relationship to Christ, that we are told to drink of His living substance. The life is not in the nerves, but in the blood (*Leviticus 17:11*). We are to drink the very life of our God!

“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.”—*John 7:37*.

“As the weary traveler seeks the spring in the desert and, finding it, quenches his burning thirst, so will the Christian thirst for and obtain the pure water of life, of which Christ is the fountain.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 19.

“We must each come to the fountain and drink for ourselves. A thousand around us may take of the stream of salvation, but we shall not be refreshed unless we drink of the healing stream ourselves.”—*That I May Know Him*, 172.

“It is our privilege to have a living, abiding Saviour. He is the source of spiritual power implanted within us, and His influence will flow forth in words and actions, refreshing all within the sphere of our influence, begetting in them desires and aspirations for strength and purity, for holiness and peace, and for that joy which brings no sorrow with it. This is the result of an indwelling Saviour.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 390.

**Eating His Flesh.** Not only are we to drink of Christ, we are to eat of Him also. This is a command. We are told that only those who do this will inherit eternal life.

“This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not

die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh.”—*John 6:50-51*.

“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day.”—*John 6:53-54*.

What is Christ telling us here? —He is explaining that we are to have such a close relationship to Him—that He is to be our very food. We are to assimilate His very characteristics into our being!

“For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.”—*John 6:55-57*.

Who is there who dares deny the great truth in this book? It is the will of God that we have the very closest relationship with Him. And it is to be an ongoing, continual communion of one heart and life to another!

“To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes part of our being. So Christ is of no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour. A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life. His love, His grace, must be assimilated.”—*Desire of Ages*, 389.

“‘Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life.’ It is by receiving the life for us poured out on Calvary’s cross, that we can live the life of holiness. And this life we receive by receiving His Word, by doing those things which He has commanded. Thus we become one with Him.”—*Desire of Ages*, 660.

“As we need food to sustain our physical strength, so do we need Christ, the bread from heaven, to sustain spiritual life and impart strength to work the works of God. As the body is continually receiving the nourishment that sustains life and vigor, so the soul must be constantly communing with Christ, submitting to Him and depending wholly upon Him.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 19.

“In the struggle for eternal life, we cannot lean upon one another. The bread of life must be eaten by each one. Individually we must partake of it, that soul, body, and mind may be revived and strengthened by its transforming power.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 385.

“When a soul receives Christ, he receives His righteousness. He lives the life of Christ. As he trains himself to behold Christ, to study His life and practice His virtues, he eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God. When this experience is his, he can declare, with the apostle Paul: ‘I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’”—*Review, November 23, 1897*.

“All who received Him would partake of His nature, and be conformed to His character. This involved the relinquishment of their cherished ambitions. It required the complete surrender of themselves to Jesus. They were called to become self-sacrificing, meek and lowly in heart. They must walk in the narrow path traveled by the Man of Calvary, if they would share in the gift of life and the glory of heaven.”—*Desire of Ages*, 391.

“The followers of Christ must be partakers of His experience. They must assimilate the Word of God. They must be changed into its likeness by the power of Christ and reflect the divine attributes. They must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or there is no life in them. The spirit and work of Christ must become the spirit and work of His disciples.”—*5 Testimonies*, 576.

### **Bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh.**

God’s plan is that, in figure, we are to be actually part of Him! *Can there be any closer symbol than this!* How much evidence do we need to show the closeness we are to have with God in this life!

“For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.”—*Ephesians 5:30 (Genesis 2:23)*.

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ.”—*Romans 12:5*.

“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?”—*1 Corinthians 6:15*.

“Ye are the body of Christ.”—*1 Corinthians 12:27*.

We are to be “one flesh” with Him!

“They two shall be one flesh . . . I speak concerning Christ and the church.”—*Ephesians 5:31-32*.

The above passage is frequently referred to as speaking about how we are to be close to the church. Please now; it is primarily talking about how God’s people are to be close to Him!

## Others Who Have Gone before

It is an intriguing—and very significant—fact that several times in Scripture we are told about individuals who loved the Lord, but who then entered upon a deeper relationship with Him. It is possible to love Him—at a little distance,—and later discover that we can be in Him—close up!

Let us briefly consider the lives of eleven of God’s children in past ages.

### **1 - ENOCH**

We are all well-acquainted with the experience of Enoch. Although he loved the Lord,—yet, when he was 65, he entered upon an even deeper experience. According to the description, he began doing what we are talking about in this book.

“Of Enoch it is written that he lived sixty-five years, and began a son. After that he walked with God three hundred years. During these earlier years Enoch had loved and feared God and had kept His commandments . . . He relied on the Redeemer to come.

“But after the birth of his first son, Enoch reached a higher experience; he was drawn into a closer relationship with God. He realized more fully his own obligations and responsibility as a son of God. And as he saw the child’s love for its father, its simple trust in his protection; as he felt the deep, yearning tenderness of his own heart for that first-born son, he learned a precious lesson of the wonderful love of God to men in the gift of His Son, and the confidence which the children of God may repose in their heavenly Father.

“The infinite, unfathomable love of God through Christ became the subject of his meditations day and night; and with all the fervor of his soul he sought to reveal that love to the people among whom he dwelt.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 84.

Seeing his love for his son, and the son’s love

for him, Enoch recognized that he could have this kind of relationship with God. Throughout the previous decades, he loved and served God,—but now he chose to begin a closer relationship with Him.

There is no mystery here. We are told that there are Enochs living today (*COL 332*). You can be one. It is easy to indulge the Catholic saint fallacy, that there are only a few holy people, and the rest of us can only admire them—while God selected only a few “saints” to be close to Him. That is papal error. Satan does not want mankind to realize what they can have, and become, in God.

Diamonds are unusual because they are so rare. Why does clean, godly living have to be as rare as diamonds? We all can walk with God as did Enoch. To learn more about the experience of Enoch, thoughtfully read *Patriarchs and Prophets, 84-87*. He lived in a corrupt age (*2T 122*) and he had no Bible to help him, as we do.

“While engaged in our daily work, we should lift the soul to heaven in prayer. These silent petitions rise like incense before the throne of grace; and the enemy is baffled . . . It was thus that Enoch walked with God. And God was with him, a present help in every time of need.”—*Gospel Workers, 254*.

People, anxious to remain in their indifferent self-centeredness, will declare that it is impossible to live such a clean, dedicated life. But mind them not. You want a higher, happier way of life—and therefore, God will let you have it. Living like Enoch is not a sacrifice. It is a sweet, peaceful walk with God.

“Enoch kept the Lord ever before him, and the Inspired Word says that he ‘walked with God.’ He made Christ his constant companion. He was in the world, and performed his duties in the world; but he was ever under the influence of Jesus. He reflected Christ’s character, exhibiting the same qualities of goodness, mercy, tender compassion, sympathy, forbearance, meekness, humility, and love. His association with Christ day by day transformed him into the image of Him with whom he was so intimately connected.

“Day by day he was growing away from his own way into Christ’s way, the heavenly, the divine, in his thoughts and feelings. He was constantly inquiring, Is this the way of the Lord? His was a constant growth, and he had fellowship with the Father and the Son. This is genuine sanctification.”—*6 Bible Commentary, 1098*.

“Did he [Enoch] see God by his side? Only by faith. He knew that the Lord was there, and he adhered steadfastly to the principles of truth. We, too, are to walk with God. When we do this, our faces will be lighted up by the brightness of His presence, and when we meet one another, we shall speak of His power, saying, Praise God. Good is the Lord, and good is the Word of the Lord!”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1087*.

God’s Word says this:

“Enoch . . . was translated to heaven without seeing death. And those who will be translated at the close of time, will be those who commune with God on earth.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1087*.

Those who will be translated will be the ones serious about living with God. Having said that, however, beware of imagining that, if you enter more fully upon this way of life, you will be rising to some kind of “holiness”—above others. We are talking about becoming a little child with God. A little child has no pride of accomplishment in his heart. Enoch had none.

“To be like God will be the one desire of the soul. This is the desire that filled Enoch’s heart . . . He studied the character of God to a purpose. He did not mark out his own course, or set up his own will, as if he thought himself fully qualified to manage matters. He strove to conform himself to the divine likeness.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1087*.

Enoch trusted in his heavenly Father to take care of him; and, in this child-parent relationship, Enoch was consistent.

“While trusting in your heavenly Father for the help you need, He will not leave you. God has a heaven full of blessings that He wants to bestow on those who are earnestly seeking for that help which the Lord alone can give. It was in looking in faith to Jesus, in asking of Him, in believing that every word spoken would be verified, that Enoch walked with God. He kept close by the side of God, obeying His every word . . . His was a wonderful life of oneness. Christ was his Companion. He was in intimate fellowship with God.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1087*.

## 2 - JACOB

Jacob gained the victory through surrender to God.

“Jacob was in fear and distress while he sought in his own strength to obtain the victory. He mistook the divine Visitor for an enemy, and contended with Him while he had any strength left. But when he cast himself upon

the mercy of God, he found that instead of being in the hands of an enemy, he was encircled in the arms of infinite love.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1095-1096.*

“All penitent and broken, he clung to the Angel; “he wept, and made supplication” (*Hosea 12:4*), pleading for a blessing. He must have the assurance that his sin was pardoned. Physical pain was not sufficient to divert his mind from this object. His determination grew stronger, his faith more earnest and persevering, until the very last. The angel tried to release Himself; He urged, “Let Me go, for the day breaketh”; but Jacob answered, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” Had this been a boastful, presumptuous confidence, Jacob would have been instantly destroyed; but his was the assurance of one who confesses his own unworthiness, yet trusts the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God.

“Jacob ‘had power over the Angel, and prevailed.’ *Hosea 12:4.* Through humiliation, repentance, and self-surrender, this sinful, erring mortal prevailed with the Majesty of heaven. He had fastened his trembling grasp upon the promises of God, and the heart of Infinite Love could not turn away the sinner’s plea.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 197.*

“The crisis in his life was past. Doubt, perplexity, and remorse had embittered his existence, but now all was changed; and sweet was the peace of reconciliation with God. Jacob no longer feared to meet his brother.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 198.*

Perhaps you have something you need to clean up in your life. Turn to God; He can forgive and enable you to start new—on this better way of life. If you want to return; if you want the better life with Him—you can return, you can have the closer walk!

“In his night of anguish beside the Jabbok, when destruction seemed just before him, Jacob had been taught how vain is the help of man, how groundless is all trust in human power. He saw that his only help must come from Him against whom he had so grievously sinned. Helpless and unworthy, he pleaded God’s promise of mercy to the repentant sinner. That promise was his assurance that God would pardon and accept him. Sooner might heaven and earth pass than that word could fail; and it was this that sustained him through that fearful conflict.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 198-201.*

### 3 - JOSEPH

Then there is Joseph. The Bible says he was

different than his brothers. He was separate in that he did not partake of their sins.

“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob . . . Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven . . .

“The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.”—*Genesis 49:22-26.*

What enabled Joseph to be so different? He wanted a close walk with God, and he found it. As a result, he was strengthened to resist all the temptations encountered in a heathen land.

“Then his thoughts turned to his father’s God. In his childhood he had been taught to love and fear Him . . . Now all these precious lessons came vividly before him. Joseph believed that the God of his fathers would be his God. He then and there gave himself fully to the Lord, and he prayed that the Keeper of Israel would be with him in the land of his exile.

“His soul thrilled with the high resolve to prove himself true to God,—under all circumstances to act as became a subject of the King of heaven. He would serve the Lord with undivided heart; he would meet the trials of his lot with fortitude and perform every duty with fidelity. One day’s experience had been the turning point in Joseph’s life.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 213-214.*

So it can be in your life. Make the decision and stick to it! As you become God’s little child, it can be done.

### 4 - MOSES

Moses lived a holy life. The word, “holy,” means dedicated. As we draw close to our kind Father in utmost surrender to His will,—we also can live such a clean, godly, dedicated life.

“Amidst the solemn majesty of the mountain solitudes, Moses was alone with God. Everywhere the Creator’s name was written. Moses seemed to stand in His presence, and to be overshadowed by His power. Here his self-sufficiency was swept away. In the presence of the Infinite One he realized how weak, how inefficient, how short-sighted, is man.

"Here Moses gained that which went with him throughout the years of his toilsome and care-burdened life,—a sense of the personal presence of the Divine One . . . When misunderstood and misrepresented, when called to bear reproach and insult, to face danger and death, he was able to endure 'as seeing Him who is invisible.'

"Moses did not merely think of God, he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him. Never did he lose sight of His face.

"To Moses faith was no guesswork; it was a reality. He believed that God ruled his life in particular; and in all its details he acknowledged Him. For strength to withstand every temptation, he trusted in Him.

"The great work assigned him he desired to make in the highest degree successful, and he placed his whole dependence upon divine power. He felt his need of help, asked for it, by faith grasped it, and in the assurance of sustaining strength went forward."—*Education*, 63-64.

## 5 - SOLOMON

Solomon was said to be wisest man. But he did not receive it until he told God he was a little child, and wanted God to guide His life. Then he received wisdom to carry on his duties.

Yet it was not inherent wisdom which he received. He only had it as long as he remained God's little child. Later, when he separated from his kind Father, his wisdom evaporated away—and Solomon's actions became extremely self-serving and foolish.

It was when he genuinely acknowledged that he was but a little child—God's little child—that Solomon became more fully linked with the Father of all wisdom.

"The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, 'Ask what I shall give thee.' In his answer the young and inexperienced ruler gave utterance to his feelings of helplessness and his desire for aid . . . 'I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in.'"—*Prophets and Kings*, 28.

Solomon was granted his request; but he only received the requested help as long as he remained a little child, in submission to His Creator.

"Solomon was never so rich or so wise or so truly great as when he confessed, 'I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in' . . .

"The higher a position a man occupies, the

greater the responsibility that he has to bear, the wider will be the influence that he exerts and the greater his need of dependence on God. Ever should he remember that with the call to work comes the call to walk circumspectly before his fellow men. He is to stand before God in the attitude of a learner. Position does not give holiness of character. It is by honoring God and obeying His commands that a man is made truly great."—*Prophets and Kings*, 30-31.

## 6 - ELIJAH

Elijah is generally recognized as an important worker for God. Yet his call to a special work dates back to lengthy pleadings with the Lord for his apostate people.

"As Elijah saw Israel going deeper and deeper into idolatry, his soul was distressed and his indignation aroused . . . Unbelief was fast separating the chosen nation from the Source of their strength. Viewing this apostasy from his mountain retreat, Elijah was overwhelmed with sorrow. In anguish of soul he besought God to arrest the once-favored people in their wicked course, to visit them with judgments, if need be, that they might be led to see in its true light their departure from Heaven."—*Prophets and Kings*, 119-120.

"It was only by the exercise of strong faith in the unfailing power of God's Word that Elijah delivered his message. Had he not possessed implicit confidence in the One whom he served, he would never have appeared before Ahab."—*Prophets and Kings*, 121.

Elijah was experienced at drawing close to God. He knew how to get answers.

"The prophet did not give up in discouragement. He kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that he prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came."—*2 Bible Commentary*, 1035.

## 7 - DANIEL

As with others who sought the closer walk, Daniel found that he could fully lean upon God to encourage and care for him.

"The history of Daniel, if all was written,

would open chapters before you that would show you the temptations he had to meet, of ridicule, envy, and hatred; but he learned to master difficulties. He did not trust in his own strength; he laid his whole soul and all his difficulties open to his heavenly Father, and he believed God heard him, and he was comforted and blessed. He rose superior to ridicule; and so will everyone who is an overcomer. Daniel acquired a serene and cheerful state of mind, because he believed God was his friend and helper.”—*4 Bible Commentary, 1168.*

### 8 - JOHN THE BAPTIST

As John the Baptist took time to observe the natural world and study deeply in the Scriptures—he was led into a deep closeness with His heavenly Father.

“He studied the revelations of God in nature. Under the guiding of the divine Spirit, he studied the scrolls of the prophets. By day and by night, Christ was his study, his meditation, until mind and heart and soul were filled with the glorious vision.

“He looked upon the King in His beauty, and self was lost sight of. He beheld the majesty of holiness and knew himself to be inefficient and unworthy. It was God’s message that he was to declare. It was in God’s power and His righteousness that he was to stand. He was ready to go forth as Heaven’s messenger, unawed by the human, because he had looked upon the divine.”—*8 Testimonies, 331-332.*

This close walk enabled John to more fully detect the approach of Satan, and to resist him.

“In solitude, by meditation and prayer, he sought to gird up his soul for the lifework before him . . . So far as possible, he closed every avenue by which Satan could enter, yet he was still assailed by the tempter. But his spiritual perceptions were clear; he had developed strength and decision of character, and through the aid of the Holy Spirit he was able to detect Satan’s approaches, and to resist his power.”—*Desire of Ages, 102.*

“John had by nature the faults and weaknesses common to humanity, but the touch of divine love had transformed him. He dwelt in an atmosphere uncontaminated with selfishness and ambition, and far above the miasma of jealousy.”—*Desire of Ages, 179.*

### 9 - JOHN

The following paragraph reveals that some followers of Christ press into a closer relation-

ship with Him than do other Christians. Each may live in a state of obedience by faith in Christ; yet some choose that closer walk.

“These disciples had been for some time associated with Jesus in active labor. John and James, Andrew and Peter, with Philip, Nathanael, and Matthew, had been more closely connected with Him than the others, and had witnessed more of His miracles.

“Peter, James, and John stood in still nearer relationship to Him. They were almost constantly with Him, witnessing His miracles, and hearing His words.

“John pressed into still closer intimacy with Jesus, so that he is distinguished as the one whom Jesus loved. The Saviour loved them all, but John’s was the most receptive spirit. He was younger than the others, and with more of the child’s confiding trust he opened his heart to Jesus. Thus he came more into sympathy with Christ, and through him the Saviour’s deepest spiritual teaching was communicated to His people.”—*Desire of Ages, 292.*

### 10 - MARTIN LUTHER

*Great Controversy, 156-157*, contains an account of Luther’s prayer life. It is quite obvious that, over the years, he had learned to press very close into the presence of His Lord and—when the crisis came—he knew how to pray through to victory.

### 11 - ELLEN WHITE

Numerous examples could be cited of the childlike relation she bore to her kind, heavenly Father. Individuals who knew her at Elmshaven testified of this remarkable childlike quality of hers, combined with a firm stand, when needed, for the right.

Frequently, she sorrowed over the worldliness she encountered in the world and among her brethren. *1 Testimonies, 583-584*, is a dramatic example of how God was teaching her to find her strength in solely placing all her trust in Him. Read it. The entire chapter is powerful, especially *pages 577-585.*

Another remarkable illustration of how we can rely on God alone, to carry us through to the end, is found in the familiar journey along the narrow way (*2 Testimonies, 594-597*).

What can we give to Jesus That He would prize the most,  
That would, when known in heav'n, Rejoice the angel host?

Not gold no precious jewels Could such an off'ring be;  
These were a gift unworthy Of such a Friend as He.

We may not govern riches, Our talents may be few;  
Yet surely there is something That we for Him may do.

He owns the lovely flowers, The earth and heav'n above;  
He asks us not for riches, He only wants our love.

We know that He will take us, For He has told us so;  
He'll purify and cleanse us, And wash us white as snow.

He'll always dwell within us, And make us sweet and mild,  
Just like the gentle Saviour, The sinless, holy Child.

We'll give our hearts to Jesus; No gift that we could bring  
Would be a better present For Christ, the children's King.

## — Part Two —

## Inspired Comments

## Spirit of Prophecy: Submitting the Will to God

The information in this chapter can change your life. Read it slowly and thoughtfully. Here are solid answers for one seeking a consistent life in God.

We are told that we must either be under the control of one or the other of the two great powers. If we do not yield our lives to God, Satan will inevitably take control. This is a life and death issue.

“To make God’s grace our own, we must act our part. The Lord does not propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. Our souls are to be aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works in us, that we may work out our own salvation.”—*Messages to Young People*, 147.

“Man is allotted a part in this great struggle for everlasting life; he must respond to the working of the Holy Spirit. It will require a struggle to break through the powers of darkness, but the Spirit that works in him can and will accomplish this. But man is no passive instrument to be saved in indolence. He is called upon to strain every muscle in the struggle for immortality, yet it is God that supplies the efficiency.”—*Our High Calling*, 91.

“Man can accomplish nothing without God, and God arranged His plans so as to accomplish nothing in the restoration of the human race without the cooperation of the human with the divine.

“The part man is required to sustain is im-

measurably small, yet in the plan of God it is just that part that is needed to make the work a success.”—*Amazing Grace*, 319.

“The work of the Holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker of God; and the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.

“He who looks to Christ in simple, childlike Faith, is made a partaker of the divine nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. When led by the Spirit of God, the Christian may know that he is made complete in Him who is the head of all things.”—*Review*, November 29, 1892.

“Man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected . . . The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 96-97.

“Our finite will must be brought into submission to the will of the Infinite; the human will must be blended with the divine. This will bring the Holy Spirit to our aid.”—*Messages to Young People*, 55.

“Man’s working, as brought out in the text [*Philippians 2:12-13*], is not an independent work he performs without God. His whole dependence is upon the power and grace of the Divine Worker. Many miss the mark here, and claim that man must work his own individual self, free from divine power. This is not in accordance with the text. Another argues that man is free from all obligation, because God does it all, both the willing and the doing. The text means that the salvation of the human soul requires the will power . . . And it is the very hardest, sternest conflict which comes with the purpose and hour of great resolve and decision of the human to incline the will and way to God’s will and God’s way.”—*Our High Calling*, 91.

“As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to

be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 333.

“Men may have a power to resist evil—a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 409.

“The reason why God can do so little for us is that we forget that living virtue in the Holy Spirit is to combine with the human agent.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 30.

“Let no one think he can overcome without the help of God. You must have the energy, the strength, the power, of an inner life developed within you.”—*Amazing Grace*, 111.

“It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the spirit of Christ, and even your thoughts will be subject to Him.

“You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire; but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you. But your will must cooperate with God’s will.”—*5 Testimonies*, 514.

“If we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thought and aims, so blend our thoughts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses.”—*Desire of Ages*, 668.

“‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.’ What does this mean? It means that every day you are to distrust your own human efforts and wisdom. You are to fear to speak at random, fear to follow your own impulses, fear that pride of heart and love of the world and the lust of the flesh shall exclude the precious grace the Lord Jesus is longing to bestow upon you.”—*Our High Calling*, 91.

“God does not bid you fear that He will fail to fulfill His promises, that His patience will weary, or His compassion be found wanting. Fear lest your will shall not be held in subjection to Christ’s will, lest your hereditary and cultivated traits of character shall control your life. ‘It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.’ Fear lest self

shall interpose between your soul and the great Master Worker. Fear lest self-will shall mar the high purpose that through you God desires to accomplish. Fear to trust to your own strength, fear to withdraw your hand from the hand of Christ and attempt to walk life’s pathway without His abiding presence.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 161.

“The very first step in the path to live is to keep the mind stayed on God, to have His fear continually before the eyes. A single departure from moral integrity blunts the conscience, and opens the door to the next temptation.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 111.

“We have no reason to fear while looking to Jesus, no reason to doubt but that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him; but we may constantly fear lest our old nature will again obtain the supremacy, that the enemy shall devise some snare whereby we shall again become his captives. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in His sphere. To the extent of our ability, we are to make manifest the truth and love and excellence of the divine character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 336-337.

“There is need of fear and trembling, watchfulness and prayer, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. If the light that God has given us is held in indifference, if it is not appreciated, it will not increase, but it will become darkness.

“Our only safety is in continually looking to Jesus. By living faith we must appropriate the precious promises; for every promise and command, necessary for our salvation, must become a part of us, that we may become one with Christ.”—*Review*, September 3, 1889.

## Spirit of Prophecy: The Possibilities Held Out before Us

Reading the following passages, it should come as no surprise that Ellen White would softly

declare, "Glory, glory," each time she was taken off in vision. May the bright light of God's wondrous mercy and grace flood our minds—and help us better see our high calling. The close walk which our heavenly Father offers us is worth all the sacrifice required to obtain it! Oh, my friend, we must be there, we must be there!

"The great God, whose glory shines from the heavens, and whose divine hand upholds millions of worlds, is our Father. We have only to love Him, trust in Him, as little children in faith and confidence, and He will accept us as His sons and daughters, and we shall be heirs to all the inexpressible glory of the eternal world. All the meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way. If we will walk in obedience to His will, learn cheerfully and diligently the lessons of His providence, by and by He will say: Child, come home to the heavenly mansions I have prepared for you."—*4 Testimonies*, 653.

"Without the cross, man could have no connection with the Father. On it hangs our every hope. In view of it the Christian may advance with the steps of a conqueror; for from it streams the light of the Saviour's love. When the sinner reaches the cross, and looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; and the words of pardon are spoken: Live, O ye guilty sinners, live. Your repentance is accepted; for I have found a ransom."—*5 Bible Commentary*, 1133.

"The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory. The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to the divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!"—*7 Bible Commentary*, 959.

"Experimental religion is what is needed now. 'Taste and see that the Lord is good.' Some,—yes, a large number—have a theoretical knowledge of religious truth, but have never felt the renewing power of divine grace upon their own hearts."—*5 Testimonies*, 221.

"If all were willing to receive, all would become filled with His Spirit . . . There is nothing

that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 419.

"Are we willing to pay the price for eternal life? Are we ready to sit down and count the cost, whether heaven is worth such a sacrifice as to die to self and let our will be bent and fashioned into perfect conformity with the will of God? Until this shall be, the transforming grace of God will not be experienced by us.

"Just as soon as we present our emptied nature to the Lord Jesus and His cause, He will supply the vacuum by His Holy Spirit. We can then believe He will give us of His fulness."—*In Heavenly Places*, 155.

"As the Son of God lived by faith in the Father, so are we to live by faith in Christ. So fully was Jesus surrendered to the will of God that the Father alone appeared in His life. Although tempted in all points like as we are, He stood before the world untainted by the evil that surrounded Him. Thus we also are to overcome as Christ overcame."—*Desire of Ages*, 389.

"A divine element combines with the human when the soul reaches out after God and the longing heart can say, 'My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him' (*Psalms* 62:5)."—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 19.

"When the sinner accepts Christ and lives in Him, Jesus takes his sins and weaknesses and then grafts the repentant soul into Himself, so that he sustains the relation to Christ that the branch does to the vine. We have nothing, we are nothing, unless we receive virtue from Jesus Christ."—*That I May Know Him*, 109.

"He who looks to Christ in simple, childlike faith, is made a partaker of the divine nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. When led by the Spirit of God, the Christian may know that he is made complete in Him who is the head of all things."—*Review*, November 29, 1892.

"Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory,

and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 397.

“The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the Word of God. This Word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature, and re-creates the soul in the image of God.”—*Education*, 126.

“We have little idea of the strength that would be ours if we would connect with the Source of all strength.”—*Messages to Young People*, 105.

“When this intimacy of connection and communion is formed, our sins are laid upon Christ, His righteousness is imputed to us. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”—*5 Testimonies*, 229.

“A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last, and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being.”—*5 Testimonies*, 231.

“Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the true Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 288.

“Connected with Christ, human nature becomes true and pure. Christ supplies the efficiency, and man becomes a power for good.”—*In Heavenly Places*, 179.

“The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.”—*Desire of Ages*, 676.

“In a thousand ways the inward principles will be manifest. Christ abiding in the soul is as a well that never runs dry.”—*Review and Herald*, January 15, 1895.

“If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feeling, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God’s law.”—*Acts of The Apostles*, 563.

“We are to keep close to the Source of our strength day by day, and when the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard for us against the enemy. The promise of God is sure, that strength shall be proportioned to our day.”—*Our High Calling*, 125.

“We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have His presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which He has Himself laid down.”—*Messages to Young People*, 115.

“The Lord Jesus loves His people, and when they put their trust in Him, depending wholly upon Him, He strengthens them. He will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself.”—*That I May Know Him*, 78.

“In the Lord we have righteousness and strength. Lean upon Him; and through His power you may quench all the fiery darts of the adversary and come off more than conqueror.”—*4 Testimonies*, 213-214.

“As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 333.

“Men may have a power to resist evil—a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 409.

“Those who believe in Christ derive their motive power and the texture of their characters from Him in whom they believe.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 299.

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“We are living in days of peril. Christ alone can help us and give us the victory. Christ must be all in all to us; He must dwell in the heart; His life must circulate through us, as the blood circulates through the veins. His Spirit must be a vitalizing power that will cause us to influence others to become Christlike and holy.”—*Our High Calling*, 60.

“His power awaits the demand of those who would overcome.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 380.

“All who consecrate body, soul, and spirit to God’s service will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind.”—*6 Testimonies*, 306.

“There is need of constant watchfulness, and

of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there is an abiding, peaceful trust. Every burden is light; for the yoke which Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. This is walking in the light as Christ is in the light.”—*1 Selected Messages, 353-354.*

“Man is, through faith, to be a partaker in the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset.”—*Our High Calling, 48.*

“We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.”—*1 Testimonies, 144.*

“Talk and act as if your faith was invincible.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 147.*

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“There is a great battle to be fought . . . but you are not to do the main fighting here. As God’s agents you are to yield yourselves to Him, that He may plan and direct and fight the battle for you, with your cooperation . . . He knows just how to meet every emergency, and how to guide you through every path of danger. Then why not trust Him? Why not commit the keeping of your soul unto God, as unto a faithful Creator?”—*2 Bible Commentary, 994-995.*

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“It is not our efforts that bring victory; it is seeing God behind the promise, and believing and trusting Him. Grasp by faith the hand of

infinite power. The Lord is faithful who has promised.”—*Review and Herald, December 29, 1910.*

“If we will trust Him, and commit our ways to Him, He will direct our steps in the very path that will result in our obtaining the victory over every evil passion, and every trait of character that is unlike the character of our divine Pattern.”—*Our High Calling, 316.*

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“Let no one despair of gaining the victory. Victory is sure when self is surrendered to God.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1095.*

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“Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 119.*

“In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. ‘He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.’ Isaiah 40:29.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 157.*

“The soul that has given himself to Christ is more precious in His sight than the whole world. The Saviour would have passed through the agony of Calvary that one might be saved in His kingdom. He will never abandon one for whom He has died. Unless His followers choose to leave Him, He will hold them fast.”—*Desire of Ages, 483.*

“If we are of one mind with God, our will will be swallowed up in God’s will and we shall follow wherever God leads the way. As a loving child places his hand in that of his father, and walks with him in perfect trust whether it is dark or bright, so the sons and daughters of God are to walk with Jesus through joy or sorrow.”—*That I May Know Him, 250.*

“If we take Christ for our Guide, He will lead us safely along the narrow way. The road may be rough and thorny; the ascent may be steep and dangerous; there may be pitfalls upon the right hand and upon the left; we may have to

endure toil in our journey; when weary, when longing for rest, we may have to toil on; when faint, we may have to fight; when discouraged, we may be called upon to hope; but with Christ as our Guide, we shall not lose the path to immortal life, we shall not fail to reach the desired haven at last.

“Christ Himself has trod the rough pathway before us, and has smoothed the path for our feet. The narrow path of holiness, the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, is illuminated by Him who is the Light of the world. As we follow in His steps, His light will shine upon us; and as we reflect the light borrowed from the glory of Christ, the path will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.”—*That I May Know Him*, 253.

“In order to walk without fear, you must know that your hand is firmly held by the hand of Christ. You must not for a moment think there is no danger for you. The wisest make mistakes. The strongest sometimes falter.”—*2 Selected Messages*, 169.

“If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 173.

“The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your Helper.”—*Desire of Ages*, 490-493.

“Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand.”—*Steps to Christ*, 72.

“Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His Word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.”—*Ministry of Healing*, 182.

“When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart.

A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.”—*Desire of Ages*, 324.

“Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind.”—*My Life Today*, 316.

“Look constantly to Jesus. Take all your troubles to Him. He will never misunderstand you. He is the refuge of His people. Under the shadow of His protection they can pass unharmed. Believe in Him and trust in Him. He will not give you up to the spoiler. Flee to the stronghold, and learn that the power of Christ to strengthen and to help passes all comprehension. Open the door of the heart, and let Jesus enter, to fill your life with His peace, His grace, His joy.”—*Review and Herald*, January 5, 1911.

“While Satan is constantly devising evil, the Lord our God overrules all, so that it will not harm His obedient, trusting children. The same power that controls the boisterous waves of the ocean can hold in check all the power of rebellion and of crime. God says to one as to the other, ‘Thus far shalt thou go.’ ”—*3 Bible Commentary*, 1141.

“While they were under the divine protection, no people or nation, though aided by all the power of Satan, should be able to prevail against them.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 449.

“Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 394.

“Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 155.

“He is watching over you, and if you are willing to be guided by Him, He will throw around you influences for good that will enable you to accomplish all His will for you.”—*Messages to Young People*, 17.

“He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him an entrance into the kingdom of God.”—*Review and Herald*, March 10, 1904.

“Our duty, our safety, our happiness and usefulness, and our salvation call upon us each to

use the greatest diligence to secure the grace of Christ, to be so closely connected with God that we may discern spiritual things, and not be ignorant of Satan's devices."—*In Heavenly Places*, 184.

"We should sanctify ourselves as a people and seek strength from God to meet the demands of this time. When iniquity prevails in the world, God's people should seek to be more closely connected with heaven."—*4 Testimonies*, 583.

"When we are securely anchored in Christ, we have a power that no human being can take from us. Why is this?—Because we are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—*9 Testimonies*, 187.

"Jesus will be the helper of all who put their trust in Him. Those who are connected with Christ have happiness at their command. They follow the path where their Saviour leads, for His sake crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. They have built their hopes on Christ, and the storms of earth are powerless to sweep them from the sure foundation."—*Messages to Young People*, 415.

"Never can we safely put confidence in self or feel, this side of heaven, that we are secure against temptation. Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or feel they are saved. This is misleading. Every one should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 155.

"When man is in fellowship with God, that unswerving purpose which preserved Joseph and Daniel amidst the corruption of heathen courts will make his a life of unsullied purity."—*Ministry of Healing*, 136.

"God has a special work for everyone to do, and each one of us may do well the work which God has assigned him. The only thing we have to fear on our part is that we shall not keep our eyes continually fixed upon Jesus, that we shall not have an eye single to the glory of God, so that if we were called to lay down our armor and sleep in death we might not be ready to give an account of our trust."—*2 Selected Messages*, 273.

"Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly, in God. We are His little children, and thus He deals with us. When we draw near to Him, He mercifully preserves us from the assaults of the enemy. Never will He betray one who trusts in Him as a child trusts in its parents. He sees the humble, trusting souls drawing near to Him,

and in pity and love He draws near to them, and lifts up for them a standard against the enemy."—*Our High Calling*, 85.

"Everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' Psalm 46:10."—*Desire of Ages*, 363.

"God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with Him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him who has given His life a ransom for me? Thus may we walk with God, as did Enoch of old; and ours may be the testimony which he received, that he pleased God."—*Review and Herald*, May 30, 1882.

"If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' "—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 173.

"His children must follow where He has led the way; at whatever sacrifice of ease or selfish indulgence, at whatever cost of labor or suffering, they must maintain a constant battle with self."—*Gospel Workers*, 135.

"Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His Word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend.

"If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the city of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy."—*Ministry of Healing*, 248-249.

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing

you.”—*Steps to Christ*, 64-65.

“None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.

“So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall be seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle’s confession our own: ‘I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing,’ ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 561.

“Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.”—*Desire of Ages*, 311.

“Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell on the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach His divine image, the more clearly they will discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.”—*Sanctified Life*, 7.

## Spirit of Prophecy: More Sweet Promises

Here are additional promises which our kind Father has given us. Each one is a little present wrapped in a beautiful box. Open each one—and use it for His glory.

“We have little idea of the strength that would be ours if we would connect with the Source of all strength.”—*Messages to Young People*, 105.

“Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 397.

“When this intimacy of connection and communion is formed, our sins are laid upon Christ, His righteousness is imputed to us. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”—*5 Testimonies*, 229.

“A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last, and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being.”—*5 Testimonies*, 231.

“Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the true Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 288.

“Connected with Christ, human nature becomes true and pure. Christ supplies the efficiency, and man becomes a power for good.”—*In Heavenly Places*, 179.

“The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to

every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.”—*Desire of Ages*, 676.

“In a thousand ways the inward principles will be manifest. Christ abiding in the soul is as a well that never runs dry.”—*Review and Herald*, January 15, 1895.

“If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God’s law.”—*Acts of The Apostles*, 563.

“We are to keep close to the Source of our strength day by day, and when the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard for us against the enemy. The promise of God is sure, that strength shall be proportioned to our day.”—*Our High Calling*, 125.

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“While they were under the divine protection, no people or nation, though aided by all the power of Satan, should be able to prevail against them.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 449.

“Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all

heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 394.

“Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 155.

“He is watching over you, and if you are willing to be guided by Him, He will throw around you influences for good that will enable you to accomplish all His will for you.”—*Messages to Young People*, 17.

“He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him an entrance into the kingdom of God.”—*Review and Herald*, March 10, 1904.

“Our duty, our safety, our happiness and usefulness, and our salvation call upon us each to use the greatest diligence to secure the grace of Christ, to be so closely connected with God that we may discern spiritual things, and not be ignorant of Satan’s devices.”—*In Heavenly Places*, 184.

“We should sanctify ourselves as a people and seek strength from God to meet the demands of this time. When iniquity prevails in the world, God’s people should seek to be more closely connected with heaven.”—*4 Testimonies*, 583.

“When we are securely anchored in Christ, we have a power that no human being can take from us. Why is this?—Because we are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”—*9 Testimonies*, 187.

“Jesus will be the helper of all who put their trust in Him. Those who are connected with Christ have happiness at their command. They follow the path where their Saviour leads, for His sake crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. They have built their hopes on Christ, and the storms of earth are powerless to sweep them from the sure foundation.”—*Messages to Young People*, 415.

“Never can we safely put confidence in self or feel, this side of heaven, that we are secure against temptation. Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or feel they are saved. This is misleading. Every one should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 155.

“When man is in fellowship with God, that unswerving purpose which preserved Joseph and Daniel amidst the corruption of heathen courts will make his a life of unsullied purity.”—

*Ministry of Healing, 136.*

“God has a special work for everyone to do, and each one of us may do well the work which God has assigned him. The only thing we have to fear on our part is that we shall not keep our eyes continually fixed upon Jesus, that we shall not have an eye single to the glory of God, so that if we were called to lay down our armor and sleep in death we might not be ready to give an account of our trust.”—*2 Selected Messages, 273.*

“Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly, in God. We are His little children, and thus He deals with us. When we draw near to Him, He mercifully preserves us from the assaults of the enemy. Never will He betray one who trusts in Him as a child trusts in its parents. He sees the humble, trusting souls drawing near to Him, and in pity and love He draws near to them, and lifts up for them a standard against the enemy.”—*Our High Calling, 85.*

“Everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ Psalm 46:10.”—*Desire of Ages, 363.*

“God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with Him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him who has given His life a ransom for me? Thus may we walk with God, as did Enoch of old; and ours may be the testimony which he received, that he pleased God.”—*Review and Herald, May 30, 1882.*

“If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.’”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 173.*

“His children must follow where He has led the way; at whatever sacrifice of ease or selfish indulgence, at whatever cost of labor or suffering, they must maintain a constant battle with self.”—*Gospel Workers, 135.*

“Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His Word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend.

“If in our ignorance we make missteps, the

Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the city of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy.”—*Ministry of Healing, 249.*

“The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan’s delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you.”—*Steps to Christ, 64.*

“None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.

“So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heart-breaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle’s confession our own: ‘I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.’ ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14.”—*Acts of the Apostles, 561.*

“Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.”—*Desire of Ages, 311.*

“Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell

on the character of Christ, the nearer they approach His divine image, the more clearly they will discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.”—*Sanctified Life*, 7.

## Bible: Promises for Those Who Want to Draw Closer

The passages quoted here can refer to various degrees of closeness to God. But, obviously, a deeper closeness and dependence upon God is recommended. A thoughtful reading of these passages will bring courage as you seek a closer walk with your kind Father.

### 1 - PRESSING IN

Come to God, and press in close. This is what He wants for His earthly children.

“Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face continually.”—*1 Chronicles 16:11*.

“If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”—*2 Chronicles 7:14*.

“When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.”—*Psalms 27:8*.

“Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.”—*Psalms 37:4-5*.

“When I cry unto Thee, then shall mine enemies turn back. This I know, for God is for me.”—*Psalms 56:9*.

“He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with Him in trouble. I will deliver him, and honour him.”—*Psalms 91:15*.

“He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.”—*Psalms 102:17*.

“Glory ye in His holy name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and His strength; seek His face evermore.”—

*Psalms 105:3-4*.

“I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.”—*Psalms 116:1-2*.

“The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them.”—*Psalms 145:18-19*.

“Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding . . . then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.”—*Proverbs 2:3, 5*.

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”—*Proverbs 3:6*.

“The prayer of the upright is His delight.”—*Proverbs 15:8*.

“They shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and He shall send them a Saviour, and a Great One, and He shall deliver them.”—*Isaiah 19:20*.

“Thou shalt weep no more. He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry. When He shall hear it, He will answer thee.”—*Isaiah 30:19*.

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.”—*Isaiah 55:6*.

“Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am.”—*Isaiah 58:9*.

“It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”—*Isaiah 65:24*.

“Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart.”—*Jeremiah 29:12-13*.

“Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”—*Jeremiah 33:3*.

“The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him.”—*Lamentations 3:25*.

“Yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed. He wept, and made supplication unto Him.”—*Hosea 12:4*.

“It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”—*Joel 2:32*.

“Seek ye Me, and ye shall live.”—*Amos 5:4*.

“Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment.”—*Zephaniah 2:3*.

“They shall call on My name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is My people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.”—*Zechariah 13:9*.

“Because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”—*Luke 11:8-10*.

“And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”—*Luke 18:1*.

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”—*Luke 21:36*.

“The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.”—*John 4:23*.

“If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”—*John 15:7*.

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”—*Romans 8:26*.

“According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.”—*Ephesians 3:11-12*.

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.”—*Ephesians 6:18-19*.

“Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”—*Philippians 4:6*.

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”—*Colossians 4:2*.

“Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”—*1 Thessalonians 5:17-18*.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”—*Hebrews 4:16*.

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”—*James 5:16*.

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.”—*Jude 20*.

## 2 - THE CHILDREN OF GOD

Here are several Bible verses which reveal God’s deep love for His children:

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.”—*Psalms 103:13*.

“My soul is even as a weaned child.”—*Psalms 131:2*.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”—*Matthew 5:9*.

“Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.”—*Matthew 5:44-45*.

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”—*Matthew 13:43*.

“And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”—*Matthew 18:2-6*

“And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me, and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me.”—*Mark 9:36-37*.

“Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”—*Mark 10:15*.

“Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me. And whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth Him that sent Me.”—*Luke 9:46-48*.

“Ye shall be the children of the Highest.”—*Luke 6:35*.

“He [Caiaphas] prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”—*John 11:51-52*.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our

spirit, that we are the children of God.”—*Romans 8:16*.

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”—*Romans 8:17*.

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”—*Romans 8:21*.

“It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there shall they be called the children of the living God.”—*Romans 9:26*.

“For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”—*Galatians 3:26*.

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—*Galatians 3:29*.

“Behold I and the children which God hath given Me.”—*Hebrews 2:13*.

“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”—*1 John 3:10*.

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”—*1 John 4:4*.

### 3 - SONS AND HEIRS

Oh, how great is the love of God for His sons and daughters who call upon Him:

“Ye are the children of the Lord your God.”—*Deuteronomy 14:1*.

“I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, keep not back. Bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth.”—*Isaiah 43:6*

“Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer.”—*Isaiah 63:16*.

“I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call Me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from Me.”—*Jeremiah 3:19*.

“It shall be come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God.”—*Hosea 1:10*.

“And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”—*Malachi 3:17*.

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?”—*Matthew 7:11*.

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”—*John 1:12-13*.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”—*Romans 8:14*.

“Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”—*Romans 8:15*.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.”—*Romans 8:16-17*.

“They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”—*Romans 9:8*.

“What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”—*2 Corinthians 6:17-18*.

“Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”—*Galatians 3:26*.

“To redeem them which were under the [condemnation of the] law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”—*Galatians 4:5*.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”—*Galatians 4:6*.

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”—*Galatians 4:7*.

“Having predestinated [foreknown] us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself.”—*Ephesians 1:5*.

“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”—*Philippians 2:15*.

“That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”—*Titus 3:7*.

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of sal-

vation?”—*Hebrews 1:14*.

“Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.”—*Hebrews 12:6* (7, 9).

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.”—*Hebrews 6:17*.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”—*Hebrews 11:7*.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.”—*1 John 3:1*.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”—*1 John 3:2*.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.”—*Revelation 21:7*.

## 4 - WALKING WITH GOD

We are actually talking about an extremely close, ongoing walk with God in this book. Here are several Bible passages which bear on this subject. Walking with God is not an unusual event, reserved only for a few holy men:

“And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.”—*Genesis 5:22*.

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death . . . Before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”—*Hebrews 11:5*.

“Noah walked with God.”—*Genesis 6:9*.

“The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect.”—*Genesis 17:1*.

“The Lord, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and prosper thy way.”—*Genesis 24:40*.

“Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him.”—*Deuteronomy 13:4*.

“Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?”—*Nehemiah 5:9*.

“If thy children take heed to their way, to walk

before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee . . . a man on the throne of Israel.”—*1 Kings 2:4*.

“All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.”—*Micah 4:5*.

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”—*Micah 6:8*.

“The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.”—*Malachi 2:6*.

“I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”—*Psalms 16:8*.

“Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth. Unite my heart to fear Thy name.”—*Psalms 86:11*.

“If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.”—*Psalms 89:30-32*.

“I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”—*Psalms 116:9*.

“Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways.”—*Psalms 128:1*.

“Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee.”—*1 Kings 3:6*.

“Remember now how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight.”—*2 Kings 20:3*.

“And he [Josiah] did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.”—*2 Kings 22:2*.

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”—*Amos 3:3*.

“They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”—*Luke 1:6*.

“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.”—*Acts 9:31*.

“Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death. That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”—

*Romans 6:4.*

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—*Romans 8:1.*

“Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”—*Galatians 5:16.*

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.”—*Ephesians 5:2.*

“We walk by faith, not by sight.”—*2 Corinthians 5:7.*

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.”—*1 John 1:6-7.*

“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”—*1 John 2:6.*

## Spirit of Prophecy: The Father and His Children

### 1 - GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Oh, how God loves His children! We will wonder at the vastness of this love through all eternity. That He would stoop down and take us by the hand—and lift us up and transform us. Thank God for His Inexpressible Gift: Jesus Christ.

“It was not enough for the disciples of Jesus to be instructed as to the nature of His kingdom. What they needed was a change of heart that would bring them into harmony with its principles. Calling a little child to Him, Jesus set him in the midst of them; then tenderly folding the little one in His arms He said, ‘Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ The simplicity, the self-forgetfulness, and the confiding love of a little child are the attributes that Heaven values. These are the characteristics of real greatness.”—*Desire of Ages, 437.*

“When we cease to worry about the future, and begin to believe that God loves us, and means to do us good, we shall trust Him as a

child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, and our will will be swallowed up in the will of God.

“Through an abiding Christ you will become Christlike in character. The Lord desires you to stand by His side, as a kind, patient, humble son of God.”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 193.*

“In that ancient ritual which is the gospel in symbol, no blemished offering could be brought to God’s altar. The sacrifice that was to represent Christ must be spotless. The Word of God points to this as an illustration of what His children are to be—‘a living sacrifice,’ ‘holy and without blemish.’ ”—*Prophets and Kings, 489.*

“God does not bestow help for tomorrow. He does not give His children all the directions for their life journey at once, lest they should become confused. He tells them just as much as they can remember and perform. The strength and wisdom imparted are for the present emergency.”—*Desire of Ages, 313.*

“The care of God is over the weakest of His children. No act of cruelty or oppression toward them is unmarked by Heaven. Over all who love and fear Him, His hand extends as a shield; let men beware that they smite not that hand; for it wields the sword of justice.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 300.*

“God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as coworkers with Him.”—*Desire of Ages, 224-225.*

“Obedience and submission to God’s requirements are the conditions given by the inspired apostle by which we become children of God, members of the royal family.”—*3 Testimonies, 365.*

“He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal.”—*Desire of Ages, 329.*

“God proposes to accept you as His child and make you a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King, upon conditions that you come out from the world and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. The Monarch of heaven would have you possess and enjoy all that can ennoble, expand, and exalt your being and fit you to dwell with Him forever, your existence measuring with the life of God.”—*3 Testimonies, 458.*

“Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members

of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His 'little ones,' dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. He has toward them an exceeding tenderness, as far surpassing what our father or mother has felt toward us in our helplessness as the divine is above the human."—*Desire of Ages*, 327.

"Christ loves the heavenly beings that surround His throne; but what shall account for the great love wherewith He has loved us? We cannot understand it, but we can know it true in our own experience."—*Desire of Ages*, 327.

"You cannot mingle with worldlings, and partake of their spirit, and follow their example, and be at the same time a child of God. The Creator of the universe addresses you as an affectionate Father. If you separate from the world in your affections, and remain free from its contamination, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust, God will be your Father, He will adopt you into His family, and you will be His heir. In place of the world, He will give you, for a life of obedience, the kingdom under the whole heavens. He will give you an eternal weight of glory and a life that is as enduring as eternity."—*2 Testimonies*, 44.

"Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son."—*Steps to Christ*, 52.

"If we are indeed God's children we shall be harassed and sorely beset, and we need not expect that Satan or those under his influence will treat us well. But there are angels who excel in strength who will be with us in all our conflicts if we will only be faithful. Christ conquered Satan in our behalf in the wilderness of temptation. He is mightier than Satan, and He will shortly bruise him under our feet."—*3 Testimonies*, 526.

"Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and Daughters."—*Desire of Ages*, 189.

"This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God: that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's

heart."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 22.

"We cannot be half the Lord's and half the world's. We are not God's children unless we are such entirely."—*Steps to Christ*, 44.

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' If we have not the light and love of God we are not His children."—*3 Testimonies*, 529.

"God was to be manifest in Christ, 'reconciling the world unto Himself.' Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness. But Christ, after having redeemed man from the condemnation of the law, could impart divine power, to unite with human effort. Thus by repentance toward God and faith in Christ, the fallen children of Adam might once more become 'sons of God.' "—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 12.

"If you have renounced self and given yourself to Christ you are a member of the family of God, and everything in the Father's house is for you. All the treasures of God are opened to you, both the world that now is and that which is to come. The ministry of angels, the gift of His Spirit, the labors of His servants—all are for you. The world, with everything in it, is yours so far as it can do you good. Even the enmity of the wicked will prove a blessing by disciplining you for heaven."—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 110.

"The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God's Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate."—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 75.

"The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption."—*Steps to Christ*, 21.

“God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures. It is His nature to give. His very life is the outflow of unselfish love.

“ ‘His glory is His children’s good; His joy, His tender Fatherhood.’ ”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 77.

“The children of God are not left alone and defenseless. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. Prayer has ‘subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire.’ ”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 172.

“Before honor is humility. To fill a high place before men, Heaven chooses the worker who, like John the Baptist, takes a lowly place before God. The most childlike disciple is the most efficient in labor for God. The heavenly intelligences can co-operate with him who is seeking, not to exalt self, but to save souls. He who feels most deeply his need of divine aid will plead for it; and the Holy Spirit will give unto him glimpses of Jesus that will strengthen and uplift the soul. From communion with Christ he will go forth to work for those who are perishing in their sins. He is anointed for his mission; and he succeeds where many of the learned and intellectually wise would fail.”—*Desire of Ages*, 436.

“We may address Him by the endearing name, ‘Our Father,’ which is a sign of our affection for Him and a pledge of His tender regard and relationship to us. And the Son of God, beholding the heirs of grace, ‘is not ashamed to call them brethren.’ They have even a more sacred relationship to God than have the angels who have never fallen.”—*My Life Today*, 365.

“Forbearance and unselfishness mark the words and deeds of those who are born again to live the new life in Christ.”—*My Life Today*, 52.

“Jesus said, Be perfect as *your Father* is perfect. If you are the children of God you are partakers of His nature, and you cannot but be like Him. Every child lives by the life of his father. If you are God’s children, begotten by His Spirit, you live by the life of God.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 77-78.

“It is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed.”—*Steps to Christ*, 51.

“Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on His own account, for

His character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character He offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb’s book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family.”—*3 Testimonies*, 371-372.

“The work of these heavenly beings is to prepare the inhabitants of this world to become children of God, pure, holy, undefiled. But men, though professing to be followers of Christ, do not place themselves in a position where they can understand this ministry, and thus the work of the heavenly messengers is made hard.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 923.

“Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. God would not have His children, for whom so great salvation has been provided, act as if He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.”—*Steps to Christ*, 103.

“The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption.

“In him who does this, a transformation of character takes place. He becomes a son of God, a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. He is fitted to be the companion of the angels.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 342.

“ ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ These are the conditions upon which we may be acknowledged as the sons of God—separation from the world, and renunciation of those things which delude, and fascinate, and ensnare.

“The apostle Paul declares that it is impossible for the children of God to unite with worldlings: ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with

unbelievers.' This does not refer to marriage alone; any intimate relation of confidence and copartnership with those who have no love for God or the truth is a snare."—*5 Testimonies*, 13.

"No man receives holiness as a birthright, or as a gift from any other human being. Holiness is the gift of God through Christ. Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. They are His spiritual children, born again, renewed in righteousness and true holiness. Their minds are changed. With clearer vision they behold eternal realities. They are adopted into God's family, and they become conformed to His likeness, changed by His Spirit from glory to glory. From cherishing supreme love for self, they come to cherish supreme love for God and for Christ . . .

"Accepting Christ as a personal Saviour, and following His example of self-denial—this is the secret of holiness."—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1117.

"When the people of God experience the new birth, their honesty, their uprightness, their fidelity, their steadfast principles, will unflinchingly reveal it."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 251.

"The converting power of God can transform inherited and cultivated tendencies; for the religion of Jesus is uplifting. 'Born again' means a transformation, a new birth in Christ Jesus."—*Adventist Home*, 206.

"The children of the light and of the day are not to gather about them the shades of night and darkness which encompass the workers of iniquity. On the contrary, they are to stand faithfully at their post of duty as light bearers, gathering light from God to shed upon those in darkness. The Lord requires His people to maintain their integrity, touching not—that is, imitating not—the practices of the ungodly."—*5 Testimonies*, 13-14.

"He wants us to remember our royal birth and high destiny as sons and daughters of God, and have genuine respect for ourselves. He would have all our powers developed, and kept in the best possible condition, that He may fill us with His grace and use us in His service, making us co-workers with Himself for the salvation of souls.

"It is the duty of each student, of each individual, to do all in his power to present his body to Christ, a cleansed temple, physically perfect as well as morally free from defilement,—a fit abode for God's indwelling presence."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 428.

"The change of heart by which we become

children of God is in the Bible spoken of as birth."—*Steps to Christ*, 67.

"Man must be emptied of self before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature. New bottles can contain the new wine. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. In him who looks unto the Author and Finisher of our faith the character of Christ will be manifest."—*Desire of Ages*, 280.

"There is a picture representing a bullock standing between a plow and an altar, with the inscription, 'Ready for either,' ready to toil in the furrow or to be offered on the altar of sacrifice. This is the position of the true child of God,—willing to go where duty calls, to deny self, to sacrifice for the Redeemer's cause."—*Ministry of Healing*, 502.

"Christ has not died for you that you may possess the passions, tastes, and habits of men of the world. It is difficult to distinguish between those who serve God and those who serve Him not, because there is so little difference in character between believers and unbelievers. Ye cannot serve God and Belial. The sons of God belong to a different nation—the empire of purity and holiness. They are the nobility of heaven. The stamp of God is upon them. So evident and perceptible is this that the enmity of the world is aroused against them by the contrast. I call upon everyone who claims to be a son of God never to forget this great truth, that we need the Spirit of God within us in order to reach heaven, and the work of Christ without us in order to give us a title to the immortal inheritance."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 241-442.

## 2 - ADOPTION AND HEIRSHIP

How kindly our heavenly Father is, to grant us to become His sons and daughters, to adopt us into the heavenly family and, one day soon, take us to heaven to be with Him forever.

"Faith lifts up the repenting soul to share the adoption of the sons of God."—*Education*, 151.

"Divine sonship is not something that we gain of ourselves. Only to those who receive Christ as their Saviour is given the power to become sons and daughters of God. The sinner cannot, by any power of his own, rid himself of sin. For the accomplishment of this result, he must look to a higher Power. John exclaimed, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' Christ alone has power to cleanse the heart. He who is seeking for forgiveness and acceptance can say only, 'Nothing in my hand I

bring; simply to Thy cross I cling.' But the promise of sonship is made to all who 'believe on His name.' Every one who comes to Jesus in faith will receive pardon."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 12.

"People think it a privilege to see a royal personage, and thousands go great distances to see one. How much greater privilege it is to be sons and daughters of the Most High. What greater privilege could be conferred on us than to be given entrance into the royal family?"

"In order to become the sons and daughters of God, we must separate from the world. 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate,' the Lord says, 'and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.'"—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 8.

"I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters . . .' What a promise is here made upon condition of obedience! . . . He promises to be a Father unto you. Oh, what a relationship is this! higher and holier than any earthly tie. If you make the sacrifice, if you have to forsake father, mother, sisters, brothers, wife, and children for Christ's sake, you will not be friendless. God adopts you into His family; you become members of the royal household, sons and daughters of the King who rules in the heaven of heavens."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 14.

"God is our Father, a tender parent, solicitous for His spiritual children. He is pledged to be the protector, counsellor, guide, and friend, of all who are obedient to Him."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 14.

"All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them. They are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They pledge themselves to become active members of His church in the earth. They are to be dead to all the allurements of worldly desires; but in conversation and godliness, they are through sanctification of the Spirit to exert a living influence for God.

"Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,'—what an exalted, dignified position! Separate and distinct from the world, secure from the wily snares of Satan! By their baptismal vows, God's professed followers have pledged themselves to stand in opposition to evil. The enemy of souls will work with all craft to corrupt their minds. He will seek to introduce his methods into their service for the Master. But there is safety for them if they will heed the injunction: 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His

might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.'"—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 15.

"To what greater honor could we aspire than to be called the children of God? What greater rank could we hold, what greater inheritance could we find, than that which comes to those who are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ?"—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 15.

"God is pleased when we keep our faces turned toward the Sun of Righteousness . . . When we are in trouble and pressed down with anxieties, the Lord is near, and He bids us cast all our care upon Him, because He cares for us . . . He comes to all His children in their affliction. In time of danger He is their refuge. In sorrow, He offers them joy and consolation."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 19.

"As a father takes his son into partnership in his business, so the Lord takes His children into partnership with Himself."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 324.

"The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father's love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.' 1 John 3:1. What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name 'sons of God.'

"Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child."—*Steps to Christ*, 15.

"The new birth is a rare experience in this

age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ.”—*6 Bible Commentary, 1075.*

“In Him [Christ] was found the perfect ideal. To reveal this ideal as the only true standard for attainment; to show what every human being might become; what, through the indwelling of humanity by divinity, all who received Him would become,—for this, Christ came to the world. He came to show how men are to be trained as befits the sons of God; how on earth they are to practise the principles and to live the life of heaven.”—*Education, 73-74.*

“In Him [Christ] was found the perfect ideal.

### 3 - OUR WONDERFUL FATHER

How wonderful the Father is! Read about His love and rejoice in it.

“In order to strengthen our confidence in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined with the dearest associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the infinite God our Father. This name, spoken to Him and of Him, is a sign of our love and trust toward Him, and a pledge of His regard and relationship to us. Spoken when asking His favor or blessing, it is as music in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has repeated it again and again. He desires us to become familiar with the appellation.

“God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”—*Christ's Object Lessons, 141-142.*

“Jesus teaches us to call His Father our Father. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 2:11. So ready, so eager, is the Saviour's heart to welcome us as members of the family of God, that in the very first words we are to use in approaching God He places the assurance of our divine relationship, ‘Our Father.’

“Here is the announcement of that wonder-

ful truth, so full of encouragement and comfort, that God loves us as He loves His Son. This is what Jesus said in His last prayer for His disciples, Thou ‘hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.’ John 17:23.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 103-104.*

“How can we ever be in doubt and uncertainty, and feel that we are orphans? It was in behalf of those who had transgressed the law that Jesus took upon Him human nature; He became like unto us, that we might have everlasting peace and assurance. We have an Advocate in the heavens, and whoever accepts Him as a personal Saviour is not left an orphan to bear the burden of his own sins.

“ ‘Beloved, now are we the sons of God.’ ‘And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.’ ”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 104.*

“The infinite God, said Jesus, makes it your privilege to approach Him by the name of Father. Understand all that this implies.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 105.*

“If you call God your Father you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest. It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father and to every member of His family. You will rejoice to do any act, however humble, that will tend to His glory or to the well-being of your kindred.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 105-106.*

“The family are called after the Father. The prophet Jeremiah, in the time of Israel's sore distress and tribulation, prayed, ‘We are called by Thy name; leave us not.’ Jeremiah 14:9.

“This name is hallowed by the angels of heaven, by the inhabitants of unfallen worlds. When you pray, ‘Hallowed be Thy name,’ you ask that it may be hallowed in this world, hallowed in you. God has acknowledged you before men and angels as His child; pray that you may do no dishonor to the ‘worthy name by which ye are called.’ James 2:7.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 107.*

“God is our Father, who loves and cares for us as His children; He is also the great King of the universe. The interests of His kingdom are our interests, and we are to work for its upbuilding.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 107.*

“He [Christ] pointed His hearers to the Ruler

of the universe, under the new name, 'Our Father.' He would have them understand how tenderly the heart of God yearned over them. He teaches that God cares for every lost soul; that 'like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' Psalm 103:13. Such a conception of God was never given to the world by any religion but that of the Bible. Heathenism teaches men to look upon the Supreme Being as an object of fear rather than of love—a malign deity to be appeased by sacrifices, rather than a Father pouring upon His children the gift of His love. Even the people of Israel had become so blinded to the precious teaching of the prophets concerning God that this revelation of His paternal love was as an original subject, a new gift to the world."—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 74.

"I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters . . .' What a promise is here made upon condition of obedience! . . . He promises to be a Father unto you. Oh, what a relationship is this! higher and holier than any earthly tie. If you make the sacrifice, if you have to forsake father, mother, sisters, brothers, wife, and children for Christ's sake, you will not be friendless. God adopts you into His family; you become members of the royal household, sons and daughters of the King who rules in the heaven of heavens."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 14.

"God is our Father, a tender parent, solicitous for His spiritual children. He is pledged to be the protector, counsellor, guide, and friend, of all who are obedient to Him."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 14.

"As a father takes his son into partnership in his business, so the Lord takes His children into partnership with Himself."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 324.

## Spirit of Prophecy: A Blueprint for Coming to God

This book is primarily about deepening our walk with God. But there are those who need to come to Him in conversion. Indeed, we are told that we should die anew each day.

The following statements reveal that conversion is not supposed to be a beginning of the process of putting away sin,—but rather, for the most part, the entire work. For, in the new birth, man becomes a new creature in Christ.

The reason many Christians keep working to get rid of sin—is because some keep slipping back into it while others never really made the separation to begin with.

"Through the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, 'It was my sins that crucified the Son of God.' At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ his character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"As the sinner looks upon the Redeemer, he finds hope, assurance, and joy. Faith takes hold of Christ in love. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul."—*1 Selected Messages*, 349.

### 1 - HAVE YOU BEEN CONVERTED?

"Many who profess the faith know not what true conversion is. They have no experience in communion with the Father through Jesus Christ, and have never felt the power of divine grace to sanctify the heart. Praying and sinning, sinning and praying, their lives are full of malice, deceit, envy, jealousy, and self-love. The prayers of this class are an abomination to God. True prayer engages the energies of the soul and affects the life."—*4 Testimonies*, 534-535.

"I saw that unless there is an entire change in the young, a thorough conversion, they may despair of heaven. From what has been shown

me, there are not more than half of the young who profess religion and the truth who have been truly converted. If they had been converted they would bear fruit to the glory of God. Many are leaning upon a supposed hope without a true foundation. The fountain is not cleansed, therefore the streams proceeding from that fountain are not pure. Cleanse the fountain, and the streams will be pure. If the heart is right, your words, your dress, your acts, will all be right. True godliness is lacking. I would not dishonor my Master so much as to admit that a careless, trifling, prayerless person is a Christian. No; a Christian has victory over his besetments, over his passions. There is a remedy for the sin-sick soul. That remedy is in Jesus. Precious Saviour! His grace is sufficient for the weakest; and the strongest must also have His grace or perish.

"I saw how this grace could be obtained. Go to your closet, and there alone plead with God: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. Jacoblike, wrestle in prayer. Agonize. Jesus, in the garden, sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort. Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God; then watch, and just as long as you watch and pray you can keep these evil besetments under, and the grace of God can and will appear in you."—*1 Testimonies*, 158.

"Seek the Lord with all your heart . . . Beg of God to work in you a thorough reformation, that the fruits of His Spirit may dwell in you, and you shine as lights in the world . . . Does Satan tell you that you cannot enjoy salvation, full and free? Believe him not.

"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 have never seen sin in its enormity. You have never felt your undone condition and turned from your evil ways with bitter sorrow. You have never died to the world. You still love its pleasures; you love to engage in conversation on worldly matters. But when the truth of God is introduced, you have nothing to say . . . The truth of God does not dwell in you."—*1 Testimonies*, 159.

"True conversion is a radical change. The

very drift of the mind and bent of the heart should be turned and life become new again in Christ."—*4 Testimonies*, 17.

"For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' *2 Corinthians 5:17*. That which was objectionable in the character is purified from the soul by the love of Jesus. All selfishness is expelled, all envy, all evil-speaking, is rooted out, and a radical transformation is wrought in the heart."—*Review and Herald*, July 22, 1890.

## 2 - EVIDENCES OF GENUINE CONVERSION

"Conversion is a change of heart, a turning from unrighteousness to righteousness. Relying upon the merits of Christ, exercising true faith in Him, the repentant sinner receives pardon for sin. As he ceases to do evil and learns to do well, he grows in grace and in the knowledge of God. He sees that in order to follow Jesus he must separate from the world; and, after counting the cost, he looks upon all as loss if he may but win Christ. He enlists in His army and bravely and cheerfully engages in the warfare, fighting against natural inclinations and selfish desires and bringing the will into subjection to the will of Christ. Daily he seeks the Lord for grace, and he is strengthened and helped. Self once reigned in his heart, and worldly pleasure was his delight. Now self is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. His life reveals the fruit of righteousness. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness. This is genuine conversion."—*In Heavenly Places*, 20.

"The heart of him who receives the grace of God overflows with love for God and for those for whom Christ died. Self is not struggling for recognition . . . If his motives, words, or actions are misunderstood or misrepresented, he takes no offense, but pursues the even tenor of his way. He is kind and thoughtful, humble in his opinion of himself, yet full of hope, always trusting in the mercy and love of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 101-102.

"There are very many who claim to serve God, but who have no experimental knowledge of Him. Their desire to do His will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal relation with a living Saviour, and their

characters reveal defects both hereditary and cultivated.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 48.

“Many who profess to follow Christ have not genuine religion. They do not reveal in their lives the fruit of true conversion. They are controlled by the same habits, the same spirit of fault-finding and selfishness, which controlled them before they accepted Christ.

“No one can enter the city of God who has not a knowledge of genuine conversion. In true conversion the soul is born again. A new spirit takes possession of the temple of the soul. A new life begins. Christ is revealed in the character.”—*Review and Herald July 30, 1901*.

“The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 114.

“Conversion is a work that most do not appreciate. It is not a small matter to transform an earthly, sin-loving mind and bring it to understand the unspeakable love of Christ, the charms of His grace, and the excellency of God, so that the soul shall be imbued with divine love and captivated with the heavenly mysteries. When he understands these things, his former life appears disgusting and hateful. He hates sin, and breaking his heart before God, he embraces Christ as the life and joy of the soul. He renounces his former pleasures. He has a new mind, new affections, new interest, new will; his sorrows, and desires, and love are all new. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which have heretofore been preferred before Christ, are now turned from, and Christ is the charm of his life, the crown of his rejoicing. Heaven, which once possessed no charms, is now viewed in its riches and glory; and he contemplates it as his future home, where he shall see, love, and praise the One who hath redeemed him by His precious blood.

“The works of holiness, which appeared wearisome, are now his delight. The Word of God, which was dull and uninteresting, is now chosen as his study, the man of his counsel. It is as a letter written to him from God, bearing the inscription of the Eternal. His thoughts, his words, and his deeds are brought to this rule and tested. He trembles at the commands and threatenings which it contains, while he firmly grasps its promises and strengthens his soul by appropriating them to himself. The society of the most godly is now chosen by him, and the wicked, whose company he once loved, he no longer delights in. He weeps over those sins

in them at which he once laughed. Self-love and vanity are renounced, and he lives unto God, and is rich in good works. This is the sanctification which God requires. Nothing short of this will He accept.”—*2 Testimonies*, 294-295.

“God loves His obedient children. He has a kingdom prepared, not for disloyal subjects, but for His children whom He has tested and tried in a world marred and corrupted by sin. As obedient children, we have the privilege of relationship with God. ‘If children,’ He says, ‘then heirs’ to an immortal inheritance.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1077.

“When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience.”—*Desire of Ages*, 668.

### 3 - GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE

“Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. The greater the sinner’s guilt, the more he needs the Saviour. His heart of divine love and sympathy is drawn out most of all for the one who is most hopelessly entangled in the snares of the enemy.”—*Ministry of Healing*, 89-90.

“He yearns with intense desire to relieve the woes of men and to apply His balsam to their wounds. It is true that God ‘will by no means clear the guilty,’ but He would take away the guilt.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 22.

“God reveals to us our guilt that we may flee to Christ, and through Him be set free from the bondage of sin, and rejoice in the liberty of the sons of God. In true contrition we may come to the foot of the cross, and there leave our burdens.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 10.

“When Jesus has taken away the burden of sin that is crushing the soul, you will experience the blessedness of the peace of Christ.”—*Our High Calling*, 131.

“He came to their aid when they felt their lost and perishing condition. When weary and heavy-laden with sin, they turned unto Him. He removed their burden of guilt and sin, took away their sorrow and mourning, and turned the whole current of their affections. The things they once loved, they now hate; and the things they hated, they now love.”—*1 Testimonies*, 160.

“None need despair because of the inherited tendencies to evil, but when the Spirit of God convicts of sin, the wrongdoer must repent and confess and forsake the evil.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1120.

“As soon as we consent to give sin up, to ac-

knowledge our guilt, the barrier is removed between the soul and the Saviour.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 325.

“In laying off burdens, let us not forget to lay self at the feet of Christ.

“Hand yourself over to Jesus, to be molded and fashioned by Him, that you may be made vessels unto honor. Your temptations, your ideas, your feelings, must all be laid at the foot of the cross. Then the soul is ready to listen to words of divine instruction. Jesus will give you to drink of the water which flows from the river of God. Under the softening and subduing influence of His Spirit your coldness and listlessness will disappear. Christ will be in you a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.”—*In Heavenly Places*, 107.

“The only reason that we have not remission of sin is that we have not acknowledged to Him whom we have wounded by our transgressions, whom we have pierced by our sins, that we are at fault and in need of mercy. The confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul will find its way to the heart of infinite pity; for the Lord is nigh unto him that is of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 326.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”—*Matthew 5:4*.

“The mourning here brought to view is true heart sorrow for sin . . . God reveals to us our guilt that we may flee to Christ, and through Him be set free from the bondage of sin . . . In true contrition we may come to the foot of the cross and there leave our burdens.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 9-10.

“The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’”—*Steps to Christ*, 41.

“Sins not repented of are sins not forgiven. Those who think themselves forgiven for sins of which they have never felt the sinfulness and over which they have never felt contrition of soul, only deceive themselves.”—*Our High Calling*, 82.

“A repentance such as this, is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Christ, who ascended up on high, and has given gifts unto men.”—*Steps to Christ*, 25.

“There is great need today of just such sin-

cere, heartfelt repentance and confession. Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance which is not to be repented of, and have not confessed our sin with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit, abhorring our iniquity, we have never sought truly for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought we have never found the peace of God.”—*5 Testimonies*, 636.

## 4 - REPENT AND TURN AWAY FROM SIN

“We cannot meet Christ in peace with one sin unrepented of, unconfessed, and forsaken.”—*Review and Herald*, March 17, 1891.

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin, and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.”—*Steps to Christ*, 23.

“Repentance is the first step that must be taken by all who would return to God. No one can do this work for another. We must individually humble our souls before God and put away our idols. When we have done all that we can do, the Lord will manifest to us His salvation.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 590.

“The heart must be yielded to God—must be subdued by divine grace—before man’s repentance can be accepted.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 587.

“Repentance is turning from self to Christ; and when we receive Christ, so that, through faith, He can live His life in us, good works will be manifest.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 87.

“With his own blood He paid the penalty for wrongdoers. Every sin acknowledged before God with a contrite heart, He will remove.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 970.

“Sins not repented of are sins not forgiven. Those who think themselves forgiven for sins of which they have never felt the sinfulness and over which they have never felt contrition of soul, only deceive themselves.”—*Our High Calling*, 82.

“Only by faithful repentance will their sins be forgiven; for God will not cover evil with the robe of His righteousness.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 13.

“Who is desirous of becoming truly repentant? What must he do?—He must come to Jesus, just as he is, without delay. He must believe that the Word of Christ is true, and, be-

lieving the promise, ask, that he may receive. When sincere desire prompts men to pray, they will not pray in vain.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 393.

“There is only one provision made for the transgressor. Faithful repentance and confession of sin, and faith in the cleansing blood of Christ, will bring forgiveness, and pardon will be written against his name.”—*2 Testimonies*, 293.

“As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ’s atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, His sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God’s will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

“Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel . . . to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: ‘This is My child, I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.’ Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ’s righteousness, stands faultless before God.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1070.

“To be pardoned in the way that Christ pardons, is not only to be forgiven, but to be renewed in the spirit of our mind.”—*3 Selected Messages*, 190.

“Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him and he is no more to doubt God’s forgiving grace.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1071.

“Justification is the opposite of condemnation. God’s boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. He forgives transgressions and sins for the sake of Jesus, who has become the propitiation for our sins. Through faith in Christ, the guilty transgressor is brought into favor with God and into the strong hope of life eternal.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1070-1071.

“Freely will He pardon all who come to Him

for forgiveness and restoration.”—*Desire of Ages*, 568.

“The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ *1 John 1:9*.”—*Steps to Christ*, 41.

“I tell you, my brethren and sisters, there is need of humbling your souls before God. ‘Cease to do evil,’ but do not stop here, ‘Learn to do well.’ You can glorify God only by bearing fruit to His glory.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 146.

“That repentance which is produced by the influence of divine grace upon the heart will lead to confession and forsaking of sin.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 324.

“There is no evidence of genuine repentance, unless it works reformation. If he restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, confess his sins, and love God and his fellow men, the sinner may be sure that he has found his peace with God.”—*Great Controversy*, 462-463.

## 5 - PUT ON THE WEDDING GARMENT OF OBEDIENCE BY FAITH

“No man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 366.

“Patching will not do. The only way is to discard the old garment and procure a new one . . . Christ’s plan is the only safe one. He declares, ‘Behold, I make all things new’ (*Revelation 21:5*). ‘If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature’ (*2 Corinthians 5:17*). The Saviour gives no encouragement to any to think that He will accept a patchwork religion.”—*Our High Calling*, 342.

“The patchwork religion is not of the least value with God. He requires the whole heart.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1101.

“The parable of the wedding garment opens before us a lesson of the highest consequence. By the marriage is represented the union of humanity and divinity; the wedding garment represents the character which all must possess.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 307.

“The religion of Christ is a firm fabric, composed of innumerable threads, woven together with tact and skill. Only by the wisdom that God gives can we weave this fabric. Trusting to ourselves, we draw into it threads of selfish-

ness, and the pattern is spoiled.”—*Faith I Live By*, 220.

“The grace of Christ must be woven into every phase of the character.”—*Counsels on Health*, 633.

“The righteousness of Christ consists in right actions and good works from pure, unselfish motives.”—*3 Testimonies*, 528.

“Those who believe in Christ derive their motive power and the texture of their characters from Him in whom they believe.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 299.

“This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us . . . By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him, we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 311-312.

“All must pass the scrutiny of the great King, and only those are received who have put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness. Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 312.

“No man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 366.

“The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin. It is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God. It is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.”—*Desire of Ages*, 555-556

“God makes no compromise with Sin. A genuine conversion changes hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1101.

“Christ looks with pitying tenderness on all who have combination characters. Those with such characters have a connection with Christ so frail that it is utterly worthless.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1101.

“The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness.”—*Steps to Christ*, 43.

## 6 - HE WILL MAKE YOU AN OBEDIENT CHILD

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin, and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.”—*Steps to Christ*, 23.

“There is no power in repentance to change the life, but when the helpless soul casts itself on Christ, there comes transformation of character.”—*Signs of the Times*, May 20, 1903.

“It is for you to yield your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession, and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—*5 Testimonies*, 514.

“When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God.”—*Desire of Ages*, 173.

“Through the simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God and He loves you as He loves His Son.”—*Steps to Christ*, 52.

“The Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O my God.’ *Psalms 40:8*.”—*Desire of Ages*, 176.

“Christ connects fallen man in his weakness and helplessness with the Source of infinite power.”—*Steps to Christ*, 20.

“His imputed grace and power He gives to all who receive Him by faith.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 929.

“The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind.”—*6 Testimonies*, 306.

“Men need to learn that the blessings of obedience, in their fulness, can be theirs only as

they receive the grace of Christ. It is His grace that gives man power to obey the laws of God. It is this that enables him to break the bondage of evil habit. This is the only power that can make him and keep him steadfast in the right path.”—*Ministry of Healing*, 115.

“In ourselves we are incapable of doing any good thing; but that which we cannot do will be wrought by the power of God in every submissive and believing soul. It was through faith that the child of promise was given. It is through faith that spiritual life is begotten, and we are enabled to do the works of righteousness.”—*Desire of Ages*, 98.

“There are many who think it is impossible to escape from the power of sin, but the promise is that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.”—*That I May Know Him*, 302.

“When we submit to God’s way, the Lord Jesus guides our minds and fills our lips with assurance. We may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An indwelling Saviour makes His power our property.”—*7 Testimonies*, 71.

“In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all God’s requirements. This is true worship.”—*Desire of Ages*, 189.

“True conversion is a radical change. The very drift of the mind and bent of the heart should be turned and life become new again in Christ.”—*4 Testimonies*, 17.

“When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—A changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride.”—*Messages to Young People*, 72.

“To be a Christian is not merely to take the name of Christ, but to have the mind of Christ, to submit to the will of God in all things.”—*Review and Herald*, September 4, 1883.

“The sons of God will not be like the worldling; for the truth received in the heart will be the means of purifying the soul and of transforming the character and of making its receiver like-minded with God. Unless a man becomes like-minded with God, he is still in his natural depravity.”—*Faith and Works*, 116.

“Through faith in His name He imputes unto us His righteousness, and it becomes a living

principle in our life.”—*That I May Know Him*, 302.

“Without the transforming process . . . the original propensities to sin are left in the heart in all their strength, to forge new chains, to impose a slavery that can never be broken by human power.”—*Evangelism*, 192.

“True obedience is the outworking of a principle within.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 97.

“The power of Christ alone can work the transformation in heart and mind that all must experience who would partake with Him of the new life in the kingdom of heaven. ‘Except a man be born again,’ the Saviour said, ‘he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ *John 3:3*. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will lead to watchfulness. It will purify the heart and renew the mind, and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.”—*9 Testimonies*, 156.

“New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines . . . The conscience is awakened.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 98-99.

“But while every faculty is regenerated, man does not lose his identity. New faculties are not supplied, but a thorough change is made in the employment of those faculties . . . A motive power is working within to transform the character.”—*Signs of the Times*, October 13, 1898.

“By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1098.

“Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan, have been transformed into the image of God. This change is itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is ‘Christ in you, the hope of glory.’ *Colossians 1:27*.

“A knowledge of this mystery furnishes a key to every other. It opens to the soul the treasures of the universe, the possibilities of infinite development.”—*Education*, 172.

“The Lord Jesus loves His people, and when they put their trust in Him, depending wholly upon Him, He strengthens them. He will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself. He acts through

their faculties and causes them to choose His will and to act out His character.”—*That I May Know Him*, 78.

“God’s forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 114.

“When self is submerged in Christ, true love springs forth spontaneously. It is not an emotion or an impulse, but a decision of a sanctified will. It consists not in feeling, but in transformation of the whole heart, soul and character, which is dead to self, and alive to God . . . Surrendering self to God is all that He requires, giving ourselves to Him to be employed as He sees fit.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, 206.

“Our will is to be yielded to Him, that we may receive it again, purified and refined, and so linked in sympathy with the Divine that He can pour through us the tides of His love and power.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 62.

“The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul joy that nothing earthly can destroy, joy in the Holy spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy.

“Our Saviour’s words, ‘Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest,’ are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills.”—*Ministry of Healing*, 115.

“The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension.”—*Desire of Ages*, 305.

“Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace.

“There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ received into the heart, subdues enmity; it allays strife and fills the soul with love.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 27.

## Spirit of Prophecy: Preparing for the Future

For about three years, the author has slowly been collecting the quotations found in this chapter.

There is new light for the people of God, but it will always, only be found in statements from the Inspired Books, not in the speculations of men. In this chapter you may receive some new light.

*It is now that we are to prepare for the extent of the work we will be entrusted with in heaven.* Our opportunities to serve God do not end when this life is over! It is not for us to merely get through this life; it is for us to work with our Father—and change in this life! After that, our work with Him will continue.

### CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IS ESSENTIAL

What is character?

“Mental ability and genius are not character, for these are often possessed by those who have the very opposite of a good character. Reputation is not a character. True character is a quality of the soul, revealing itself in the conduct.”—*Child Guidance*, 161.

“It is by a repetition of acts that habits are established and character confirmed.”—*Child Guidance*, 199.

“True character is not shaped from without, and put on; it radiates from within.”—*Desire of Ages*, 307.

“We are to form characters free from sin—characters made righteous in and by the grace of Christ.”—*Counsels on Health*, 633-634.

It is only character that we can take to heaven.

“A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 332.

### NOW IS THE TIME TO GROW AND PREPARE FOR HEAVEN

It is now that we must form the characters which we will take to heaven.

“There will be no future probation in which to prepare for eternity. It is in this life that we are to put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness. This is our only opportunity to form characters for the home which Christ has made ready for those who obey His commandments.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 319.

We are now to cooperate with the angels in perfecting our characters.

“The work of these heavenly beings is to prepare the inhabitants of this world to become children of God, pure, holy, undefiled. But men, though professing to be followers of Christ, do not place themselves in a position where they can understand this ministry, and thus the work of the heavenly messengers is made hard.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 923.

“The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 332. (For the opposite outcome, read GC 542-543.)

At the close of this chapter, we will view divinely given promises of what we can now be enabled to do.

### DIFFERENTIAL REWARDS TO THE REDEEMED

When Christ returns He will give “rewards” to everyone.

“I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”—*Jeremiah 17:10*.

“Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men; to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”—*Jeremiah 32:19*.

“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.”—*Matthew 16:27*.

“God who will render to every man according to his deeds.”—*Romans 2:5-6*.

“Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.”—*1 Corinthians 3:8*.

“Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”—*Revelation 22:12*.

The present writer had assumed that the “rewards” consist only of eternal death for the wicked and eternal life for the righteous. But, according to the following statements, those rewards will, in some manner, be different for some than for others of the redeemed.

The following statements do not clarify whether or not the persons discussed will or will not be saved.

“In these days of peril and corruption, the young are exposed to many trials and temptations. Many are sailing in a dangerous harbor . . . They need an unerring counselor, an infallible guide. This they will find in the Word of God. Unless they are diligent students of that Word, they will make grave mistakes, which will mar their happiness and that of others, both for the present and the future life.”—*Messages to Young People*, 443.

“It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change.”—*5 Testimonies*, 466.

“Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character. If you come to this decision, you will certainly fail of obtaining eternal life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you will not, then you cannot overcome . . . Thousands pass through life as if they had no definite object for which to live, no standard to reach. Such will obtain a reward proportionate to their works.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 331.

“Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness. If you have become estranged and have failed to be Bible Christians, be converted; for the character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ. If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. The traits of character you cherish in life will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny.”—*Adventist Home*, 16.

The following statements are about the re-

deemed, and indicate that—now, in this life—we determine the extent of our usefulness in heaven.

“Before His coming, then, the character of every man’s work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ’s followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.

“It is while men are still dwelling upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in review before God. All are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 310.

“The competitors in the ancient games, after they had submitted to self-denial and rigid discipline, were not even then sure of the victory . . . Such is not the case in the Christian warfare. Not one who complies with the conditions will be disappointed at the end of the race. Not one who is earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown of immortal glory. All may win who, through the power of divine grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ . . . Every act casts its weight into the scale that determines life’s victory or defeat. And the reward given to those who win will be in proportion to the energy and earnestness with which they have striven.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 313-314.

“God has given us many advantages and opportunities, and when the last great day shall be ushered in, and we shall see what we might have attained, had we taken advantage of the helps that Heaven vouchsafed to us; when we see how we might have grown in grace, and look upon these things as God looks upon them, seeing what we have lost by failing grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ, we shall wish that we had been more in earnest.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 330.

“Every sin, every unrighteous action, every transgression of the law of God, tells with a thousandfold more force upon the actor than the sufferer. Every time one of the glorious faculties with which God has enriched man is abused or misused, that faculty loses forever a portion of its vigor and will never be as it was before the abuse it suffered. Every abuse inflicted upon our moral nature in this life is felt not only for time but for eternity. Through God may forgive the sinner, yet eternity will not make up that voluntary loss sustained in this life.

“To go forth into the next, the future life, deprived of half the power which might be carried

there is a terrible thought. The days of probation lost here in acquiring a fitness for heaven, is a loss which will never be recovered. The capacities of enjoyment will be less in the future life for the misdemeanors and abuse of moral powers in this life. However high we might attain in the future life, we might soar higher and still higher, if we had made the most of our God-given privileges and golden opportunities to improve our faculties here in this probationary existence.”—*This Day with God*, 350.

“As the books of heaven are opened, each overcomer is assigned his lot and place in heaven, in accordance with the advancement he has made in this life.”—*Upward Look*, 248.

“The reward, the glories of heaven, bestowed upon the overcomers, will be proportionate to the degree in which they have represented the character of Christ in the world. ‘He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.’ Thank God that it is our privilege to sow on earth the seed that will be harvested in heaven.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1104-1105.

We are told that we will take every divine improvement to heaven.

“Those who, under the education of Christ, make it possible to reach the highest attainments will take every divine improvement with them to the higher school. But those who are unwilling to have their characters molded after the divine similitude make the angels sad; for by clinging to their sinful habits and practices they spoil the design of God.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 315.

## THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

The parable of the talents helps explain the concept.

“‘After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them’ [*Matthew 25:19*]. When the Lord takes account of His servants, the return from every talent will be scrutinized. The work done reveals the character of the worker . . .

“They [the servants] see that they have done only their duty. The capital was the Lord’s; the improvement is His. Had not the Saviour bestowed upon them His love and grace, they would have been bankrupt for eternity.

“But when the Master receives the talents, He approves and rewards the workers as though the merit were all their own . . .

“‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant,’ He says; ‘thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord’ [*Matthew*

25:21].

“It is the faithfulness, the loyalty to God, the loving service, that wins the divine approval.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 360-361.

Commenting further on this parable, the principle of proportionate rewards to the redeemed is mentioned.

“What we shall be in heaven is the reflection of what we are now in character and holy service . . . Our reward for working with Christ in this world is the greater power and wider privilege of working with Him in the world to come.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 361.

“We shall individually be held responsible for doing one jot less than we have ability to do. The Lord measures with exactness every possibility for service.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363 [and the rest of the paragraph].

But then we are told the means by which the work down here is to be done.

“But when we give ourselves wholly to God and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest endeavors. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to cooperate with One who knows no failure.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363 [and next paragraph].

“The spirit of the slothful servant we are often fain to call humility. But true humility is widely different . . . Real humility fulfills God’s purposes by depending upon His strength.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363.

### PRECIOUS PROMISES OF HELP

In view of what we have read, the situation can look somewhat discouraging. How can we possibly do all that God requires? Our days are short. We have to work for a living, there are times when we become ill from overwork. What is the answer?

The solution is just what we have been discussing all through this book! Become God’s little child—and totally rely upon Him for everything—and He will work through you to accomplish all that you, with your limited time and talents, are able to perform. And in the process, He will perfect you! Thank God; He does it in and through us, as we obediently cooperate with Him.

The requirement is big.

“Of every Christian the Lord requires growth in efficiency and capability in every line.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 330.

“Be ambitious, for the Master’s glory, to cultivate every grace of character. In every phase of your character building you are to please God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 332.

But the promises are bigger!

“But when we give ourselves wholly to God and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest endeavors. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to cooperate with One who knows no failure.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363.

“All who will with determined effort seek help from above, and subdue and crucify self, may be successful in this world, and may gain the future, immortal life. This world is the field of man’s labor. His preparation for the future world depends upon the way he discharges his duties in this world . . . There are services due to others which we cannot ignore and yet keep the commandments of God. To live, think, and act for self only is to become useless as servants of God. High-sounding titles and great talents are not essential.”—*4 Testimonies*, 339-340.

“As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 333.

“True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right—because right doing is pleasing to God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 97-98.

“God in His great love is seeking to develop in us the precious graces of His Spirit. He permits us to encounter obstacles, persecution, and hardships, not as a curse, but as the greatest blessing of our lives. Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 117.

“Those who thus exercise the Christian graces will grow, and will become strong to work for God. They will have clear spiritual perceptions, a steady, growing faith, and an increased power in prayer. The Spirit of God, moving upon their spirit, calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul, in answer to the divine touch. Those who thus devote themselves to unselfish effort for the good of others, are most surely working out their own salvation. The only way to grow in grace is . . . to engage, to the extent of our ability,

in helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them.”—*Amazing Grace*, 305.

“God does not desire you to remain novices. He needs in His work everything that you can gain here in the lines of mental culture and clear discernment. He desires to have you reach the very highest round of the ladder, and then step off it into the kingdom of God.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 330.

“Every promise that is in God’s book holds out to us the encouragement that we may be partakers of the divine nature. This is the possibility—to rely upon God, to believe His Word, to work His works, and this we can do when we lay hold on the divinity of Christ. This possibility is worth more to us than all the riches in the world. There is nothing on earth that can compare with it. As we lay hold of the power thus placed within our reach, we receive a hope so strong that we can rely wholly upon God’s promise; and laying hold of the possibilities there are in Christ, we become the sons and daughters of God . . .

“If you are partakers of the divine nature, you will day by day be obtaining a fitting for that life that measures with the life of God. Day by day you will purify your trust in Jesus and follow His example and grow into His likeness until you shall stand before Him perfected.”—*My Life Today*, 274.

Day by day, you are building for eternity.

“Remember that you will never reach a higher standard than you yourself set. Then set your mark high, and step by step, though it be by painful effort, by self-denial and sacrifice, ascend the whole length of the ladder of progress. Let nothing hinder you. Fate has not woven its meshes about any human being so firmly that he need remain helpless and in uncertainty. Opposing circumstances should create a firm determination to overcome them. The breaking down of one barrier will give greater ability and courage to go forward. Press with determination in the right direction, and circumstances will be your helpers, not your hindrances.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 331-332.

“Day by day you are building for eternity. Fashion your characters after the divine model. Weave into them all the kindness, thoughtful obedience, painstaking, and love that you can . . . Cultivate quick sympathy; always have a cheerful, happy face, and be ready to lend a helping hand to those who need your aid . . . He [God] will make an accurate entry of every deed done to His glory . . . And in the great day of final accounts you will receive a glorious reward.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 149.

## MORE GROWTH IN HEAVEN

One could surmise, from some of the earlier statements (especially *This Day with God*, 350, and *Upward Look*, 248), that it is now that we must grow; because in heaven there is no growth and we must be content with the level achieved, through the grace of Christ, in this life.

It is true that it is now that we must make growth which (according to *This Day with God*, 350) cannot be made up in heaven. Exactly what that is, the author is not certain. It very likely is the degree or breadth of capacity to which we can be used in heaven. That is the indication given in *Upward Look*, 248 (which is quoted again, just below).

But do not imagine that there will be no more growth. There will, indeed, be more growth in heaven for all the redeemed! However, the following statements which speak of it (and they are indeed glorious) appear to refer especially to growth in knowledge of God and His created works, and love for Him.

“When God’s redeemed ones are called to heaven, they will not leave behind the advancement they have made in this life by beholding Christ. They will go on, learning more and still more of God. They will carry their spiritual attainments into the courts above, leaving nothing of heavenly origin in this world. As the books of heaven are opened, each overcomer is assigned his lot and place in heaven, in accordance with the advancement he has made in this life.”—*Upward Look*, 248.

“Our lifework here is a preparation for the life eternal. The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward through all eternity,—ever progressing, never completed. More and more fully will be revealed the wisdom and love of God in the plan of redemption.

“The Saviour, as He leads His children to the fountains of living waters, will impart rich stores of knowledge. And day by day the wonderful works of God, the evidences of His power in creating and sustaining the universe, will open before the mind in new beauty. In the light that shines from the throne, mysteries will disappear, and the soul will be filled with astonishment at the simplicity of the things that were never before comprehended. Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; but then we shall know even as also we are known.”—*Ministry of Healing*, 466.

“Think what it will mean to study through eternal ages under the personal instruction of Christ! Amidst the present conflicts and temptations, in this our day of probation, we are to form characters that will prepare us to obtain a life that measures with the life of God.”—*Manuscript Releases, Vol. 20, 87.*

Here are several of the concluding paragraphs in that masterpiece of Inspiration—the book, *Great Controversy*. You will notice that this lengthy passage is focused solely on the ongoing growth in knowledge and love we shall acquire in heaven.

“There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.

“All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God’s handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator’s name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.

“And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of voices unite to swell the

mighty chorus of praise.”—*Great Controversy, 677-678.*

The reward we will receive will be the joy of serving God on more extended levels than we could do down here. We are now determining what that level shall be. It is very likely that those who, on this earth, choose to be little children in relation to their heavenly Father are more likely to be used more fully in heaven. Why? because by entering such a relationship, they were actually becoming more like God,—for the Ancient of Days is Himself meek, lowly, and childlike in affections and purity of heart.

All this may seem astounding, but keep reading in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, and you will find that it is so.

There yet remains one question: Will the redeemed be fully happy with their position and work in heaven?

Yes, yes! Every tear is wiped away, and everyone is fully satisfied. The most obvious example of this is the fact that the crowns given to the redeemed vary in the number of stars. Yet we are told that each will be perfectly happy with his crown.

“Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads . . . Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns.”—*Early Writings, 16.*

That would not happen down here! If ten people were each given differently weighted crowns, most would be envious of those with the more elaborate gifts. But in heaven, there will be no tempter to annoy. Everyone will be perfectly contented with his lot in life. We can all be thankful for that.

### CHARACTER, NOT WORKS IS THE ISSUE

We earlier noted that character was the crucial area of concern. There is a passage in *Christ’s Object Lessons* which vividly explains this.

After noting the incident in which the rich young ruler comes to Christ, we discover that Peter began thinking he was going to get some rich reward in heaven for his work on earth. In response, Jesus gives the parable of the husbandman who hires different men all through the day—but pays them all the same amount at

its close.

Ellen White comments on this and, in several incisive statements, shows that the reward of our service is the penny: eternal life.

(In sharp contrast, we earlier discovered that the rewards of character development are differential.)

Consider these clear statements. We are to labor out of love for God, not for the reward.

“But Peter’s question, ‘What shall we have therefore?’ had revealed a spirit that uncorrected would unfit the disciples to be messengers for Christ; for it was the spirit of a hireling. While they had been attracted by the love of Jesus, the disciples were not wholly free from Pharisaism. They still worked with the thought of meriting a reward in proportion to their labor.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 396.

“In worldly business, compensation is given according to the work accomplished . . . In the

parable . . . they were rewarded, not according to the amount of their labor, but according to the generosity of his [the householder’s] purpose.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 397.

“God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 398-399 [also read 399-400].

It is the spirit in which the work is done, not the labor itself, which counts. The spirit reveals the character.

“His reward is given not according to our merit but according to His own purpose . . . Not the amount of labor performed or its visible results but the spirit in which the work is done makes it of value with God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 397 [also 398].

Jesus loves a child like me; This is how I know.  
Once He blessed the children dear In the long ago.

In His arms He folded them, All who came to Him;  
Jesus loves the children now Just as He did then.

Loving Jesus, be Thou near To Thy child this day;  
May I know Thy loving arms Shelter me alway.

— Part Three —  
 Appendixes

Appendix I:  
 Questions, Answers,  
 and Facts

**“Christianity does not require this! Is not righteousness by faith all that is needed? Also, I have heard that all I need is justification, sanctification, or obedience.”**

Justification, sanctification, obedience, and righteousness by faith are wonderful topics for study—and all are important in their own way. But a remarkable number of the theological errors are based on taking part of the whole and omitting the rest. When combined together, each of the above elements is important. Yet *they are all causes or effects of our relationship with God, not the core of it. Where that relationship is missing, there is no effective justification, obedience, sanctification, nor righteousness by faith.* By themselves, none of those aspects will get you to heaven. It is the basic, ongoing, vital experience with God that is crucial. *If you do not have God,—what of worth do you have?* Anyone who imagines that he can have God’s “righteousness,” apart from having Him, is only fooling himself.

**“But is not forgiveness and grace all that is needed?”**

*It will make an infinite difference whether or not you think you need to obey God.* Some people suppose that all they need is forgiving “grace”—and they can live and die in their sins and still be saved.

Grace is unmerited favor, shown by God to those who do not deserve it. Christ’s life on earth,

death on Calvary, and intercessory work in the heavenly Sanctuary makes it available to all who will receive it.

The grace of Christ is able to do two wonderful things in your life: It can forgive and it can empower. Therefore, we speak of forgiving grace and enabling grace. *Forgiving grace* is sent to forgive our past sins. *Enabling grace* strengthens us in Christ (always, only *in Christ*; that is, when we are in submission to Christ) to be able to resist temptation and sin and obey the commandments of God.

Grace is given to eliminate sin from our lives, not whitewash over it.

**“What is justification and sanctification?”**

For practical purposes, *justification* is the forgiveness of your past sins. By it, you are made right with God. Christ clothes you with His own robe of righteousness, and God looks on you as He looks on His own Son. He *imputes* His righteousness to you. That word just means that you are accounted as though you are righteous.

Some try to make justification appear very complicated and burdensome. Yet it is just a matter of coming to God, genuinely confessing one’s sins in true heart sorrow for sin, and receiving forgiveness. That is exactly what the publican did in the parable; and, Jesus said, he went down to his house justified! So justification cannot be very complicated.

Justification is not the forgiveness of your future sins. That is the error which Tetzl sold with his indulgences (see *Great Controversy*, 127-129); and it is akin to once-saved-always-saved. A like error is the “finished atonement,” the concept that we were saved 2,000 years ago at the cross. You are not, personally, made right in God’s eyes until you actually fall down before Him and seek forgiveness for past sin.

It is for this reason that the atonement continues, in heaven, on down to the present day.

When it ends, human probation will forever close. Christ, our High Priest, pleads on our behalf before the Father.

Then there is *sanctification*. These “-ion” words are often hard to understand. Sanctification simply means obedience and growth. We are being sanctified when, by His grace, we obey God’s Written Word, live clean lives, and continue on in Christian growth and maturity. But we do it all connected to Christ and in His strength.

Sometimes the result is termed *imparted righteousness*. But never imagine that you have anything of yourself. All the goodness you have, you hold in Christ. Without Him, you quickly fall right back into sin. Apart from Christ, you cannot resist Satan.

“It is the work of conversion and sanctification to reconcile men to God by bringing them into accord with the principles of His law.”—*Great Controversy*, 467.

### “What is perfection?”

Perfection is another word which people become confused about. The half-converted like to complain about those who believe in perfection of character, and they call them “perfectionists.”

But, by perfection, all we are really talking about is obedience. Are we to throw out the ten commandments? We are to obey them.

Some say they do not believe in perfection, yet they are actually saying that they do not believe in ongoing obedience. God asks us to be His children and obey Him every day. “Do not worry about the road ahead. Just follow Me today,” He says. But following Him means submitting to Him and obeying Him!

### “What does ‘righteousness’ mean?”

Righteousness simply means “rightdoing.” It means clean, honest living—the kind a genuine Christian exhibits. However, as with everything else, we cannot produce or have justification, sanctification, obedience, or righteousness by ourselves! Christ provides it. Christ enables it. Christ clothes us with it. We have it and do it in Him.

Christ clothes us in His own righteousness. That means two things: When we come to God in repentance for sin, Christ forgives and accepts us as though we had never sinned. We are justified. We are accounted as rightdoing.

But the next instant, we start down the road of sanctification. Through the enabling grace of Christ, we begin resisting sin and obeying the Inspired Writings. We are being sanctified. We are rightdoing in action.

### “What is righteousness by faith?”

This is another frequently misunderstood term. Yet it is not complicated, either. It just means rightdoing by faith.

Most people think that righteousness by faith is equivalent to justification, but it is extremely significant that nearly every Spirit of Prophecy statement on the subject is, in context, referring to our actively obeying God. (See my tract set, *The Message of Minneapolis*, in which most of the statements are quoted.) So the term is generally synonymous with obedience by faith.

Prior to 1888, the brethren were strong on obedience. At Minneapolis, the balance was presented: obedience by faith. In the decade after Minneapolis, Ellen White detailed the concept in her 1890 books: *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, and *Desire of Ages*. Read *Steps to Christ* and you will know what righteousness by faith is all about. It is neither mysterious nor complicated. Christianity is so simple a child can understand it. If anyone tells you otherwise, point him to the Word of God. It was written for common folk. Much of the religious ills of mankind have been caused by men who got too much theological learning at the feet of skeptics in worldly universities.

### “What is the atonement?”

The *atonement* is simply the entire process whereby Christ makes us acceptable to God the Father—by forgiving us, empowering us to obey, and making us like Himself. The atonement began on the cross, was continued in the first apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary, and will soon be completed in the second apartment of that massive structure in heaven.

### “What are the Bible words for how we enter this relationship with God?”

God describes *the entrance to this relationship in several ways, including:* (1) adoption, (2) the new birth, (3) engrafting, and (4) baptism.

For our purposes, all four concepts have essentially the same effect; we begin our close relationship with our heavenly Father.

We come individually in repentance to God; and, as we are forgiven and accepted by Him, we are born anew. As this is done, we are engrafted into Christ, the vine, and adopted out of the world into God's family.

In public recognition of our entrance into this relationship, we are then baptized into Christ. In Him we then associate with other obedient-by-faith believers, all of which constitute His true church.

You will notice that nowhere are we told that we are adopted into justification or born into righteousness by faith. Those are wonderful qualities; but only out of the experience of a personal, ongoing connection with Christ in the heart flow the issues of life.

**“Such a close relationship is not really the emphasis in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, is it?”**

The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy speak of an intertwining, totally connected relationship: the engrafting into the vine. The branches are connected, fiber by fiber, to the parent stock. Those who come to the fountain are the ones that Christ washes, the believers who drink the water of life by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The faithful ones are those who, in this life, sit in heavenly places with Him, the *en Christos* experience of living His life in Him—those who are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, the sheep carried in the bosom of the shepherd, and the lost coin in the hand of the rejoicing householder.

Anything less than the best is really not much at all.

**“How do these different aspects—such as justification, righteousness by faith, and all the rest—relate to this child/parent relationship?”**

We are dealing here with causes and effects vs. a relationship. Let us briefly categorize some of the concepts we have discussed, in order to see how they relate to each other:

***Causes and enablers of the relationship:***

Christ's earthly life  
Calvary  
Heavenly Sanctuary  
Atonement

Forgiving and enabling grace

***Entering upon the Relationship:***

Conversion/New Birth  
Adoption

***The ongoing relationship:***

Child-parent relationship  
Sons and Daughters of God  
Walk with God

***Effects of the causes and enablers:***

Justification (forgiveness and imputed righteousness)  
Sanctification (empowered obedience and imparted righteousness)  
Righteousness by faith  
Fruits of the spirit  
Peter's ladder

Keep in mind that it is the relationship—from *start to finish*—which connects us to God. Without the relationship, the causes and enablers are not operative. Without the relationship, the effects do not occur.

**“Are you not advocating some strange, new concept which we have not had before?”**

Several centuries ago, there was a man who spent his adult life working in the kitchen of a monastery. Lame from birth, by his own admission he was somewhat clumsy. Very much aware of his frailty, he sought solace by comforting himself with the assurance that God was near. He called it “practicing the presence of God,” and later wrote a booklet by that name. In it, he alluded to his experience, without telling much about it. Very likely his experience was the one many of God's children have had, the one described in this present volume. Walking with God is not new. Men have done it since the days of Enoch; and, before his time, Adam walked with God in the Garden.

**“Why do you call this a child-Father relationship, when normally it is the mother which the child closely attaches to and is his caretaker throughout his early years. Should we not pray to a Father/Mother God?”**

You may have noticed that, throughout this study, we have discussed child-father relationship, but not a divine child-mother relationship.

Here on earth, it is the mother who leads out in raising the child for heaven. There is a Spirit of Prophecy statement that, because of this, women have a more important work in this life than that of men. Christian women train the next generation, hopefully, for citizenship on earth and in heaven. Men work with what women have produced. Theirs is a second-class activity.

Yet, in relation to heaven and eternal life, there is no mother god and no women priests. The concept of divine motherhood is totally non-Scriptural.

It is only in paganism that we find the women priestesses at Delphi; the vestal “virgins” at Corinth; Diana of the Ephesians; and witches, with their incantations, at Endor and throughout the world.

Mary, the Queen of Heaven and Co-redemptrix is a concept which comes from pagan roots of Isis and Horus in Egypt, and earlier still to Athena, Venus, and other loose women of antiquity who were worshiped as gods.

We do not need prayers to women saints or men saints; we need speaking to, and walking with, God.

Is there no place for women in God’s Word? Yes, we are told they can minister in the home, to the children and youth, to their spouses, and to other women. They actually have a wider range of ministry than do men! In addition, Scripture is clear that God has, at times, selected women to be inspired prophets. Women can be counselors to children and women; but, never in Scripture, are they to be priests or ministers to mixed groups. Although women are frequently more spiritually devoted than are men, yet we must abide by the plain words of Scripture.

The Fatherhood of God, and our relation to Him as our Father, is of extreme importance in saving our souls. For this reason, Satan has, for thousands of years, counterfeited this with women gods, women priests, women mediums, and channelers.

## Appendix 2: More Questions and Answers

**“To do what you suggest in this book would be an effrontery to my manhood! I am a strong, capable adult, well able to handle my affairs. And you tell me I must become a little child again! Why does it have to be a child-parent arrangement; why not a meeting of two responsible beings? I am willing and able to serve God as an adult.”**

To paraphrase Matthew 22:29: You err, knowing neither Bible facts about God nor His power and authority; and John 5:44: “How can ye believe, which are so anxious to receive honor for yourself, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?”

Nearly two centuries ago, some of the leading writers, intellectuals, and scientists in England met in a social gathering. At one point, someone asked what they would do if Shakespeare were to enter the room. They happily said they would say this or that. Then, while they had a toast to that departed celebrity, another asked, “And what would we do if Dante walked in?” More light bantered as several more names of famous men of the past were mentioned.

Then someone spoke: “What would we do if Jesus Christ walked into the room?” Stunned silence fell upon these, the leading modernists of their day; and then Charles Lamb, a leading English essayist of the day, hoarsely replied, “I believe, gentlemen, we would all fall on our faces.”

According to the Bible, you and I are as worms in comparison with God. Scripture supports this fact (*Job 25:6; Psalm 22:6; Isaiah 41:14*).

The child-parent relationship agrees with the facts in the case. Consider the infinite power of your Creator, exercised every moment over the vast reaches of space. Then get out one of your baby pictures and look at them. It was not too many years since you were that infant, a time span that is a mere drop in the bucket of eternity. —And you imagine that you have a right to not fall down in worship before your God and to

plead with Him as a child?

Some will enter and some will not. Yet, to those who do, this relationship is one of sweetest happiness. In response, your kind Father lifts His little child up, and lets him sit in heavenly places with Him (*Ephesians 1:3; 2:6*).

In the world, parents scold and cuff. But as God's loving child, the meek, submissive one is the recipient of a King's ransom. Can such a life be belittling to anyone's supposed dignity? Banish the thought.

If you stepped into a room where the Queen of England was sitting, you would not treat her as an equal,—yet you appear to have no fear nor quaking before the most powerful Being in the universe.

We are told it is those who take a lowly place before God, who can take a high place before men. That is, it is those who are little children of God, who have the best intellectual powers, the strongest will power to do right, and are able to present the firmest defense of the right in the face of wrongdoing.

The most capable people in the world are the ones who take a lowly place before the God of the universe.

Yet, despite the true facts in the case, men, when they pray to the King of all worlds, will dare to stand before Him as an equal!

**“My problem is different: All those numerous qualities needed by the Christian; I just can't seem to achieve them all.”**

While you work on one, another seems to slip away. Just listing them all seems like a difficult task to keep track of, much less fulfill in the life. Toward others, we need patience, perseverance, meekness, gentleness, firmness, and much more. Toward God, we need trust, love, obedience, and more besides.

How can we fulfill all these objectives and qualities? How can we, individually, be the godly man and woman that Heaven would have us be?

The solution is to become God's little child. Daily, hourly, minute-by-minute. In His enabling strength, you can fulfill all His requirements. There are requirements! His law has not been abrogated. But His rules for your betterment are not difficult,—when you are with Him.

When you are His humble, trustful, obedient child,—all the pieces fall into place! He guides your entire life into better paths

of thought and action. That which you cannot do, He can do in you.

**“It would weaken the brain to be that dependent on another. It would make a person more susceptible to control by another mind.”**

*Not if it is God whom you are dependent on!* Never! Submission to Him strengthens the mind, the will, and the degree of self-control. None of the angels in heaven are weak-minded.

The danger comes when we grant to another human being, the submission we are to give alone to the God of heaven. According to the manual Loyola wrote, the Jesuit is trained to be “a staff in the hand of his superior.” That is devilish! Submission to God is far different than submission to man! You were created to be submissive to God; and, we are told, in *Desire of Ages*, 324, “Everyone will be under the control of one or the other of the two great powers [God or Satan].” In reality, no one is really independent.

Anyone who is not in submission to the Lord, will, erelong, be in bondage to the devil. Either choose the Lord by your own free choice or, by default, be enslaved by Satan. —And his tender mercies are a misery to behold. Compare *1 BC 1113, col. 1* with *DA, 337*. Moses, the greatest leader on earth, was meekly submissive to God; the demoniacs became such because they totally managed their own lives, thus giving them into the hands of Satan.

**“Can't I be saved without a relationship with God?”**

Well, it might be presumed that maybe you can—if you want to hang your salvation on such a frail possibility. But why would you want to get into heaven on a ticket marked “absentee Christian who says he has been justified?” Are you really happy with just saying hello to God at morning and evening worships (if you have that) and, hopefully, while listening once a week to other people at Sabbath School and church service talk about Him? Is that really all you want out of Christianity? Is “go-to-meeting religion” going to be sufficient to save you? *How much do you really value the presence of God?* When you get to heaven, if you get there, will you go off into some corner so you can continue to avoid Him?

Many professed Christians want to be able to make an occasional phone call to Heaven; but, horrors, they do not want God *living day by day with them!* The attitude of some toward God

seems to be “Save me, but don’t get too near to me in the process.”

We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy, “to be almost saved is to be not almost, but wholly lost.”

Some people believe that, having “accepted Christ” in some earlier decade, they can have the world for a lifetime—and afterward go to heaven and have that too. They spend all their time getting all they can; but, unfortunately, most of what they are trying to get is secular. Salvation in sin is poor planning; according to God’s Word, it will be fatal planning.

**“I would not want to live such a stilted, controlled life.”**

Living with God may seem like a sacrifice, but it is extremely happy. The only reason it appears miserable is because the devil tempts people to think it is.

It is actually a self-controlled life. And such people always do better in life, even when they are not Christians.

We all know that the angels in heaven and the beings on the other worlds are extremely happy. —Yet they live like this all the time! *Fully yielded to the control and guidance of God, they have the fullest freedom.* In marked contrast, the poor creatures on earth who do not have the Lord are the ones who are miserable and in slavery.

**“The Lord told Jeremiah not to say he was a little child. So why should I think I am?”**

You are referring to the first chapter of his book. When the Lord called him to do a special work for Him, Jeremiah replied,

“Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

“But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.”—*Jeremiah 1:6-8.*

It was because Jeremiah considered himself a humble child in ability and self-confidence—that the Lord called him! —But Jeremiah was not to imagine that, therefore, he could not be used by the God of heaven.

The context of the chapter reveals that the young man was told that he was going to be used of Heaven to do a man’s work! In order to carry it out, Jeremiah would have to set his face as

flint. Yet if he had been self-confident, the Lord would never have called him in the first place.

Without exception, every other person in the Bible, whom we know much about, which God called to a special work—was initially humble and childlike in his attitudes. It is only such men and women that God can use.

*Walk humbly with thy God.* Do not presume to think you are smart enough to improve on His guidance. A thought will come to mind to think or do something which you sense you should not do. *Train yourself to sense the danger in such a situation.* At such a time, quickly resubmit yourself to the Lord, and do what you know to be right. A favorite approach of Satan is to suggest the thought that you are able to take care of yourself. You are not. You must remain close to your Father, or you are headed for trouble. John the Baptist had carefully studied the science of guarding against the stealthy approach of the enemy of mankind (*DA 102*). We must do it also.

**“I would far rather have the brains of an adult, than return to the blitherings of a child?”**

If that is your decision, after learning all this, it will be written in the records of heaven, “He chose to remain a foolish man.”

Why such strong words? Consider Moses, who was so childlike before God that he was called the “meekest man” in the world, with the men who had chosen fully to follow their own will—the Gergesene demonics . . .

### THE ACT OF CONVERSION

**“What is the fundamental aspect of conversion? What is that moment, at which time the changeover from a worldling to God’s property occurs?”**

A good place to look for the answer is in Christ’s conversation to Nicodemus.

“In the interview with Nicodemus, Jesus unfolded the plan of salvation and His mission to the world. In none of His subsequent discourses did He explain so fully, step by step, the work necessary to be done in the hearts of all who would inherit the kingdom of heaven.”—*Desire of Ages, 176.*

As we might expect, the best analysis of John 3 is to be found in *Desire of Ages*. Yet, as we thoughtfully read the chapter, we find that in two

consecutive paragraphs the moment of conversion is explained in some detail.

*We are trying to find that act which marks the point of transition. It is not an act of God, for He is always ready to grant our request. It is something that we must do.*

What is the key word here?

“By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. These may be received through meditating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the Word of God from the living preacher. *Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus.* By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God,—a patient, protracted process.

“While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. *The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God.* Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God . . . The beginning of redemption we may know here through a personal experience. Its results reach through the eternal ages.”—*Desire of Ages*, 172-173 [italics ours].

The key word is “surrender.” It is when we give up, give in, and give all—to God—that we become His!

As mentioned in the last sentence above, the results of this are momentous, reaching into eternity. *You can live forever; but the key that opens the door is genuine surrender.*

**“Well, I experienced that years ago. I surrendered to God in a church meeting so long ago, I can hardly recall the time.”**

You are missing the crux of the matter: *Surrender is not a point in time, it must be an ongoing experience—or you are not going to heaven!* It is not the person you were at an instant in time twenty years ago which will be saved; it is you, every day now, living and breathing.

Thus there are two crucial aspects to your part in the salvation process: (1) the act of entering the experience, which is the initial surrender and (2) continuing that experience, maintaining an ongoing surrender.

How is that done?

By becoming God’s sincere, little child and, as a little child, remaining with Him. All the qualities of continued surrender are contained within that sweet walk with God.

This concept is reflected in a paragraph in the next chapter in *Desire of Ages*:

“We can receive of heaven’s light only as we are willing to be emptied of self. We cannot discern the character of God, or accept Christ by faith, unless we consent to the bringing into captivity of every thought to the obedience of Christ. To all who do this the Holy Spirit is given without measure. In Christ ‘dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are made full.’”—*Desire of Ages*, 181.

**“Is there another time when Jesus fully explained how to come to God and live with Him?”**

An outstanding, step-by-step clarification is recorded in the Beatitude section of the Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 5:3-12*). Thoughtfully read *Desire of Ages*, 299-302, the detailed explanation of the first six beatitudes which concern our relationship with God,—and you will see that they can best be fulfilled in your life by becoming God’s little child. (The last two beatitudes deal more with our relationship to others.)

#### LIFE IN A CRISIS HOUR

**“Why is it so necessary that we live on a higher plane of Christian experience at this time? Christ saves us, and that is all that is needed.”**

Some people want to live life on earth as effortlessly as possible, with an attitude that “Jesus does it all.” Others are willing to make any sacrifice, go anywhere, do anything, if it may please their Saviour.

But, it is important that we remember that, at this time in history, we face special challenges and opportunities. Never before, except just before the Flood, has mankind faced such a worldwide crisis.

As we near the onset of this global calamity, God needs men and women who are totally surrendered, quick to hear, and quick to obey.

This is one of the reasons our Father gave us the Spirit of Prophecy in these last days. —We needed an extra measure of divine guidance!

In order to be prepared for what is ahead, and the part we must act at this time, we must adhere to the highest standards. They are to be found in God's Word, the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy; and we must read in those books most earnestly every day.

If you and I were adults, we could manage ourselves, but we are only children—God's offspring,—as are all the other beings in the universe. In order to be more manageable, we need to maintain a simple, healthful diet.

“If the Israelites had been given the diet to which they had been accustomed while in Egypt, they would have exhibited the unmanageable spirit that the world is exhibiting today.

“In the diet of men and women in this age there are included many things that the Lord would not have permitted the children of Israel to eat. The human family as it is today is an illustration of what the children of Israel would have been if God had allowed them to eat the food and follow the habits and customs of the Egyptians.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1102.*

How very thankful we can be that God has called us out from the world, and taken us as His own children. He intends that we live carefully and be quick to listen, quick to obey.

With all this in mind, it is obvious that we need sensitive consciences. If you will go on the program outlined in this book, you will find that your conscience will become more sensitive.

What is needed to attain such a conscience? What is the effect of this in the life?

As mentioned earlier, the basis is laid by being in close contact with God through the reading of His Word and prayer to Him through the day.

But that which is especially needed—and can easily be overlooked—is the need to be alert throughout the day, so that we make the right choices, do the duties which need to be done, and listen for His guidance. If you will carefully do this, *you will sense that guidance more clearly than before.* This is happening because you are His little child, intending to be fully submitted to His will. Not only at the time of prayer, but throughout the day you are surrendering the will to Him.

While we want to avoid “being guided by impressions” (see 2T 505; GC 7-8; AA 279; 2SM 93), yet, with greater clarity than before, *you will find that you are being quietly cautioned as you go through the day.*

Avoid every wrong step, even though it be ever so small. As you do this, your walk will deepen.

It is quite obvious that, in what we are discussing here, there could be room for fanaticism if someone wanted to veer off in that direction. But the genuine child of God, who has Christ for his righteousness—and is not attempting to produce his own—will be kept free from slipping under the power of Satan, through pride in his own accomplishments of apparent “sinlessness.”

It would seem that, amid such dangers, it would be difficult to draw especially close to God. Yet it is not a bit difficult! The only problem is our own will. As we submit, God will guide and protect us. Remember Peter on the water: Look to Jesus, not to the water nor to the others.

Yes, we live in the crisis hour of earth's history. If ever there was a time when the Creator needed people on earth who would stand in defense of the truth, it is now.

Will you and I be faithful to the end? In His strength, we may do it—and, in Him (only in Him), be conquerors in all things.

All that needs to be done—can alone be done in His enabling strength. Yet, without our part—our continual choices and actions—He will not do His.

This is no time for vaunted boasting; it is a time for pleading, for drawing nearer to Him, for careful following and a willingness to stand in His defense, carrying a cross and going with Him to the death.

May God help you and I to be faithful to the end. God can only use little children. Let us fall before Him and say, “Here am I, take me. Here am I, send me.”

And remember the words of John Milton who, while in his blindness writing *Paradise Lost*, wrote: “They also serve who stand and wait.”

It may be that you find yourself limited in your sphere of contact; you may be on a bed of infirmity. In God's great plan, it matters not. Wherever you and I are—we can be His children, serving Him faithfully, and accepted fully by Him.

# The Joy of the Lord is Your Strength

## A postscript to *As a Little Child*

This little book, *As a Little Child*, was written to help you deepen your experience with God. Yet it is easy to let the problems of life come between you and your kind Father, so that you are going it alone again.

When things start wobbling, or beginning to crash—you may wish to glance through this check sheet and find out what went wrong. Make sure you are doing it all. When things are just dull, go through this list and look for what, in your experience, is sagging. But, even more important, keep reading in the Inspired Books. They are your window into heaven.

- Your salvation is solely from God; He alone can save you, yet He asks that you accept His plan and cooperate with Him in working out your salvation with fear and trembling.

- Do not trust to yourself. Everything you do must be done in Him.

- Focus your attention on the fact that you are His little child, ever seeking to please Him, yet aware that you are not earning something. Your part is so very small and His part is so very great; yet without your earnest cooperation, He will not do His.

- Believe that He loves you, and you are accepted in Him. Satan will try to discourage you. Reject the thought and cling to Jesus.

- As soon as you get into misfortune or

trouble (whether caused by you or others), you must run right back to Him. You must not wait.

- At such times, you must actively draw closer to Him. Plead for help; hold tightly to Him.

- When darkness comes upon you, cling tightly to His hand. It will pass, and the sun will come out again. Be patient. Do nothing rash.

- First, come back home. Tell God your problem. Lay it all out before Him. Find Him again as your Saviour. You may be the problem or it may be others. Either way come back. He is the great Solver of problems, and is waiting for you.

- Think through what happened that day. What went right; what went wrong?

*Here are additional points to consider:*

- Are you submitting everything to Him—everything you have and are? If it is not a full surrender, then you are sure to have a hard time.

- You must be His *humble* child. The deep experience is reserved for those alone who nestle close to their heavenly Father, and are not conceited about that closeness! You dare not have a “I am better than others” attitude, because of the closer walk you have been having. This quickly kills the relationship! There is a Spirit of Prophecy quotation, which says, “Unless you are broken,

you are worthless” (cf. *Matthew 21:44* or *Luke 21:18*).

- To keep a steady closeness, you must study His Word more than once every day, preferably morning and evening. It can be brief, but it must be consistent. Select a Spirit of Prophecy book and read through it, marking it as you go. Read slowly for meaning. It matters not how fast you proceed. You need quiet contact with God through His Word more than once a day.

- You must obey His Word, and do what you know to be right. If you are living in known disobedience,—you are must reverse course immediately. Run back to Father right away, and cooperate with Him in cleaning out the cobwebs and killing the spider.

- Talk to Him every so often through the day, even though the words may be almost soundless. You must keep the contact open. You love to be with Him and talk with Him.

- Be thankful, and tell your Father quite frequently. He loves to hear it. When life starts pressing in, think of something to be thankful for. Talk to Him about another of the many blessings He provides. Think about heaven. It is coming closer every day!

- Find ways to help someone else. Most everything worthwhile that you do is helping someone else. It may seem little, but it is important.

- Enjoy doing your duties and being a help. Busy yourself helping others and praying for them. There are so many who need help.

- Take God with you wherever you go—or don’t go there.

- As you move from one duty to another through the day, believe that He is there by your side.

*Here are more pointers:*

- Walk out in nature every day, breathe deep, and thank God for what is around you. Thankfulness combined with that outdoor fresh air will calm and rest you.

- Be at peace with Him when you lay down at night.

- Be guarded about who your associates

are. Do not make close friends of the ungodly.

- Be courteous to everyone you meet and work with.

- In your words, conduct, and clothing, do not give the impression you are a worldly. Make sure your clothing and appearance is in full agreement with principles given in God’s Word.

- Be careful of the music you listen to. Too much of it today is bewildering, jangly, wild, or savage. Calming music with simple, Christian wording is the best.

- Singing your little songs of rejoicing to Jesus is a powerful way to keep close to Him. Make up the words, if need be. Nothing needs to rhyme. The birds sing their little songs to Him; you can too.

- Have special times to pray. Some do best kneeling alone. Others find they need time to pray as they walk outdoors alone.

- The rest of the day, pray as you work.

- Think about the closing scenes in the life of Christ.

- Read through the *Conflict Series*, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, *Mount of Blessing*, *Steps to Christ*, and *Messages to Young People*. Also very helpful: *Volume 7A* of the Bible Commentary.

- Live above the clouds and the battle around you. You are living on a higher level and headed somewhere special.

- Try to take others with you to heaven.

- See the best in others; expect the best from them; believe and help them through to victory.

- Do not accept employment that you know is wrong.

- Guard your health, be careful, avoid accidents, live right.

- Maintain your health, do not overdo, eat a small amount of nourishing food, exercise in the open air, breathe deep, and get enough water and rest.

- Be kind, but stand for principle and God’s Word. You are a child of the King and have a right and responsibility to do so.

- Be ready to defend God and His Word

when its truths or authors are doubted or attacked.

- Never, never question or doubt God or His Word. Both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are fully inspired.

- You know where you are going when you leave this life, and you know whose property you are. Live your life for Him. You can work peacefully through the day and sleep peacefully at night, for you know Who is watching over you.

- Always be ready to go on His assignments. You can never know when He will have someone for you to help. —And those opportunities may come when you think you are quite busy with something else.

- Determine that your Father must guide you in everything. You want guidance in Him, not wisdom apart from Him.

- When you are exhausted or in pain, you have the privilege of just resting in His arms.

- Pause every so often and memorize a Bible or Spirit of Prophecy promise.

- Keep a promise book open on the desk or table, and read a sentence every so often and think about it. (Secure a copy of our book, *The Promise Year*.)

- As you work, recall to mind one of the promises you have memorized.

- Tell someone else how wonderful God has been to you or write it to them in a letter.

- Find someone in need and help them.
- Encourage someone who is discouraged, by telling them how God loves them and will help them.

- Pray with and for those who do not know how to pray for themselves. Many do not know the path which leads home.

- Give a Bible or Spirit of Prophecy study.

- How to really give others the help they need: Read *Education*, 80. When you need to rest in His arms yourself: Read *Mount of Blessing*, 100-101. (See the next page.)

- You believe that He loves you just as you are and accepts you fully. But when everything seems to crumble about you, go back and read the above points again. Make sure you are doing them. It is God which worketh in you to do His will for your life.

- He is your strength, and He has a bright future planned for you.

- Not only does He have a special work for you to do on earth, He will have a special work for you in heaven. So, in preparation, draw as close to Him as you can.

—For additional copies of the 90-page book: *As A Little Child*, write us (\$6.50+\$1.50). / Here is a book with 366 days of classified Bible promises: *The Promise Year*, 384 pp. (\$9.95+\$2.00).

MISSION EVANGELISM  
ALTAMONT, TN 37301

Jesus, Friend of little children, Be a Friend to me;  
Take my hand and ever keep me Close to Thee.

Teach me how to grow in goodness, Daily as I grow;  
Thou hast been a child, and surely Thou dost know.

Never leave me, nor forsake me, Ever be my Friend;  
For I need Thee from life's dawning To its end.

“If you have given yourself to God, to do His work, you have no need to be anxious for tomorrow. He whose servant you are, knows the end from the beginning. The events of tomorrow, which are hidden from your view, are open to the eyes of Him who is omnipotent.

“When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. We may well have anxiety and anticipate danger and loss, for it is certain to befall us. But when we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.

“Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee’ (2 Corinthians 12:9); but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day’s need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day’s supply.

“One day alone is ours, and during this day we are to live for God. For this one day we are to place in the hand of Christ, in solemn service, all our purposes and plans, casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for us.”

—*Mount of Blessing, 100-101*

“In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace,—in ‘the beauty of the Lord our God.’ Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust. Revealing in Himself man’s true ideal, He awakened, for its attainment, both desire and faith. In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy were awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life.”

—*Education, 80*

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,  
Bless Thy little lamb tonight;  
Through the darkness be Thou near me;  
Watch my sleep till morning light.

All this day Thy hand has led me,  
And I thank Thee for Thy care;  
Thou hast clothed me, warmed and fed me;  
Listen to my evening prayer.

Saviour, while my heart is tender,  
I would yield that heart to Thee;  
All my powers to Thee surrender,  
Thine, and only Thine, to be.

Send me, Lord, where Thou wilt send me,  
Only do Thou guide my way;  
May Thy grace through life attend me;  
Gladly then shall I obey.

I will early seek the Saviour,  
I will learn of Him each day.  
I will follow in His footsteps,  
I will walk the narrow way.

I will hasten where He bids me,  
I am not too young to go.  
In the pathway where He leadeth,  
Not too young His will to know.

He is standing at the doorway  
Of escape from every sin;  
I will knock, for He has promised,  
He will hear and let me in.

For He loves me, yes, He loves me,  
Jesus loves me, this I know.  
Jesus loves me, died to save me,  
This is why I love Him so.

I once was an outcast, a stranger on earth,  
A sinner by choice, and an alien by birth!  
But I've been adopted, my name's written down,  
An heir to a mansion, a robe, and a crown.

A tent or a cottage, O why should I care?  
They're building a palace for me over there!  
Tho' exiled from home, yet still I may sing:  
'All glory to God, I'm a child of the King!'

I'm a child of the King, a child of the King!  
With Jesus, my Saviour, I'm a child of the King!

Jesus loves a child like me; This is how I know:  
Once He blessed the children dear In the long ago.

In His arms He folded them, All who came to Him;  
Jesus loves the children now Just as He did then.

Loving Jesus, be Thou near To Thy child this day;  
May I know Thy loving arms Shelter me alway.

“And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

—*Matthew 18:2-4*

This is how the redeemed will live with God in heaven. Why not start now? Do you dare wait till later to begin the deeper walk?

Choose the first circle around the throne. Why settle for less than the best? Do you really know of a better way to live?

Besides, you are not being selfish in choosing the best. You will please your kind Father, and help those around you. By your example, they will be more likely to choose the better way also. Isn't this why you are here?

What do you have to lose? Complacency; cherished sins; busy nothingnesses; and, deep down, a lot of emptiness in your life.

What do you have to gain? A lot; a far happier, meaningful life for you and for others. —And, oh, how you will please God, if you really get serious about Him!

This book tells you how to do it.

*As a Little Child*